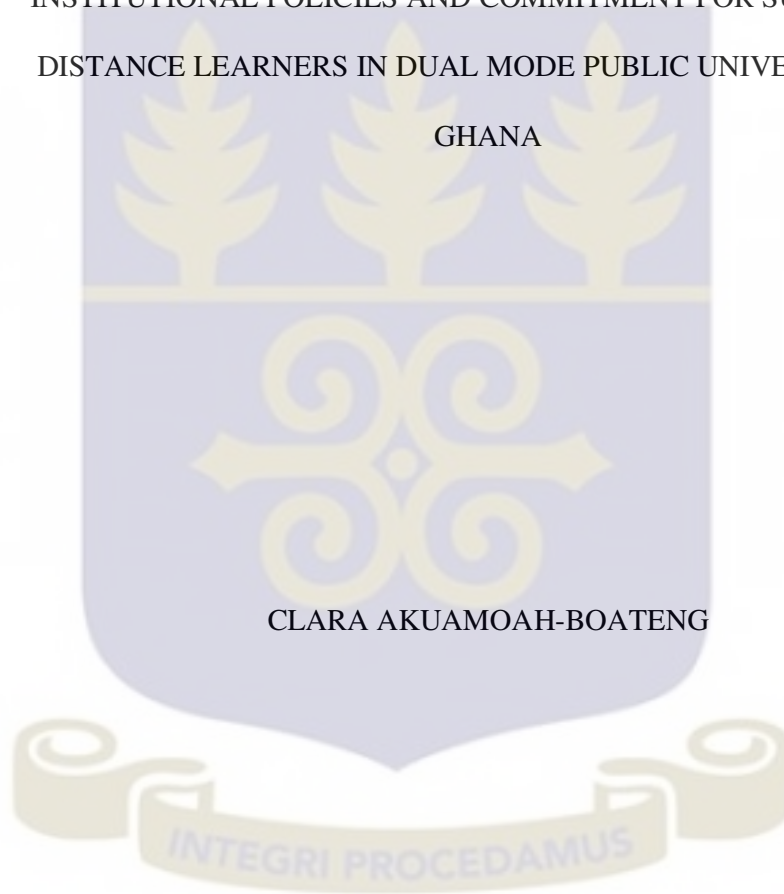


UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND COMMITMENT FOR SUPPORTING
DISTANCE LEARNERS IN DUAL MODE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN
GHANA



CLARA AKUAMOAH-BOATENG

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND COMMITMENT FOR SUPPORTING
DISTANCE LEARNERS IN PUBLIC DUAL MODE UNIVERSITIES IN
GHANA

BY

CLARA AKUAMOAH- BOATENG

(10395187)

This thesis is submitted to the University of Ghana, Legon in partial fulfilment
of the requirement for the award PHD Adult Education and Human Resources
Studies degree.

JUNE 2018

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature Date

Name:

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Ghana.

Principal Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name:.....

Co-Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name:.....

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to gain insights into institutional policies and commitment for supporting Distance Education (DE) learners in public dual mode universities in Ghana. The study was underpinned by Simonson's theory of equivalency and a Policy analysis framework (PAF) for studying distance education institutions. The study used the convergent parallel design of the mixed methods in which qualitative and quantitative approaches were adopted. Six principal officers and 632 DE learners from the public universities were purposefully and conveniently sampled respectively to respond to interview schedules and a student survey questionnaire for data collection. Audio recordings of interviews were transcribed and coded into nodes which provided easy retrieval of themes that emerged. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistical methods (including percentages, means, standard deviations and graphs where appropriate).

The major findings of the study generally, indicate the lack of institutional policies specifically formulated for DE delivery in public dual mode universities in Ghana. The use of policies meant for conventional students and unofficial conventions and guidelines to carry out some key DE activities to the detriment of DE learners was revealed. This finding contravenes the Equivalency Theory in Distance Education delivery. The current institutional policies being addressed in the universities are concentrated on academic, faculty, students, and fiscal geographic governance, technical and philosophic issues. None of the universities identified clear-cut institutional policies on legal issues. The study also indicated DE learners' dissatisfaction with the array of support services provided and the non-availability of some support services such as guidance and counselling.

The moderate level of commitment towards DE delivery despite the non-availability of specific institutional policies in the universities was also revealed. The findings of this research study led to the conclusion that although DE in public universities in Ghana is growing for the past decade, institutional policies to serve as a framework for its successful implementation are lacking. The findings from this study is consistent with earlier research findings by Butcher (2013), affirming that generally, institutional policies and

commitment which are essential to the success of all DE programmes and their students are lacking in most dual mode universities in Africa.

Based on the findings of the study, six recommendations were made; The major finding among others is that the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Services should encourage stakeholder discussions for a national (DE) policy from which the universities could use as a spring board to conduct policies audit and needs assessment of existing institutional policies, to identify areas of weaknesses that do not ensure institutional support and commitment towards institutional goals and objectives, and learner success.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No work of this nature could be attributed to the sole effort of one person. Many individuals in various ways have made invaluable contributions to this research study from its inception to conclusion. My heartfelt gratitude is expressed, particularly to my supervisors, Dr. Samuel Kofi Badu -Nyarko and Prof. George Kwaku Toku Oduro, who in spite of their heavy schedules worked tirelessly to see me through the completion of this work. Their foresight and expertise guided and challenged me throughout the dissertation writing process. They provided key insight, asked difficult questions that helped me stay focused on my research goals.

I gratefully acknowledge the University of Cape Coast, College of Distance Education for the four years Doctoral scholarship and financial support, which enabled me to undertake and complete this research study. I also wish to express my indebtedness to Prof. Olivia F. T. Kwapong, Dr. Clara Benneh and Ben. Mensah (University of Ghana) who not only provided wise counselling and served as continuing source of inspiration for this research work but also made available to me all of their valuable resources.

I am equally grateful to Dr. Kenneth Asamoah-Gyimah, Dr. Isaac Buabeng, Dr. Kofi Ayebi- Arthur, Prof. Nelson Boa, Prof. Emmanuel Kofi Gyimah, Prof. Mrs. Josephine Sam -Tagoe and Mr. Kofi Opoku Oku -Afari, and (University of Cape Coast). Prof. I. K Dontwi, Ms. Lucy Diawuo, Mr. Muntaka and Dr. E Osei University of Science and Technology) for their contributions to this study.

Special thanks to the academic staff of the Department of Adult Education and Human Resources Studies, University of Ghana. Their contributions of providing mentorship and guidance were extremely beneficial. I would also like to thank all the general office staff especially Val and Zed for their assistance in answering all my questions, helping with each semester's registration, and sending e-mails reminders to ensure our cohort did not miss important deadlines.

I would also like to thank Mrs. Adzo Aswei. Kwashie, a special colleague in my Adult Education and Human Resource Doctoral Cohort group. We spent many times together encouraging one another, studying together, and giving each other support to take one day at a time, prayed for continued strength to make it to graduation. Her kindred spirit and friendship will continue to be part of my life for years to come.

I am also grateful to all members of my Doctoral Cohort who were a part of this journey from the beginning. There is truth to feeling supported by a learning community to grow, learning community built around relationships. Thanks to Prof. Oheneba- Sakyi and Dr. Samuel Kofi Badu- Nyarko for providing opportunities for our learning community to grow, learn, and encourage each other.

I wish also to express my sincere thanks to my family for their support, encouragement and all my friends. I will forever be grateful.

Lastly, throughout my academic studies, I have asked for God to give me patience, help me balance my work, home life, and give me the endurance to make this dream possible. I thank God and give Him praise and unquestionable gratitude for answering my prayers.

DEDICATION

To my children with love and gratitude

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
DEDICATION	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES	xvi
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	8
1.3 Purpose of Study	11
1.4 Specific Objectives	11
1.5 Research Questions	11
1.6 Significance of the Study	12
1.7 Delimitations	14
1.8 Limitations	14
1.8 Operational Definition of Terms	16
1.9 Organisation of the Study	16
CHAPTER TWO	18
LITERATURE REVIEW	18
2.1 Introduction	18
2.2 Theoretical Framework	18

2.3The Theory of Equivalency in Distance Education Delivery	18
2.4 Conceptual Framework	21
2.5 A Policy Analysis Framework for Distance Education Delivery	21
2.6 Policy Areas and Key Issues	22
2.9 Importance of Institutional Policies in DE Delivery	25
2.10 Institutional Policies Issues in Distance Education Delivery	30
2.11 Policy Categories for Distance Education Delivery	33
2.12 Institutional Commitment for Distance Education Delivery	41
2.13 Stakeholders	44
2.14 Faculty	44
2.15 Administrators	46
2.16 Alumni	46
2.17 Institutional Provision of Support Services to DE Learners	53
2.17 Summary of Literature Review	59
CHAPTER THREE	61
3.0 METHODOLOGY	61
3.1 Introduction	61
3.2 Research Design	61
3.3 Rationale for the Design	63
3.4 Limitations	65
3.5 Addressing Trustworthiness	66
3.6 Population	67
3.7 Sample and Sampling Technique	68
3.8 Research Instruments	71
3.9 Personal Interviews	71

3.10 Survey Questionnaire	72
3.11 Validity and Reliability of Instruments	73
3.12 Validation of Interviews	74
3.13 Data Collection Procedure	75
3.14 Administration of Questionnaires	75
3.15 Conducting the Interviews	75
3.16 Data Processing and Analysis	77
3.17 Ethical Considerations	78
CHAPTER FOUR	80
4.0 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS QUALITATIVE RESULTS	80
4.1 Introduction	80
4.2 Institutional Policy Issues	80
4.3 Institutional Commitment	87
4.4 Institutional policies Areas Currently Being Addressed by the Public universities	90
4.5 Issues on Academic Policies	90
4.6 Orientation and Registration	95
4.7 Deferment, Transfer, Transit and withdrawals	111
4.8 Fiscal, Governance and Geographic Issues	117
4.8 Faculty Issues	131
4.8 Legal Issues	138
4.9 Student Support Services Issues	141
4.10 Technical Issues	145
4.11 Philosophical Issues	148

CHAPTER FIVE	156
5.0 PRESENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE RESULTS QUANTITATIVE RESULTS	156
5.1 Introduction	156
5.2 Profile of the Respondents Characteristics	156
5.3 Students Satisfaction of Support Services	158
5.4 Admission Process	159
5.5 Orientation and Registration	161
5.6 Course Materials	164
5.7 Quizzes and Examinations Proctoring	167
5.8 Study Centre Related Issues	169
5.9 Course Facilitation	171
5.10 Face -to -Face Interaction	174
5.12 Face -to -Face Monitoring	176
5.13 Technical Support	179
5.14 Learner Assessment	181
5.16 Learners Satisfaction with DE Programme	184
5.16 Differences and Similarities between the major Centres (UCC and KNUST)	185
5.17 Differences and Similarities among UCC Centre	186
5.18 Differences and Similarities among the KNUST Centre	190
CHAPTER SIX	194
6.0 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	194
6.1 Introduction	194

6.2 Institutional Policies available for Distance Education delivery in Public Dual Mode Universities in Ghana	194
6.3 Institutional Policy Areas Currently Being Addressed by the Public Universities for Distance Education delivery	200
6.5 Public universities commitment in supporting DE Learners.	219
6.6 DE learners' satisfaction with Range of Support Services Provided by the universities	223
6.7 Effective use of Institutional Policies in promoting DE learners' Success	233
6.8 Interpretation of the Framework	237
CHAPTER SEVEN	238
7.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	238
7.1 Overview	238
7.2 Key Findings	241
7.3 Conclusions	244
7.4 Implications for Distance Education Delivery	244
7.5 Implications for Institutional Growth	245
7.6 Implication for Adult Education	245
7.7 Recommendations	245
7.8 Suggestion for Further Research	246
REFERENCES	248
APPENDICES	260
APPENDIX A: University of Ghana	260
APPENDIX B: University Of Ghana	264

APPENDIX C: In Depth-Interview Guide for Principal Officers of Public Universities In Ghana.	269
APPENDIX D: Questionnaire for Distance Education Student Respondents	274
APPENDIX E: Transcription of Qualitative Data	286

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1.1 Distance Education Policy Analysis Framework	22
2.2 Comparison of policy categories from previous studies	24
3.3 Qualitative Sample Frame	70
4.4 Quantitative Sample Frame	70
5.5 Results on Admission Process	159
6.6 Results on Orientation and Registration	161
7.7 Results on Course Materials	164
8.8 Results on Quizzes and Examination Proctoring	167
9.9 Results on Study Centre Related Issues	169
10.10 Results on Course Facilitation	171
11.11 Results on Face -to -Face Interaction	174
12.12 Results on Face -to -Face Monitoring	176
13.13 Results on Technical Support	179
14.14 Results on Learner Assessment	181
15.15 Results on Learners Satisfaction with DE Programme	184
16.16 Independent sample t-test of the differences between UCC and KNUST DE Learners with respect to the Satisfaction of the Services provided by the Institutions	186
17.17 Test of Homogeneity of Variances	187
18.18 Robust Tests of Equality of Means	188
19.19 Summary of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)	188
20.20 Multiple Comparisons (The Post-Hoc Tests)	189
21.21 Test of Homogeneity of Variances	191

22.22	Robust Tests of Equality of Means	192
23.23	Summary of One-way of Analysis Variance (ANOVA)	192

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1.1 The convergent design framework	61
2.2 A Pie Chart Showing the Distribution of Respondents by Gender	157
3.3 A Bar Chart showing the distribution of respondents by Age	157
4.4 A Pie Chart showing the distribution of respondents by programme level	158
5.5 Means Plots	187
6.6 Means Plots	191

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The attainment of socio-economic status of a “knowledge Society” through the medium of education is a policy aspiration of most countries. Access to tertiary education provides the drive and mechanism for achieving this status. Most countries especially in Africa view distance education (DE) as a key strategy to increase access to tertiary education and researchers have highlighted the expansion of DE in many ways in this regard (World Bank, 2002). DE universities became more acceptable in the education sector with the establishment and success of the Open University of the United Kingdom in 1969. This brought DE closer to the mainstream education and encouraged other countries to establish such universities.

Perraton (2004) notes that by the late 1990s, there were over 30 open universities while a larger number of conventional universities have mounted DE programmes, attracting a lot of clientele. He indicated the varied use of DE for basic, secondary, tertiary and vocational training with the desire to widening access to education. The need for an increased access to tertiary education through DE is driven by the need for skilled manpower for development. This is propelled by economic, social developments and technological advancements. As governments and universities look for cost-effective ways to educate a nation, DE is increasingly being accepted as a viable option to the traditional mode of delivery and is becoming part of the education policy and institutional landscape.

Public universities in Ghana embraced DE as an alternative mode of delivery in 1996 through a government policy mandate to increase access to tertiary education. Thus, the public universities became dual mode universities, providing conventional and DE simultaneously. As dual mode universities, all academic programmes offered on the conventional mode, are replicated on the DE mode, using the same curriculum, course structure and content. However, the increasing numbers in enrolment without any expansion of infrastructure and other logistics support in the public universities in Ghana to deliver DE raises concerns by stakeholders of education. They question how DE is managed and the issue of quantity over quality. Institutional policies to guide DE implementation and the commitment to support DE learners in the universities also becomes a high-stake question.

There is much emphasis on policy issues on DE delivery in dual mode universities. King, Eich, Mlinek & Russell (2000) indicated in their case study of DE delivery framework that many basic questions to DE delivery in most dual mode universities remained unanswered especially in the institutional policy environments. To buttress these issues, Butcher (2013) also that generally, institutional policies for DE delivery are lacking in most dual mode universities in Africa. Butcher emphasized that most universities strive to provide quality alternate mode of instructional delivery through DE and enter the increasingly competitive race for admitting new students but two areas that often receive little attention are institutional policies and commitment development which are essential to the success of all DE programmes and their learners.

Simonson (2007) describes policies as a set of ideas that have been constructed into a coherent form, designed as a framework to address particular issues. The framework may contain specific mission and vision captured in a strategic. In broad terms, the framework determines the actions required to achieve expected goals. Policies exist within governments and institutions and may extend beyond all levels of society.

In the context of DE in dual mode universities, the mission of the university determines its expected role in the context of a national policy. The mission may be directed towards purposes, target groups, and educational levels depending on national values and educational philosophies. This calls for a national DE policy with a clear statement of principles, vision and mission that underpin the policy in practical terms. UNESCO, (2000) affirm that there is no single policy document that can meet all governments' needs and address all contexts. There are, however, generic elements that any DE policy should cover:

type of economy and the education system needed;

- trends in international developments in DE;
- key policy issues that need to be addressed.

In formulating institutional policies for DE in dual mode universities, the needs of the society, economy, and educational philosophy of the university, cost of materials to be developed, institutional management and accessibility to learners are factors worth considering in the policy document. This is important to ensure the universities' ability to effectively teach learners, provide information and counseling, plan for course development and delivery, monitor spending and develop budgetary, accounting systems and

effective strategies for change based on sound management principles, quality assurance and evaluation.

Clearly, national policies are not enough to serve as a framework to guide DE implementation in dual mode universities. They must be echoed at the institutional level to ensure all barriers militating against quality DE delivery are addressed through appropriate institutional policies development and a high degree of commitment to support DE learners to ensure parity of esteem. In most dual mode universities, decision to adopt DE as an alternate mode of delivery could be a source of debate and great care must be taken in the decision-making processes to ensure success. (UNESCO, 2000).

Gellman-Danley and Fetzner (1998) also add that the availability of the appropriate institutional policies in dual mode universities ensure that the focus of the university remains firmly on its core functions: teaching, learning and research. The authors describe institutional policies as providing the framework for operation, an agreed upon set of rules that explain all participants' roles and responsibilities in the operational system of the universities. They further identified several operational areas that institutional policies in the universities should be grouped. These include academic, faculty, fiscal, geographic service area, governance, legal and student- support services, technical strategy and philosophy.

Moreover, Dhanarajan (1992) opined that in formulating institutional policies, a dual mode university need to develop a vision which outlines why the University is embarking on a dual mode of operation, the type of learners and the impact DE hopes to have on the country. Dhanarajan suggests that dual

mode universities need to make a clear statement of its focus on DE as a formal institutional commitment to develop DE in order to balance the inequalities between the two modes by ensuring parity of esteem. It is here that course materials, instructional design options, student support services, course delivery modes and technology usage become important factors to be captured in the strategic of plans of the universities. These issues determine the level of institutional commitment towards DE delivery in any dual mode university.

To buttress this point, Siaciwena (1989), argues that the success of DE in dual mode universities largely depends on the attitude of staff and formal institutional commitment of the university towards DE. He believes that a solid policy environment with strong formal commitment shape the environments of dual mode universities to focus on their core mandates.

Koehler, Punyashloke, Hershey and Peruski (2004) mention that most dual mode universities all over the world have faced the challenge of developing good institutional policies, strategies to ensure institutional commitment to support DE learners. Institutional policies, faculty and commitment issues, in DE could be traced back to the early 1990s. For instance, Wolcott and Shattuck (2007) referenced early research work during this period that focused on faculty commitment in DE and what persuaded universities to adopt this mode of delivery. The findings of the study indicated that appropriate institutional policies and faculty support enhanced faculty commitment towards DE.

Moore and Kearsley (2005) identified administrative and operational barriers to DE at the national, regional, and institutional levels. These barriers include funding, monitoring, accreditation, institutional policies, faculty and learners, support, tuition payment, faculty promotion and tenure, problems of territoriality, collaborators rewards strategies, and the degree on institutional commitment.

Gellman-Danley (1998), further builds on these issues, confirming that state and higher education policy makers are facing many DE Issues. These include (1) who to formulate policies; (2) Implementers of policies; (3) Governing body to ensure compliance; (4) content policies; (5) Ability to learn current DE issues from others.

Rahman (2001) believes that the sustainability of DE in dual mode universities cannot happen without appropriate institutional policies, and the active commitment of management and student support services. All these issues must work in tandem to achieve institutional missions and goals.

Knowles (1980) argues that DE learners' behaviour is influenced by a combination of factors including their needs, characteristics and situation. Moodley (2000) mentions the negative attitudes to the stereotyping in distance learning and socio-economic barriers, such as poverty, place the DE learner at risk in most DE programmes. He explains that effective learning outcomes of DE programmes is dependent on the social and emotional wellbeing of learners. There is therefore the need for dual mode universities to recognize that some DE delivery problems may arise within the social, economic and political environments in which the learner lives and learns. This may impart

negatively on the learner's social and emotional wellbeing, placing the learner at risk of learning breakdown. Such factors greatly influence learner success as quality of programmes are affected negatively. The ability of the university to remove these barriers is greatly dependent on the availability of appropriate institutional policies and the commitment for supporting DE learners.

Cross (1991) affirmed that institutional barriers caused by the organisational set up of a university may be physical or non-physical. The physical barriers include issues such as proximity to study centres and other academic resources. Stringent admission requirements, high tuition fees and mode of payment, inadequate learning materials and poor organization of tutorials and examinations and the issues of 'distance' and the perception of alienation.

Galusha (2012) mentions that students of all kinds want to be part of a larger school community. For both traditional and distance students, being part of that community is an important part of their social lives but as part of institutional arrangements, dual mode universities tend to separate traditional students from DE students during university activities may create an illusion of "distance" from the perspective of DE learners.

The lack of support and services to DE learners also constitutes a major barrier. Support services are meant to support and facilitate DE learners' learning. This is essential because of the separation of the learner and the universities. Lehman (1998) affirms that there is the need for DE providers to create an enabling environment for learners, ensuring that all barriers are identified and eliminated. The ability of a dual mode universities to formulate

appropriate institutional policies with strong formal commitment and effective support systems will greatly determine the success of learners and the entire DE programmes they offer.

The Ghana government policy on tertiary education (1996) provides the policy framework for public universities to increase access to tertiary education through the DE mode. Hence the four public universities at that time became dual mode universities, providing conventional and distance education simultaneously. DE provision in public universities in Ghana since then is making a significant impact, increasing access to tertiary education per the government policy mandate. It is expected that the universities create enabling learning environments using appropriate institutional policies and a high degree of commitment to support DE learners. This is very important since access to conventional tertiary education in Ghana, is becoming increasingly competitive and expensive. DE presents the best option and should therefore be managed well by public universities providing the service, to enhance the prospects it holds for all stakeholders of education in Ghana. This study stresses that appropriate institutional policies, a higher degree of commitment and good support services, by dual mode public universities in Ghana will promote learner success and prevent learner attrition that characterizes DE delivery in most dual mode universities.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In distance education systems institutional policies provide the basis for almost all activities associated with providing education and training to DE learners. These policies are normally framed within national or regional

policies and an institutional mandate or mission. Nevertheless, many basic questions with regards to institutional policies and commitment to guide DE delivery in public dual mode universities in Ghana remained unanswered. Reviews of DE literature, including policy planning documents (Bates 2000; Berge, 1998; Epper 1999; Frantz & King 2000; Gellman-Danley, 1998; Gellman-Danley & Fetzner 1998; King, Nugent, Russell, & Lacy, 1999; Simonson, Smaldino, Albright, & Zevack 2000), conclude that dual mode universities in most countries lack a “system” perspective to institutional policies development and the commitment for quality DE delivery.

In Africa, Butcher,(2013) affirms that most dual mode universities strives to provide quality alternate mode of delivery through DE and enter into the increasingly competitive race for admitting students but two areas that often receive little attention are institutional policies and commitment which are essential to the success of all DE programmes and their students The author mentions that soon DE programmes are on the air waves or travelling through cyberspace, and unprepared DE educators find themselves in legal, academic, fiscal, logistical and union controversies . Butcher conclude her assertion by indicating that clearly, advanced institutional policies deliberation and commitment are essential to the success of all DE programmes in dual mode universities in Africa. She observed a range issues from no policies at all to the use of local strategies available in most dual mode universities in Africa.

To buttress this point, Osei et al (2013) corroborate this assertion by indicating that a major challenge to the success of DE delivery in public dual mode universities in Ghana is that there is lack of commitment on the part of the

universities to come out with specific DE policies. Yet, DE activities are based on the needs of campus-based students and faculty. However, the Commonwealth of Learning (2003) mentions that it is problematic to apply established campus-based institutional policies without adaptation to suit the context of DE. To this end it appears policy audit is usually not conducted to see the policies that work well for DE learners before public dual mode universities in Ghana change from single to dual mode. It therefore follows that although DE in public universities in Ghana is growing for the past decade, institutional policies and commitment for supporting DE learners are lacking.

The lack of systematic policy frameworks in the public universities to find any contradictions, redundancies and omissions to the advantage of DE learners, do not ensure that institutional policies consistently support all dual mode universities missions, goals and objectives (Osei et al, 2013). There is therefore a clear need for a well-planned, systematic framework of policies through which decisions on DE in public universities in Ghana could be made, highlighting a strong formal institutional commitment for supporting DE learners.

Moreover, it appears there have not been any institutional policies and commitment and support for DE learners in dual mode universities related research studies in Ghana. This is a research gap that needs bridging.

It is in this vein that this study sought to investigate: the institutional policies environments of public dual mode universities in Ghana. To ascertain the availability of institutional policies and the level of commitment for

supporting DE to ensure parity of esteem, devoid of learner attrition. The overarching research question to drive this study therefore was: What institutional policies and commitment exist in public universities in Ghana for supporting DE learners.

1.3 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate institutional policies guiding DE delivery in public dual mode universities in Ghana, and to find out the level commitment of the universities in supporting distance learners.

In order to address the statement of the problem, the following research objectives were formulated to guide the study:

1.4 Specific Objectives

The study sought to:

1. Explore the availability of institutional policies for DE delivery in public universities in Ghana.
2. Examine the institutional policy areas being addressed currently for DE delivery in public universities in Ghana.
3. Investigate how public universities in Ghana are committed in supporting DE learners.
4. Find out how DE learners are satisfied with the range of support services provided by the institution.
5. Determine the effectiveness of the institutional policies and the commitment in promoting DE learners 'success.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What institutional policies exist in public dual mode universities in Ghana for DE delivery?
2. What policy areas are currently addressed by public universities for DE delivery?
3. How are public universities committed in supporting DE learners on their programmes of studies?
4. How satisfied are the DE learners with support services provided by public dual mode universities?
5. How effective are the institutional policies and the commitment in promoting DE learner's success?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Critical to the success of the public dual mode universities in Ghana with regards to the provision of quality DE delivery is largely dependent on the use of appropriate institutional policies and a high degree of commitment and support to ensure that quality of DE programmes did not become second class to quantity.

This research study is one of the few in-depth studies on DE delivery in public universities in Ghana which focuses on institutional policies and commitment for supporting DE learners in dual mode universities. The study draws a picture of DE provision in a Ghanaian environment. It questions the relationship between institutional policies, commitment and support services for learners' support in the DE environments.

By analyzing the similarities, differences, discrepancies and gaps the goal of the study was to ascertain the availability of institutional policies for DE if

there any, investigate the level of institutional commitment for supporting DE learners. Recommendations from this study will help decision-makers to deal with institutional policies issues in DE environments of dual mode universities in Ghana. Findings from this study will also benefit planners and implementers of DE to plan comprehensively, in this era of frequent flux and constant change in the education land scape. This would help to structure robust and proactive policy frameworks to guide DE provision in the public universities in Ghana.

Although many Ghanaian authors (Ohene & Essuman, 2014; Akuamoah-Boateng & Sam-Tagoe, 2012, Badu Nyarko, 2010 & Addo Sampong, 2009) are writing about DE delivery in Ghana, there appears to be very little research work on institutional policies and commitment for supporting DE learners. Since interest in DE is growing in public dual mode universities in Ghana, studying the policy environments of the DE units and the level of commitment in supporting DE learners are very important. The findings of the study give decision makers of the public universities some guidelines to develop appropriate institutional policies and to display a strong formal commitment to support DE learners.

Finally, the results from the study could be used to share knowledge and insights about institutional policies and commitment towards learner support in dual mode universities based on Ghanaian experience. This could serve as a framework for researchers, practitioners and policy makers to adapt and use further activities. The results of the study may also contribute to new

knowledge and insights on institutional policies and commitment for supporting DE learners in public universities in Ghana and beyond.

1.7 Delimitations

Currently DE is delivered in four out of the eleven public universities in Ghana. These public universities responded to a government mandate in 1996 to expand access to tertiary education. They include University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah university of Science Technology, University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba. Programme delivery approaches, courses content and learner demographics differ in these universities. This study was delimited only to the Universities of Cape Coast and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, using Winneba as pilot. Findings (quantitative) of the study, however, could be generalized to cover all public dual mode universities in Ghana since institutional policies and support services for learners are not likely to differ as DE learners share commonalities in needs and aspirations. Finally, DE delivery in public universities in Ghana present several issues of concern that need investigation, but this study was restricted only to institutional policies commitment and student support services issues.

1.8 Limitations

In general, doing a research study in DE is challenged with many limitations that could be different from that of campus-based mode. For instance, it was difficult to reach out to most of the principal officers and most learners to respond to the interview schedule and questionnaire. The principal officers appeared to be too busy and DE learners were non-residents. It was not possible to reach all DE learners who are spread all over Ghana.

The study should have covered all four public universities mandated by government to expand access through DE in 1996. However, it was difficult to meet all learners and staff in all the public dual mode universities due to resource constraints and the difficulties in scheduling meetings at campuses and study centres.

Literature on DE delivery in Ghana is quite abundant, however, high quality research studies and academic papers on institutional policies and commitment for supporting distance learners in dual mode public universities conducted by Ghanaian researchers, appears to be limited. Many of the studies focus on theoretical discussions rather than solid empirical research studies in this area. Therefore, the selection of literature in this area to review relevant literature to this study was limited.

The bureaucratic working culture of the public universities sometimes made it difficult to readily obtain information. It was therefore difficult to ensure the reliability of some field data gathered.

Finally, data for this study was collected mainly from principal officers of the universities who by virtue of their positions served as “Key Informants” for this study. Respondents from other departments did not get the chance to participate in the study. Nevertheless, some information was obtained informally to enhance the study. Public universities partnerships with private entities continue to develop impact on universities policies and its commitment in supporting DE learners. This was not the focus of the study and did not affect the outcome.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Definitions of key terminologies to this thesis are provided below:

Institutional Policies: A written course of action, such as statutes, procedures, rules or regulations adopted by institutions to facilitate the operations and development of quality distance education programmes.

Learner Support Services: A wide range of human and non- human resources provided by distance learning institutions to guide and facilitate the educational process for learners' success.

Institutional Commitment: The willingness and ability of an institution to establish and integrate practicable distance education policies into its mandates or mission and ensuring programme quality and learners' success.

Distance Education: A teaching learning process in which the learner and the tutor are separated from each other but mediated by the learning materials and other intermediaries like media and technologically-based educational systems.

Single Mode Universities: Universities that operate entirely at a distance.

Dual Mode Universities: Universities that run both distance and face- to- face programmes.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

The study is organized in seven chapters. Chapter one presents the introduction, background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of study, research objectives, research questions, and significance of the study, followed by limitations, delimitations, and definitions of terms. Chapter Two reviews related literature on distance education, institutional policies for DE

delivery, institutional commitment for supporting Distance learners and student support services. Chapter Three gives the methodology used in the research study which includes the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques and the instruments for the data collection. Chapter Four and five offer a thorough analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected and a detailed description of the findings respectively. Chapter six summarizes and discusses the findings. Implications for practice and recommendations for further studies are finally dealt with in chapter seven.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter two begins with the conceptual and theoretical frameworks for the study, organization of dual mode universities. The dependent variables institutional policies and commitment and student support in DE programmes were then explored as major gaps that had already been identified and emphasized in literature as key factors influencing quality DE delivery.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.3 The Theory of Equivalency in Distance Education Delivery

This study is based on the Theory of Equivalency of Simonson, Schlosser, and Hanson (1999) for DE delivery in dual mode universities. This theoretical framework was applied to this study to find out its application in the design and implementation of DE in public universities when they became dual mode universities in Ghana.

Of critical importance is the need for DE programme/courses to be considered of higher quality and comparable to campus-based offered courses. Often the term equivalency is used when DE courses are compared to campus-based courses. Simonson et al. (1999) explain the equivalency theory by emphasizing that distance learners and conventional campus-based students have fundamentally different environments in which to learn. Yet just as the triangle and the square are considered equivalent if they have the same surface area even though they are quite different, distance and campus-based learners should be provided with equivalent learning experiences that may be quite different but “cover the same area with equivalent learning outcomes

comparable to the campus- based mode of delivery”. Learning experiences are anything that happens to the learner to promote learning, it includes what is observed, felt, heard, or done (Simonson, et al., 1999).

Simonson et al. (1999) further mentioned that equivalent is not the same as equal according. Rather, equivalent experiences could be similar or considerably different. The key issue to the equivalency theory is that the totality of the learning experiences for each learner should cover the same area, even if the individual experiences might be quite different. Any attempt to make learning experiences equal for DE learners and campus- based students is an exercise in futility. Therefore, instructional designers for DE should create multiple learning experiences that could be selected by learners to achieve course objectives. Also, institutional policies for DE should support the concept of equivalency rather than equal learning experiences to guide the institutional policies formulation and other activities in the DE environments of dual mode universities.

Simonson et al. (1999) further emphasize that the more equivalent the experiences of DE learners are to those of campus -based students, the more equivalent will be the outcomes of the learning experiences for all learners irrespective of delivery mode. They argue that this approach to DE delivery advocates for the designing of a collection of equivalent learning experiences for both DE and campus-based learners though the experiences may not be the same. It therefore follows that the DE units of dual mode public universities in Ghana should show a high level of formal institutional commitment in applying the theory of equivalency in their operational activities to reflect equivalent learning experiences for learners of the two modes if they are to

succeed as dual mode universities. The public universities whose institutional policies were examined in this study were all dual universities with government mandate to provide services to conventional and distance learners simultaneously.

Most public universities all over the world exist in two principal forms: single mode or dual mode. These categories exist depending on the purpose of the university, its levels of operation and technology use. (Perraton, 1991; Rumble & Latchem, 2004) mention that the core values, vision, mission and traditions of a university determines its compatibility with DE. Dual mode universities with its remarkable contribution to accessibility and equity, suggest a system of two distinct delivery modes. One completely devoted to in-person education and the other to education at a distance. Croft (1992) advocates for the need for dual mode universities to make new commitment to the importance of teaching and learning, a commitment aided by the new partnerships between the two delivery modes to support learner success and for institutional growth.

In dual mode universities the administration of DE units integrates with the mainstream administration while teaching integrates with academic departments of the conventional mode. In most cases, a department or unit adds to the conventional structure to administer the distance mode while power and authorities remain with the conventional administrative system. Croft (1992) believes that as part of the evolutionary process, there is the need for dual mode universities to make a strong internal formal institutional commitment to the realities of DE and to bring the best of their strengths and

experiences to the mix, using appropriate institutional policies in order for DE learners to be fully supported.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

2.5 A Policy Analysis Framework for Distance Education Delivery

To examine the institutional policies and commitment in supporting DE learners in public universities in Ghana more closely, a policy analysis framework was selected as a lens to look at the institutional policies and commitment available for supporting DE learners in public universities in Ghana. The conceptual framework for the study is shown in Table 1. The framework guided the formulation of research objectives, research questions, design, methodology, data analysis and reporting. It provided guidance in looking at policy structures and identifying essential policy areas, activities and processes that may be fundamental to DE delivery in dual mode public universities in Ghana which was the focus of this study.

The frameworks (PAF) have been used and evaluated in many DE delivery systems and they appear to be useful in investigating the DE wings of dual mode universities. Seven institutional policies areas with key issues for attention in DE environment were used.

Table 1 shows the policy areas and key issues.

2.6 Policy Areas and Key Issues

Table 1.1: Distance Education Policy Analysis Framework

Policy Development Area	Key Issues
	A. Students
1. Academic Policies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Admission policies 2. Grading policies 3. Academic records
	1. Evaluation
B. Faculty	2. Credentials
	1. Accreditation
C. Curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Course/program approval 3. Course/program evaluation 4. Carnegie unit determination
	A. Fiscal
II. Fiscal, geographic, and governance policies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tuition collection and disbursement 2. Special fees 3. Safe funding 4. Administrative costs 5. Telecommunications costs
	1. In-district vs. out-of-district
B. Geographic	2. Consortia agreements
	1. Board oversight
C. Governance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Consortia contracts 3. Provider contracts
	1. Design and development incentives
III. Faculty policies	2. Overload compensation
	1. Course evaluation
B. Evaluation	2. Promotion and contract
	3. Intellectual freedom
	1. Staff development/training
	2. Course/program support
	3. Local facilitators

Table 1.1 Continued

	A. Intellectual property
IV. Legal policies	B. Copyright
	C. Liability
	1.Student
	2.Faculty
	3.School
	A. Academic
V. Student policies	1.Advising
	2.Resources and laboratories
	3.Training
	4.Testing and assessment
	B. Nonacademic
	1.Equipment and software
	2.Financial aid
	3.Privacy
	4.Access and equity
	A. System
VI. Technical policies	B. Contractual agreements
	A. Vision
VII. Philosophical policies	B. Mission
	C. Activities

Source: Berge, (1998) Gellman- Danley&Fetzer (1998) King et al (2000).

Four policy analysis frameworks were reviewed and adapted as a framework for this study. The frameworks are compared in Table 1.1.

Table 2.2: Comparison of policy categories from previous studies

Policy categories	Berge 1 998	Gellman- Danley& Fetzner 1998	Berge	King et. al 2000
Private industry	X			
Competency based	X			
Governance	X	X	X	X
Labour/management/administration	X		X	X
Accreditation	X			
Training	X			
Funding/Fiscal	X	X	X	X
Consumerism	X			
Academic		X	X	X
Geographic		X	X	
Legal		X	X	
Student support services		X	X	X
Technical			X	X
			X	X

(Adapted from Gellman-Danley and Fetzner, 1998; Berge, 1998)

The authors of the framework had indicated that the PAF is a good tool to investigate the policy environments of dual mode universities. Shermis (2011) supports this idea with her quantitative study on the connection between

faculty support for DE programmes and institutional policies at post-secondary colleges in Florida used the PAF for her study. She found out that the most basic barriers to quality distance education provision in dual mode universities were the lack of faculty and student support. Other authors who used the PAF for research studies include Gunasekera (2014), Osei et al. (2013) and Haughey (2008). Against this background, the researcher was convinced that since the afore-mentioned studies, were similar to the this study, the PAF appears to be the most appropriate framework for this study, hence its selection.

2.9 Importance of Institutional Policies in DE Delivery

Every public university has existing policies, procedures and organisational structure and the laws under which it was established, binding on all operational activities. State laws provides the authority for the formulation institutional policies and in some cases dictate the overall purpose of a university, its governance systems and responsibility for certain activities which may include DE delivery (COL, 2004).

DE institutional policies are written course of actions adopted by an institution to facilitate the development DE programmes (King, Nugent, Eich, Mlinek & Russell, 2000). Institutional policies are formal, general statements of intent, goals and objectives that guide the activities, behaviour and attitudes of an institution and its staff. The summary of the two explanations reveal some form of guidance accruing from the use of policies by universities DE delivery. Good institutional policies need to reflect the mission and vision of the institution and must be consistent with government, regional or national

legislations. Most institutional policies are not available at the start of a dual mode establishment (COL, 2003).

COL (2003) further argues that DE programmes must be guided by institutional policies that specifically address DE learners' needs after addressing the wider national policy context for guidance. However, there is also the need to review whether, and to what extent, existing institutional policies are appropriate for Distance Education provision. This call for the conduction of institutional policy audit which the report maintains should be conducted to:

- Consider how the University's mission and vision foster or inhibits DE delivery.
- Determine the values of the University that should govern its Distance Education component.
- Identify areas where policies need to be revised or areas needing institutional policies specific to DE delivery.

Furthermore, COL (2003) indicates that institutional policies should specify that all learning opportunities provided by accredited dual mode universities, should have the same quality, accountability and focus on learners out comes whether they are delivered electronically or blended. The intent of the institutional policies is to provide a framework that allows the universities the flexibility to adapt their delivery modes to the emerging needs of DE learners and all stakeholders while maintaining quality. It is expected that any dual mode university offering DE meets the requirement of accreditation in each of its courses and programmes. The report added that;

The universities are expected to:

- Develop, implement and evaluate all courses and programme within the universities' total educational mission.
- Control development, implement and evaluate all courses and programme for both Distance Education and campus based programmes.
- Have clearly defined and appropriate student learning outcomes for all courses and programmes.
- Provide the resources and structures needed to accomplish these outcomes.
- Demonstrate a higher level of commitment that will enable their learners to achieve these outcomes through the application of rigorous assessment.

Overall, the institutional policies and procedures must ensure that DE learners have an off-campus educational experience as the students on campus, such as campus bookstores, libraries, computer laboratories and other institutional facilities that aid learning. Most often, the organizational leader of a DE programme is responsible for a supportive learning environment for DE learners and to ensure parity of esteem. A leader of a DE programme could be described as:

“A visionary leader capable of actions which guide the organization's future, its vision, mission, goals, and objectives. The leader guides the organization and its people who have trust in the leader and have a clear understanding and acceptance of the organizations' worthwhile and shared vision and goals. A Distance Education leader has competence in knowing, designing, managing, leading and visioning distance education” (Simonson et al, 2004).

In distance education systems institutional policies provide the basis for almost all activities associated with providing education and training to learners. Institutional policies provide a framework for the operation for distance education. Institutional policies could be compared to laws of navigation, rules of the road, or language syntax. They provide a standard method of operation. Institutional policies therefore give structure to unstructured events and are natural steps in the adoption of an innovation, such as distance education. They form a set of agreed-on rules that explain roles and responsibilities in Distance Education universities as organizations (Simonson et al, 2004). Rogers (2003) opined that the institutionalization of a new idea of distance education delivery includes the development of institutional policies for the use of the innovation. While Dodds (1996) also affirms that one key indicator that distance education is moving into the mainstream is the emphasis on the need for good institutional policies to guide its growth.

Institutional policies are normally framed within the national policy framework and the institution's mandate and mission. But policies that govern a university's relationships with its main components are usually established by the university. Such policies recognize the peculiar nature of DE with the physical gap between the university and its learners which often necessitates a view of teaching and supporting activities that are very different from conventional mode (Berge, 1998). Berge further mention that key to ensuring a university's mission is carried out and institutional policies appropriately implemented is to develop a strategic plan indicating the mandate of the university, its clients, and what they do better than their competitors. He

indicates that if a university cannot succinctly explain what they do better especially to their prospective clientele the university is not likely to achieve its goal and mission. Berge believes when a university clearly know what they do, it is much easier to assess what they should be doing, which is often an issue addressed in the strategic plan. If the strategic plan fails to analyze the role clientele play, success or failure of the plan, the likelihood of the university's success is minimal at best. The strategic plan is one primary instruments for formulation of institutional policies it provides the framework for allocating, managing resources, accommodating institutional change and development. Berge believes that institutional policies in the strategic plan need to address such questions as:

- Mandates and mission statement for distance education?
- Strategic planning for DE?
- Faculty policies issues in the DE unit?
- Institutional policies helping to manage institutional change?
- Institutional policies issues relating to resources allocation in DE?
- Main DE learners' policies issues?
- Copyright and ownership issue arise in DE? (Berge, (1998)

Kinyanjui (1998) argued that aligned with national development plans and the mandate of the university, institutional policies should promote, encourage, and support DE programmes and associated technologies, infrastructure, and capacity building. Additionally, institutional policies for DE should help enhance effectiveness and the management of DE at minimal economic and social costs. Non consideration of any one of the above- mentioned issues will usher any DE programme into transactional distance.

2.10 Institutional Policies Issues in Distance Education Delivery

Policies issues crop up in dual mode universities whether it is recently introduced or well established. DE programmes must be guided by institutional policies that specifically address its needs. Perraton (1991) opined that effective organization and management of a DE programme need to start with institutional policies formulation and control. This has to do with creating the necessary administrative structures through which institutional policies governing DE delivery may be formulated. This may involve entrusting with some people, holding certain positions with the responsibility of DE in the university to proceed according to the university's strategic plan and its overall mission. Perraton further indicated that a dual mode university especially need to clearly address the overall role and purpose of DE in its institutional profile, if it to achieve all of its strategic goals and objectives. The COL report (2004) reported that some years back, a Commonwealth University used established on- campus institutional policies and procedures for its DE programme. The goal the initiative was quality control and academic integrity, but the result at the end of the day was an administrative confusion. The report revealed that the time needed to communicate at a distance meant that neither staff nor the DE learners were able to meet deadlines slated by the institutional policies. Most of the learners were not officially registered at the start of face- to-face tutorials, as they received study materials and other administrative services many weeks late. In some cases, some DE learners missed examination deadlines before they could have the chance to register resulting in academic and administrative confusion. This is a clear indication that there is the need for DE and campus-based learners are to operate in different learning environments though there may have equivalent

learning experience at end of their programmes as suggested in literature by Simonson et al (1999) based on the equivalency Theory.

Perraton (1991) also corroborate the above-mentioned idea when he mentioned that in most dual mode universities, DE is a small, peripheral component or may be a recent development as such, its policies must be constantly reviewed and adapted, or new policies developed to accommodate changes in the institution's practices. He again stated that an institution's DE institutional policies must take into account the reality that DE is different from campus –based mode of education in the way it is taught, how the materials are delivered to learners, and how the learners actually learn and interact with their teachers/facilitators and each other. Perraton further indicated that institutional policy makers must also consider how DE institutional policies are influenced and shaped by state or national policies, new technologies, accreditation requirements, institutional legislation and existing internal policies and procedures.

State or national policies according to (COL, 2013) can mar or make effective DE institutional policies development. For example, national policies such as restricting how public funding for public universities may be used, by excluding activities important for DE, may hinder effective Distance Education institutional policies development. State or national policies that can help effective DE policies development may include establishing and maintaining access to Information Communication Technology networks, for instance. National policies on Information Communication Technology (ICT) development and their use in dual mode universities could also have direct

consequences on DE delivery and may vary from country to country. In a review of national ICT policy for DE in eight countries of Southern Africa, Neil Butcher (2013) observed a range from no policy at all to local strategies and specific policies were available for DE delivery in most countries. Butcher affirmed that generally, institutional policies for DE delivery are lacking in most tertiary educational institutions in Africa.

Butcher (2013) again indicates that as most tertiary institutions strive to provide quality alternative instructional delivery mode through Distance Education and enter the increasingly competitive race for admitting new students, two areas that often receive little attention are institutional policies development and planning. The author continues that soon the courses are on the air waves or travelling through cyberspace, and unprepared educators find themselves in legal, academic, fiscal, logistical and union controversies. Butcher concludes by indicating that clearly, advanced institutional policies deliberation and development are essential to the success of all DE programmes and their learners.

Brey (1991) institutional policies asserts that most educators know that even a minor mid-stream institutional policies skirmish could draw the focus of DE programmes away from their most critical core values or concerns (teaching and learning). He maintained that good institutional policies could provide a framework for operation, an agreed upon set of rules that explain all participants' roles and responsibilities in the DE enterprise.

Gellman-Danley et al mention that these policies can be grouped in several operational policy areas; they offer seven key policy areas as academic, fiscal,

geographical, governance, faculty, legal and student support services and philosophical

2.11 Policy Categories for Distance Education Delivery

The seven constructs of institutional policies areas for distance education delivery by Gellman-Danley and Fetzner, 1998; King, Nugent, Eich et al. (2000).

Academic Policies Issues: Academic policy issues form the foundation of institutional policies in many ways and that explains why they are critical to any educational institution. Academic policies in educational institutions concern students, instruction delivery, curriculum, and programmes/courses. Academic policies probably have the longest and most widespread impact on students as they learn to obtain certificates and progress on the education ladder. Academic policies help in ensuring that institutional integrity is maintained.

The common DE delivery method is the integrated approach where the same procedures used for DE are also used for the conventional mode. Instead of developing institutional new structures and policies for DE the intent is to modify existing policies, structures and regulations, to integrate DE into the culture of the institution. Flexibility is also a necessary aspect of the integrated approach. Faculty, administrators, and policy makers should recognize that changes in delivery mode do not reflect a weakening system or that modification is not a threat to integrity. Rather, the policy changes necessary for the development of DE are just part of the shifting paradigm of the institution to accommodate the innovation.

Watkins and Schlosser (2000) describe the processes of how DE courses could be compared to traditional campus-based mode of delivery where “seated time” is measured. They authors believe that once the institutional commitment to DE is made, academic policies needs to be reviewed and DE requirements integrated into the institutions regulations. The development of curriculum and the approval process differ by countries. In some countries approval of programmes is only one-time, with no difference between delivery modes. Other countries require that DE programmes are approved separately. Some institutions may deliver DE courses away from their home campus without seeking formal permission from regulatory bodies.

Berge et al, (1998) recommend that abiding by national policies is obviously advisable, and if the institutional policies are not appropriate, there is the need to advocate for change, otherwise DE delivery will be negatively affected. To this end, the objective of the institutions is to review institutional policies and recommend the needed changes to accommodate nation-wide DE initiatives. Academic policies include evaluation of the learner and the instructor/facilitator. If a course or programme is taken at a distance, evaluation is essential for the successful continuous improvement of the curriculum and the delivery method. Learner evaluation is varied in light of test proctoring and assurance of learners’ integrity. For any programme, in any institution conventional or DE, is likely to be successful if it is developed on a strong needs assessment and programme review. Institutional policies to ensure that these processes are followed inherently improve a DE programme. It must be determined whether conventional programme evaluation addresses all delivery formats at once, or, if DE efforts require separate review and assessment.

Another issue on academic policies according to Watkins et al, (2000) is the issue of transcripts, which appear to be simple at first, but it requires sound planning in order to serve DE learners fairly. The transcript usually does not designate the mode in which the course was offered. However, policies guiding the provision of transcripts in DE environments and the conventional mode must be the same. Further, Berge et al, (1998) question how in dual mode universities, such as the public universities in Ghana, providers of DE cannot provide transcripts for its DE learners using the same institutional policies and procedures. The authors again question how the same personnel who handle students' transcripts of the conventional could handle DE. Attention to academic issues is essential when developing effective institutional policies at the local, national and consortium levels for dual mode universities. Learners need the guaranteed commitment of the institutions, regardless of delivery mode.

Fiscal Geographic and Governance policies issues: The central issue behind most fiscal, geographic, and governance policies is ownership- ownership of the courses, the learners, and curriculum. The section of the university with ownership has the responsibility on fiscal geographic and governance issues and final decisions. In most dual mode universities, the central administration has the ownership of DE. With ownership comes the question of cost. Institutional policies should cover revenue sharing of incomes accruing from DE activities in dual mode universities. Persons responsible for fixing fee schedules, collection, monitoring expenditures patterns and reviews must be spelt out in the fiscal policies of the universities. Agreement to regularly expenditure pattern could be made in good faith to review expenses and

income yearly or quarterly, it is easier to establish a good fiscal plan. Institutional policies are needed to clarify how such situations are to be dealt with. In some countries, the Ministry of Education recommends the tuition fees, while other applicable charges are retained by the DE University. Berge et al, (1998) recommends this arrange as sound since dual mode universities bears the fiscal burden for course development, academic integrity of curriculum, course delivery, information system, and student support services. Simonson et al, (1999) also argues that most fiscal institutional policies fall into the categories of establishing costs and fair distribution of revenue among participating units of a dual mode universities. They further affirm that often state policy regulations dictate the necessary fiscal decisions. However, it is recommended that universities also have the flexibility to set reasonable, competitive fees for DE courses.

A difficult administrative task of mode DE universities is the determination of geographic service areas. Conventionally dual mode universities clearly identify areas they serve, such as districts, regions or countries. Institutional policies that set geographic limits for the institution needs to be clarified or altered when universities become dual mode in the early days of DE, geographic service areas were more relevant than today. However, many universities still have regulations that determine their physical boundaries for admitting and serving learners. However, cyberspace respects no borders, and new institutional policies are needed to modernize dual mode universities definition of geographical service areas. For instance, (Feisel et al, 1998) recommend that dual mode universities providing DE should not be restricted

by geographic service areas. However, institutions are strongly encouraged to collaborate and establish partnerships with other similar institutions.

Governance is closely related to finances and geography. This policy area has to with kind university board responsible for the management of DE to ensure decorum in the DE environments of dual mode universities. Institutional policies should be put in place to clarify this issue before problems emerge. DE programmes usually fall under the governance rules of the main universities. However, consortia arrangements challenge many of these regulations. When consortia are formed among many universities, several boards become involved. In some cases, existing structures are reconfigured, or new governance structures are formed, to oversee the new instructional delivery modes.

Staffing is also relevant to governance policies issues. One model allows for the conventional university structure to oversee the DE. Others add a similar, but new, department or unit with responsibility for oversight. Still others set up a "shadow college" or enclave that provides opportunities for revenue and for hiring of faculty not necessarily on the current staff. Simonson et al, (1999) maintain that well-run DE programmes take time to develop or reformulate strong governance infrastructures before the courses are offered. Advanced policy deliberation and development is extremely important in dual mode universities.

Faculty Policy Issues: This is one of the most difficult areas for policy makers, in most dual mode universities especially if faculty is unionized. More often existing labour- management policies are extended to cover DE and may

include many of the toughest questions that need to be asked. Some universities prefer to operate DE under existing labour-management agreements, while others struggle to create new guidelines. Clearly, faculty deserves recognition for their efforts and expertise in working with distance learners, and until DE becomes mainstream and expected of all faculty, policies need to be put in place that clarify DE responsibilities.

Key issues in faculty policies include class size, compensation, incentives, recognition of intellectual property of faculty payments, and other workloads issues among others. Many authors recommend that labour- management policies be kept flexible, since many issues in this area are difficult to anticipate (Gellman-Danley & Fetzner, 1998). However, faculty issues should be settled promptly to avoid complex challenges later. Once again, the concept of integration is important. Integrating DE faculty policies with conventional labour- management policies seem to be best strategy in most cases.

Legal Issues: Staff of most dual mode universities are ignorant about the legal issues associated with DE delivery (Gellman et al., 1998). Policies regarding copyright and fair use, liability for inappropriate use of technology, and intellectual property rights are important to be established for DE. When units, courses, are offered by DE, they are easily scrutinized, and violations are apparent. In addition to setting clear policies related to these issues, many dual mode universities are developed comprehensive staff development training programmes that relate with copy right and liability.

Simonson et al. (1999) argue that ownership of intellectual property is an important issue in DE delivery. When courses or portions are packaged for DE learners, the question on the owner of the “package” becomes more obvious than when students enter a lecture room in the traditional on campus mode. On the other side of the issue are those who emphasize the property side of the intellectual property equation. This group often argues that the main university is the owner of any work produced by faculty during working hours and where the institution’s resources are used. At the other extreme end are those who feel the contribution of knowledgeable faculty (the intellectual component of intellectual property) is most important. This camp advocates course ownership by faculty.

Most would agree that both elements are necessary and neither extreme best serves the university. Simonson et al. (2000). Often, policies that mandate sharing any profits after expenses with faculty who develop DE learning materials are best. The Exact split for sharing should be negotiated, and the policies should be developed before the courses are offered.

Student Support Services Issues: Offerman (2007) maintains that the area of student support services is central to the success of any DE programme. He argues that student support services should be integrated. In other words, policies related to DE learners should be reflected in the general student policies. However, there is need to modify the general policies to accommodate the DE learners’ needs. DE learners should to be able to access support services outside of regular official hours. Communication channels need to be established and be available to all learners. Library and media

center resources should be available to everyone, and computer laboratories should be of equal quality. Often overlooked, is student support policies issues which have direct impact on prospective and current DE learners. Dual mode universities need to develop DE institutional policies on learners' guidance, counseling, library, marketing, materials delivery, textbooks, training and test proctoring. Feisel et al. (1998) suggest that it is prudent that departments and faculties in the dual mode universities work vigorously and cooperatively with the main DE unit to provide all related student support services for DE learners. They argue that this recommendation allows the universities some flexibility with all areas - particularly with guidance, counseling and library usage, the marketing of courses, delivery of materials, and test proctoring. Feisel et al. (1998) believe that learning at a distance often require the collaborative efforts and high degree of institutional commitment to support learners' success.

Gellman et al. (1998) maintain that it is important that DE learners are supported well by the institutional policies and a higher degree of commitment in order to maintain the same learner-centered focus as on-campus student support service policies. The authors believe that dual mode universities must determine in advance the unit of the university to attend to learners' questions (that can originate 24-hours each day) from learners who have difficulties with several critical areas. These may include computer-related connection problems, registration problems, undelivered course modules, advising options and many other similar complains. The examination issues - including policies regarding staffing requirements, test material delivery and test retrieval - also

must be agreed to by all stakeholders prior to course implementation of the DE programme.

Gellman et al. (1998) further argue that it is critical that current institutional policies on student support services be reviewed with the DE learners in mind. They suggested that it may be helpful to work through the steps that learners must take to learn about enrollment, participation and successfully complete a DE programme. The use of several DE scenarios such as that of Malaysia, Japan, China and South Africa may be instructive in this effort. Regardless of the delivery mode employed, learners' needs must be kept in focus. COL (2004) corroborates this argue by declaring that strong institutional policies on student support services and commitment can greatly increase the probability that this will continue to be the case.

The report further indicated that advanced institutional policies development is a key component of a well-run DE initiative. DE institutional policy issues at first may seem minor, yet they often become the major stumbling block to a successful DE programme delivery. The need for advanced institutional policies with higher degree of commitment to offset potential policy pitfalls, and contribute to the quality, rigor and strength of DE provided to learners (COL, 2003).

2.12 Institutional Commitment for Distance Education Delivery

Institutional commitment is essential to developing and sustaining distance programmes. Successful DE delivery requires the support of all primary stakeholders. Offerman (2007) notes that this support becomes critical for universities embarking DE delivery. Such universities must display enough

degree of institutional commitment to enable learners who enroll on the programme to have a reasonable opportunity to complete the programme of study successfully. He argues that this is important as DE uses delivery mechanisms that allows learners to participate in the programme without being on campus. The learners, faculty, and administration of the university must understand and support the DE programme. This support is most often gained if there is clarity of purpose as to why the DE mode of delivery been adopted; expected outcomes of the programme; contribution of outcomes to the mission, vision, and the long- term strategic plan of the dual mode universities ; academic quality assurance measures; impact of the use of DE delivery will have on the experiences of learners and faculty; student support system in place; and costs management.

The primary stakeholders play important roles at the stages of programme- introduction, implementation, and ongoing maintenance. These stakeholders play shifting roles as gate- keepers, pioneers, and veterans. It is important the primary stakeholders are given enough information and engaged in the decision- making process to commit themselves fully to the DE programme. Offerman (2007) again notes that if it not clear to the stakeholders how the DE is intended to work, that quality assurance issues addressed, and all steps taken to ensure a positive experience by using DE, then the risk is not only that they will not support the idea but they will actively resist it and thereby thwart the effort of the universities in using DE as an alternate mode of instructional delivery.

Offerman (2007) believes DE delivery have passed the initial, experimental phase and all stakeholders understand what can and cannot be done with the use DE as an alternate mode of delivery in dual mode universities. There are acceptable established best practices, and DE is widely seen as a viable means to deliver high-quality programmes than a risky, cutting edge experiment. Indeed, DE is rapidly becoming popular in tertiary education, supported by clients, faculty, and administrators. Basically, institutional commitment involves the alignment between the missions, vision and strategic plans a dual mode university and planning for the DE mode of delivery. The strategy must consider the impact on faculty and learners; it must ensure that DE delivery procedures conform to the standards of the university and subjected to similar quality-assurance processes and measurements as the conventional campus-based mode.

Croft (1992) argues that institutional commitment is demonstrated and achieved when DE is clearly vetted, understood, and articulated with faculty and learners. Institutional commitment requires key stakeholders be engaged in decision making and assessment of the planning and implementation of DE programmes dual mode universities. Institutional commitment also requires financial planning for DE, identifying programme cost development, faculty support, student support, and quality assurance.

Offerman (2007) is of the view that much could be learned from the early innovators by avoiding their mistakes adopting and adhering to established best practices. The lessons to be learned could help the universities to avoid the practice of merely rushing to embark on a DE because it appears everyone

else is rushing offer DE instead of developing a clear strategy that is grounded in the long-term plans of the university, faculty and learners. Time must be spent on answering the very basic question about just what the university seeks to achieve by embarking on DE.

2.13 Stakeholders

At the start of a DE programme, learners, faculty, finance, and services administrators serve as key stakeholders. The role of the stakeholders is important in ensuring adequate planning and commitment is ultimately gained. Initial preparations are most done by a limited number of faculty and administrators, the DE programme must not be the idea and efforts of only a few people. Rather, the efforts many stakeholders seeking out ways to ensure programme success rather than trying to block the programme. There is the need for some Alumni of DE to help with initial development, but this idea will not succeed unless these pioneers champions the course; and this can occur only if the experience of teaching and learning in the programme is a positive one. It is critical to conceptualize the development, delivery, and ongoing support of the DE programme from the perspective of the learners and faculty. These are the people who will live inside the programme and experience it in very real ways on daily basis. It is not enough to embrace DE because others are doing it, or because it is fashionable. It is essential that everyone understands why DE being embraced, the approached, and the importance of the quality of the education and the experience.

2.14 Faculty

Teaching faculty including course tutors/facilitators on the DE also need to understand their expectations, required support, and expected experience. The

first issue for faculty is the impact of workload, how courses will be developed: help available and recognition of contributions. While there are varying approaches to course design, most programmes engage instructional designers who work with faculty, taking on much of the technical work involved in course development. The faculty member is expected to be the subject-matter expert who focuses on content, works with the designers on teaching learning materials and delivery strategies, and defines how to assess learning and provide feedback to learners. The use of designers or developers helps to reduce the workload impact on the faculty and provides design expertise to encourage the development of robust courses.

The role of faculty is the actual course delivery and instruction in the DE environment. Offerman (2007) notes that unless well planned, developed, and delivered, the DE courses can be more demanding than the conventional campus-based mode, if for no other reason than the learners' increased need for substantive feedback and interaction. Faculty development can help faculty learn techniques for managing the DE courses and providing reasonable levels of feedback. There is a danger that learners' expectations may reach the level of assuming that any question should result in immediate and detailed feedback. This expectation is obviously not realistic if it means that the individual faculty member must reply every query. Regardless of the workload-impact issues, quality issues are usually a priority for faculty. Efforts to address these concerns pay off in the form of faculty commitment to, and even championing of the DE programme (Offerman, 2007).

2.15 Administrators

Administrators have expectations that need to be addressed. Academic administrators need assurance that quality is being addressed and on-going data allows analysis and comparison with programmes. Student support services leaders need to understand the changed dimensions for time and place of D delivery. Technical leaders are critically important and must be involved at the early stages of DE planning. They need assurance of their expectations and technology available, reasonable and affordable, in terms of both initial acquisition and ongoing management. Finally, finance leaders will want to look at all costs and revenue to assess the fiscal viability of a proposed programme. All of these important stakeholders must be engaged, and one best to ensure such engagement is, to use existing and known institutional policies, processes and procedures.

2.16 Alumni

One other stakeholder group that should be kept in mind is alumni of the university when mounting DE programme. The introduction of any new programme in any institution is of interest to the alumni, and the addition of a new method of delivery may add to that interest. For instance, alumni may be concerned that a Distance Education programme could create a negative perception of their alma mater. It is important that they be adequately informed about the programme and, even better, engaged in the decision-making process.

A major theme running through all the policy frameworks presented in literature for DE delivery is the need for sustained institutional commitment to support distance learners. Offerman (2007) notes that by the nature of DE

programmes and what learners need in order to have a reasonable chance of attaining their aspirations in a given programme; there is need for an institution wide commitment to Distance Education learners in dual mode universities. Institutional commitment is essential to developing and sustaining the success of learners in Distance Education programmes. Dual mode institutions must demonstrate higher level of commitment towards learner success. He argues that dual mode universities differ from single mode universities, such as the great Open Universities, in one critical dimension. They are not generally established to serve distance learners. That is typically a commitment entered at some point after the institution is operating conventionally with on- campus provision.

Bruce King (2012) in support of Offerman's arguments asserts that dual mode provision of Distance Education is challenged in various ways not only by the impact of new technologies, but the commitment to serving distance education learners who are genuinely at a distance from the physical parent universities. King (2000) further opined that dual universities must demonstrate a strong formal commitment to its core values and mission that emphasize the achievement of learners' learning communicating the mission internally and externally. Explicitly or implicitly, each university chooses its mission as it faces a wide range of opportunities within a range of specific context and resources limitations. Distance Education programmes may serve different learner populations and may utilize different educational technology or learning approaches from the parent university. Such programmes according to Offerman, (2007) should contribute to the overall high-quality of the parent university anchored in its mission and vision. He further opined that

a common reason for most institutions to undertake Distance Education is to make available to learners who might otherwise be denied the opportunity for reasons such as geographical barriers, employment demands and confinement. Furthermore, Offerman (2007) suggests that institutions should ask how Distance Education degrees impact on the university and how Distance Education degrees enhance or detract from the value of other degrees. The institution must ensure that Distance Education outcomes are of comparable quality with the conventional on-campus based programmes. Not only that, the author further mentioned that thinking carefully about how Distance Education learning fits with the mission and the objectives of the university is very important, it can assist in making the choices among delivery techniques, marketing, content and other characteristics. The author, however, cautions that well-crafted mission statements cannot substitute the full commitment of the staff of the university in the implementation of a Distance Education programme. In the end, programme quality is determined by the actions taken proactively by the leadership in dual mode universities.

The role of leadership from the top is the driving force behind institutional success. Inspiring leaders are “dynamic, flexible, precise and are able to work with people, anticipate, accommodate and make decisions” (Fast, 1977, p.38); they look to the future and provide what is expected of them to the institution with leadership appropriate to the times (Murphy, 1984). A more diverse distance education learning environment begins with the commitment to this goal by the university’s governing Board and the Distance Education College Provost or Head. Murphy, (1984) believes that in higher education as in most dual mode universities in the world, it is the institution’s leadership that must

manage the challenges and the energy as well as the directions to meet the goals and objectives of the university. Dedicated individuals among faculty, staff and administration can have a profound effect on the lives of individual Distance Education learners, but their influence is limited to the sphere in which they work. Achieving diversity from Distance Education learners from different backgrounds in the Distance Education learning environment demands an institution-wide commitment. (Kelly, 1989) opined that this fundamental commitment must be expressed in the institution's mission statement. The development of a mission statement, although often expressed in broad terms, should include the concept of equivalency in a way that does not relegate the Distance Education learners to the periphery in dual mode universities.

On the part of Cole (1990), the goal of bringing DE learners from different backgrounds into the DE environment is communicated to the governing Board of the university, faculty, staff and learners through the Head of the DE unit's actions and words. The author believes that it is the Head of the DE unit's demonstrated personal belief in the whole philosophy of distance education that will set the tone for the DE environment and send the message that DE learners are welcome to the university. Bennis (1990) also mentions that effective leadership requires passion; on no one issue will passion be more necessary or effective than on the issue of achieving a supportive distance learning environment in a dual mode university that promotes learner's success.

Lenning, Beal and Sauer (1980) corroborates Bennis's idea by stating that a holistic approach to creating this supportive DE environment includes relating the functions of DE admissions and retention with diverse and an open, tolerant institutional ethos. They argue that the tendency to view the DE unit as a separate, isolated function is limiting, because the institutional policies regarding the admission and the commitment of retention directly affect the DE learners' success. All too often, DE delivery of courses and programmes has been presented in an experimental mode, without long term planning of infrastructural development and Technology among many other logistics before the commencement of most DE programmes in most institutions especially in dual mode universities. (Lenning, Beal, & Sauer, 1980).

To be successful, DE delivery requires considerable organizational commitment. The dual mode university introducing distance education should establish appropriate institutional policies for distance learning initiatives to achieve and maintain high-quality standards. The institutions should recognize that this could shift the focus of the institution educational efforts from traditional concern for teaching to a broader conception of effective instructional methods. There will be consequential effects to the development of faculty as distance educators. For instance, there will be opportunity cost especially time demands in committing faculty efforts to distance education programmes (AACBI, 2007).

To buttress this point, Offerman (2007) mentions that distance learning requires significant financial resources for technology and other support. Faculty members and administrators require assistance to manage the logistics

of distance learning and support systems that must be developed for DE delivery system. An integrated team of computer services technicians, counselors, center coordinators, course tutors and library personnel should support distance learning faculty. The magnitude of these is often underestimated by people initiating distance education programmes,

The COL (2003) asserts that administrators of most dual mode universities may be tempted to enter the arena of distance education thinking that minimal investment can earn above average returns. The report indicated that while there may be efficiencies and economies of scale in distance education delivery, substantial resources requirements for capital expenditures and sustaining support may mitigate financial benefits. As enrollments grow, infrastructural adjustments may require large investments, rather than gradual increments. Positive economic outcomes are unlikely to occur at all. The report advised that to enter into distance education for reasons other than a search for financial windfall, programme quality, unique programme attributes and access are more legitimate reasons for any dual mode university to embark on a DE programme. The COL Report (2003) indicated that the mission of the dual mode university should reflect enough institutional commitment to ensure that distance education programmes:

- Be maintained through to programme completion
- Have faculty and administrative participation and support
- Be effective in terms of learner achievement
- Achieve a level of quality comparable to other institutional offerings and consistent with standards of overall quality
- Be financially viable.

Institutional commitment could be demonstrated in many ways to distance learners. Perhaps the most important is in the balance between the flexibility of systems and their roles in ensuring equality of support and provision. Clearly there should to be appropriate institutional policies and practices. However, dual mode universities dealing with adult and younger learners must ensure that practices could be waived in individual cases. Dealing with such 'exceptions' costs money but may well be a major element in reducing avoidable learner attrition. Personal contact by staff with learners is also very important in distance education delivery (Gaskell and Simpson 2000). The authors suggest that a friendly and committed distance education staff is far more influential in learner success than the formal commenting on scripts or excellent courses.

Gaskell et al. (2000) are of the view that commitment from critical stakeholders is essential to the success of any distance education programme. Perhaps the most critical aspect of commitment is the intent, and the allocation of resources necessary, not only to implement the programme but to sustain it so that learners who enroll on the programme are allowed the opportunity to complete their studies. The required institutional commitment is best ensured by adhering to the institution's existing governance and oversight processes.

The authors conclude that institutional commitment to supporting distance learners' success will go a long way to satisfy learners and other stakeholders. The commitment can only be true, however, if learners and management are engaging in a collaborative process of discovery, that is, if academics are not simply dispensers or interpreters of content of passive learners. The education enterprise will succeed if appropriate stakeholders are engaged in serious

planning that considers mission, vision, core values, quality, and impact on experience, required resources, and assessment to ensure that the stated purposes for the programme are being achieved.

2.17 Institutional Provision of Support Services to DE Learners

The provision of student support services is essential in Distance Education delivery. The DE learners must be the priority concern in launching the DE programme. It must be clearly understood what the learners will gain from the programme and how the programme will affect the experience they have at the institution. There must be careful planning on what education is to be delivered. Attention needs to be given to how learning will be assessed in the DE mode. (Simonson et al, 1999) Offerman (2007) notes that beyond the academic and pedagogical issues, however, there must be a plan to orient DE learners to the new delivery approach, clearly outlining for them the discipline they will need to achieve in order to succeed in a DE environment, what the programme expects from them, how support services will be made available to them. The design of course modules is critical and requires a good deal of planning to provide both ways for learners to be actively engaged on the programme. Offerman (2007) believes that DE learners benefit from formal orientation to the new way of learning. This orientation he affirms that should be specific in defining expectations, navigation within the course, and how to seek assistance. Beyond the support available, there is a critical need in the DE course for instructional staff to provide frequent, critical feedback to learners. If a DE learner is to make a commitment to the new programme. The learner must understand the intended outcomes, the support that is available, the impact on her experience, and what is expected of her, and she

must experience, education that is achievable, engaging, and rewarding. (Offerman, 2007).

Holmberg (1995) explains that though most developing countries are unable to provide adequate support for their students, support for DE learners remains their priority as most DE universities in Africa allocate a large portion of their budgets towards meeting students support needs. Tait (1995) indicates that a particular interesting facet of DE is the development of a comprehensive and integrated approach to learner support. He maintains that the proper function of DE system is dependent on a strong student support system, as DE learners do self- study at convenient places using study materials and other learning resources. Hence those resources are required to sustain a quality distance education programme. The resources should be provided by the parent institution to support learners, faculty, and the programmes with the view to achieving the goal of providing effective and appropriate learning environment that promotes learners' success. Responsive and flexible human resources, knowledge, skills, institutional policies, procedures and technical infrastructure enable quality practices and contribute to quality results. Therefore, it is necessary to develop learner support system fully to maximize the advantages of the Distance Education system and to minimize the disadvantages in the system.

Tait, (1995) explains the term learner support used in DE to describe a full range of activities developed to help students meet their learning objectives and gain the requisite to course and career success. Learner support includes all those interactive processes intended to support and facilitate the learning

process from the student's first point of contact with the institution, including tutoring, teaching, counselling, advising, orientation, administrative services and even peer tutoring and alumni support.

Early notions of the "industrial model" of distance education according to Peters (2001), were concerned with access and availability of learning opportunities than the individual experience of the learner. The underlying assumption was that working through well designed package materials, whether print- based or offered through other technologies, in itself constituted "a learning experience". Evidence quickly debunked this notion as isolated, unsupported and/ or ill- prepared learners struggled to cope with the learning materials with little or no assistance from the institution. With the increased access that Open/Distance Education institutions offered, enrolments were high, but with very little support for learners, attrition rates were as well high, particularly for first- time learners.

Concern about attrition and academic credibility spurred efforts to find ways to promote persistence, mainly through the development of learner support services. At first these were mainly limited to contact with a tutor or faculty member over course content. However, other forms of support quickly followed. O'Donnell and Daniel (1979) proposed one of the earliest models for student support in a distance education setting, arguing that it could not be assumed that adult learners enrolled on DE programmes have all the skills necessary to "plan their lives, career and education, set realistic goals and study effectively" (p,1). They further mention that in gradual response to such challenges, effective support in the form of academic advising and

counselling, study centre, regional and head offices support with a variety of administrative services, weekend face-to-face meetings and group tutorials were developed.

Rumble (2000) discusses the response of large campus-based institutions to a rising consumer orientation of learners and the decline of the central role that tertiary education once played in their lives, observing a tendency for such institutions to become more bureaucratic and, paradoxically, more depersonalized for individual students. He compares this to the practice of student support in DE, and notes that distance education have already had to think through some of the issues raised, and in many ways are ahead of DE implementation. “We have always had to think through our support services, trying to find the best delivery mechanism for learners who will never come on campus because the campus, in the traditional sense, does not exist” Rumble concludes that the distance education community seems to be more driven by concern for planning customer care and support than the traditional universities (p. 218).

Sweet (1993) focused on the implications for a changing role of learner support as distance education evolved from the more passive industrial model to new, more interactive forms of learning. He envisioned a closer alignment between traditional distinct advising and tutoring tasks in distance education to promote more interaction between learners and facilitators through either mediated or face-to-face interaction. A central figure in the development and management of the decentralized learner support model at the UKOU, Sweet (1993) emphasized the importance of context in the development of learner

support services, taking into account of such diverse variables as student needs, the educational ethos of the institution and region, the dispersal of and generic differences within the student body, and relative levels of resources.

Brindley (1995) built on these notions to recommend that building a service model based on the mission and goals of the institution and informed by research findings is the ideal strategy. He argues that its goal should be to develop learner support services that are more responsive to learner needs, contribute to learner persistence and success and, to play a key role in the strategic positioning of a dual mode university or distance education programme.

Tait (1995) identified three primary functions for learner support in Distance Education systems- “cognitive”, “affective” and “systemic”, all of which are crucial to the distance education learners’ success. Cognitive support facilitates learning through the mediation of the standard and uniform elements of course materials and learning resources for individual students; affective services provide an environment which support students, creates communities and enhances self-esteem; and systemic support services establish administrative processes and information management systems which are effective, transparent and learner friendly. Tait emphasizes the essential and interdependent nature of these functions that work together to create” ... an environment where Distance learners feel at home, where they feel valued, and which they find manageable experiences”.

It is apparent from literature (Granger & Benke, 1998) that practitioners and researchers in DE have become increasingly clear about the role of learner

support in helping students to become more independent. They opined that although not all institutional budget allocations may reflect it, learner support and services are now seen as not only legitimate, but very necessary part of DE practice regardless of the mode of interaction with learners. This requires sustained research and evaluation activities in order to continually test assumptions and theories, and to measure the effectiveness of practice. All learners need support the authors affirmed. The form and the extent of the individual learners: on their learning styles, their prior knowledge, their occupational background, their goals and their social obligations. However, in contrast to traditional campus-based mode, dual mode universities support services in distance education had not gained increased importance.

Many distance education theorists (Wedemeyer, Keegan, Holmberg) emphasize the importance of student support services in distance mode delivery system have suggested many possible student support systems and frameworks for its planning.

Tait (1995) presents his conceptual framework which was built around six core elements for planning student support systems. The six elements include student cohort characteristics, course/programme demand, geography, management system, technological infrastructure and scale. He further argues that developing patterns through student support services to motivate learners for self - study, increases student retention, cope with the feeling of isolation, develop cognitive skills, provides access to resources, and provides answers to administrative queries and other pertinent issues bordering learners with view to making learning successful to learners. It is therefore very important to give

better student support services to distance learners to motivate the use of appropriate institutional policies that will enhance staff commitment in supporting the learners to succeed.

Learner support is an integral part of distance education. The design and planning of learner support system should fully consider how the conditions necessary to further promote Distance Education learners' success are created. Among the various sources of student support, institutional support is crucial, representing the basic condition for learners' overall satisfaction with distance education. For dual mode universities that take learner support seriously, there is vast literature, a wealth of expertise, and a rich history to draw upon. Student support service could be a central part of the academic mission of the university to offer access and opportunity- not just to a place in the educational institutions, but to a supportive learning environment that offers the best opportunity for academic learner success.

2.17 Summary of Literature Review

Chapter Two began with a description of public universities as frontrunners in accepting distance education as an alternate delivery system, turned to distance learning to address their changing demographics of their clients and to make tertiary cost-effective and more affordable for their students. They saw distance education as an opportunity to reduce barriers they faced with economic shortfalls, budget cuts, meeting "widening access" requirements. Distance education was also a solution to address rising enrollments without increasing physical space (Mullins, 2007).

The literature continued to address institutional policies, and commitment and student support services as major gaps. Literature highlights the need for dual mode universities to put in place adequate policies and commit resources to meet the needs of Distance Education learners. The literature was consistent identifying strengths and weakness of Distance Education provision systems at the tertiary level. But concern continued to be at the forefront on how institutions provide appropriate institutional policies and staff commitment for students' success.

From the literature review, literature on institutional policies and commitment for DE delivery in tertiary educational institutions is generally skewed to the Western culture. In Africa, little research has been carried out in DE institutional policies and commitment leading to learner success. This gap provides a justification, focus and lays a foundation of the originality for a PhD thesis. The literature review in chapter two set the stage for this dissertation.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the description of the research design, instruments and procedures used to gain insight into institutional policies and commitment for supporting distance learners in public dual mode universities in Ghana is presented. The chapter has been organized under the following sub-headings: research design, population, sample and sampling technique, instruments for data collection, methods for data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

This study investigated institutional policies and commitment in supporting distance learners in public universities in Ghana. The philosophy underpinning this study was pragmatism. The pragmatist believes in practical concrete things and abstract things from which a researcher can make inference. Based on the philosophical orientation of the pragmatists research paradigm, the study used the mixed method approach to collect qualitative and quantitative data concurrently (QUAL- Quan) to research into the problem under study. Specifically, the *convergent parallel* (Creswell & Clark, 2011) was adopted. The shown below is the framework for the design.

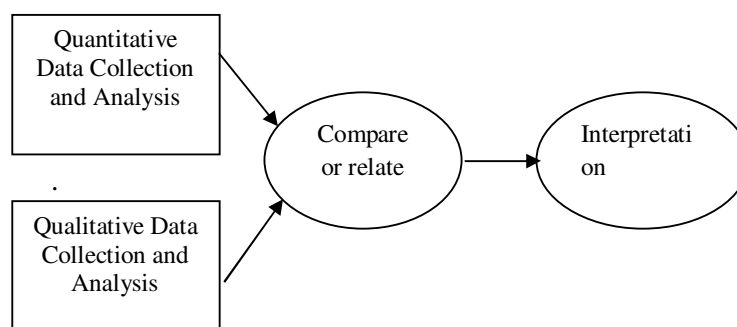


Figure 1.1: The convergent design framework

Source (Creswell & Clark, 2011)

The in using the convergent parallel mixed method design, are collected separate qualitative and quantitative data collected and analyzed and the two set of data collected merged (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The advantage of a study that uses different research methods, such qualitative and quantitative methods is that, it gives the researcher the advantage to gain a deeper insight of issues in relation to the problem under study (Best & Kahn, 2005). Survey interview guide and survey questionnaire were administered at different stages of the data collection stage. Principal Officers of public universities interviewed using an interview guide while DE learners responded to a survey questionnaire. The survey interview for the principal officers was intended to identify their views on the availability of institutional policies for distance education delivery, if any and to assess the level of institutional commitment for supporting DE learners. DE learners also responded to a survey questionnaire to substantiate the responses of the Principal Officers and express their views on the arrays of support services provided by the universities.

Collection of data was done in two phases. Phase one involved the collection of qualitative data from selected principal officers of the universities. Semi-structured interview guide was developed and used to collect data on institutional policies areas of the universities such as academic, fiscal geographic and governance, faculty, support services, legal, philosophy. The level of institutional commitment to promote learner success was also assessed.

May (2001), indicates that interview is one of the most widely used methods for obtaining qualitative data. Interviews are used to gather data on subjects

'opinion, beliefs, and feelings about the situation in their respondents' own words. Information that cannot be obtained through observation is provided through interviews. They are used to verify other data collection methods. Interview have the advantage of quickly providing large amounts of in-depth data. Immediate follow-ups and clarification of participants' responses are allowed using interviews. However, a major disadvantage of interview as a data collection method is that the interviewees sometime may not be willing to provide adequate and genuine information. It also requires much time to conduct and transcribe the audio tapes or other notes. However, the researcher was guarded by experts and literature to eliminate all issues that could threaten the accuracy of the collected data.

The second phase of the data collection involved quantitative data collection from t DE learners' satisfaction with the range of support services provided to them by the universities. The purpose was to delve deeper into issues that were not possible to obtain from the principal university officers through the interview (Fraenkael, Wallen & Hyum, 2012; Gray, 2009).

3.3 Rationale for the Design

It is important every researcher makes a road map that gives direction to the research studies. According to Burton and Bartlett (2005) it is important that every researcher sets guidelines before the research work is undertaken in order to help the researcher focus on the problem under study. In order to be guided throughout the study, the researcher chose the mixed methods approach, combining elements of qualitative methods in studying the problem under study. In employing the mixed method approach, the researcher is able

to use different tools of data collection, sampling, or data analysis in a single study

Cresswell (2006) notes that the mixed method design is a design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study. The central premise in using the mixed method approaches in a combination provides a better understanding of the problem under study than using any single approach. Mixed methods approach are generally intended to supplement one information source with another by using different data sources to study the research problem from different viewpoints. Though some researchers that constraints such as time may hinder the effective use of mixed method, it has important strengths and encourages productive research. It is very useful whether there is convergence or not. This is due to fact that where is convergence; confidence in the results grows considerably. But where divergent views emerge, explanations are generated. Above all, confidence is built in the researcher irrespective of the result which at the end of the day equips the researcher to come out with quality ideas to improve upon the results of institutional policies and commitment in supporting DE learners in public dual mode in Ghana and recommendations that may result from the findings of the study.

This study mainly sought to investigate the availability of institutional policies for DE delivery in public universities in Ghana if any, and the institutional commitment for supporting DE learners. To practically research into problem under study, the survey methods was used because surveys are useful for

gathering information on attitudes and preferences, predictions and behaviours (Fraenkel et al., 2012). For instance, noted that surveys provide a lot of useful information from the subjects of the study. Nworgu (2006) also noted that surveys make it possible for many subjects to be studied at same time.

Practically, no single approach, or research methods, could be perfectly effective (Vulliamy et al., 1990). However, each method could be improved significantly through triangulation of data from various sources. Varied data sources can contribute multiple views better in a study than single source, because multiple sources lead to a fuller understanding from different perspectives of the problem under study Yin (2009) and Gray (2009) also indicated that “ people may articulate a particular view, but in practice behave differently” (p.221). Keser, Akdeniz and Yyu (2010) further opined that data collected from a survey should be used as a springboard for further data collection using different methods, including surveys and interviews.

Keser et al. (2010) “emphasized that triangulation helps researchers to secure an in-depth understanding of the learning environment” (p.7). These approaches were relevant to the present because they help in the triangulation and corroboration of findings from principal officers of the university and DE learners in order to investigate thoroughly the problem under study.

3.4 Limitations

The qualitative and quantitative surveys (interviews and questionnaire) approaches for this study have the advantage of investigating thoroughly the institutional policies and the formal commitment in supporting DE learners in the public universities in Ghana. However, there is no research method without problems when used for research study (Sarantakos, 2005). There are

inherent challenges which the researcher must address. First, survey questionnaires are difficult to construct and secondly, the success of using questionnaire lies in getting respondents to answer questions thoroughly and honestly (Fraenkel et al., 2012).

Another significant disadvantage is the time and effort used in the delivering and collecting the questionnaires and getting enough numbers of participants to respond (Gray, 2009). The major disadvantage of the interview as a data collection method is that interviewees may not be willing to share information or may even offer false information. Again, interviews require ample time to conduct and transcribe the audio tapes or notes. Interview is also very time consuming to undertake. The researcher acquired some skills from experts and from literature on the use of interviews and questionnaire in order to deal with certain issues that might affect the credibility of the data was collected.

3.5 Addressing Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985), argues that the credibility and trustworthiness in research studies are established through data collection, analysis and reporting. The authors proposed four constructs- credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, should be considered by researchers in order to have a trustworthy research study. These four constructs have been used extensively by Shenton (2004). They suggest and provide approaches that researchers may use to meet the expectations of their research work. There are different ways to ensuring credibility in research studies (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyu, 2012) However, Creswell (2007) recommends using of at least two of those strategies in any research work to ensure credibility and trustworthiness. For this research work, credibility and trustworthiness were ensured by:

1. Making available to the interviewees (principal officers of the public universities) the interview guide prior to the interview.
2. To obtain feedback from the respondents, with regards to accuracy of information recorded during the interviews member check was used (Fraenkel et al., 2012).
3. Using multiple data sources (data triangulation) to gain more insight into the problem of investigation (Yin, 2009).
4. Using detailed descriptions to report the research findings and giving voice to the research participants (Creswell, 2007)
5. Providing accurate information of the problem under investigation and detailed description of the context of the research study (Shenton, 2004).

3.6 Population

The target population comprised all public dual mode universities in Ghana that were mandated by a government policy in 1996 to increase access to tertiary education by distance education mode had the chance to participate in the study. These universities include the University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba. However, the accessible population for the study comprised principal university officers and DE learners of University of Cape Coast (UCC) and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, (KNUST).

The reason for using this population emanate from the fact the principal officers of the university are custodians of policies and it is expected that they

show strong formal commitment in using the policies in supporting DE learners who are the final beneficiaries of the policies. It appears the selected public universities use different approaches to DE delivery using different cohorts of learners from diverse backgrounds.

The DE learners normally have a range courses in varied programmes depending on their backgrounds and career aspirations. These learners enroll on the DE programmes with the objective that there will be appropriate institutional policies, a higher degree of institutional commitment with the assurance that the programme will be sustained to allow them to complete their courses of studies through the articulation of institutional policies. Therefore, it was appropriate to find out from the principal officers of the public universities about the availability of institutional policies and the formal institutional commitment in the DE environments of the universities in supporting learners.

DE learners as part of the population were also important as they represent the final beneficiaries of all the outcomes of institutional policy issues of the dual mode public universities. They reported on whether they were being supported in the DE environments. As far as the purpose of the study was concerned, the principal universities officers and DE learners from the selected public dual mode universities appear to form a better population for the study.

3.7 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size for the study comprised of principal officers and Distance Education learners of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and the University of Science and Technology, Kumasi (KNUST). Numbering about 632

Distance Education learners and 6 principal management officers were invited to participate in the study by responding to a semi- structured interview guide. The principal officers of the public universities were invited because they were the custodians, interpreters and implementers of institutional policies of the universities. They also served as “information rich” respondents in relation to institutional policies and commitment of the universities. The personal interview was first introduced the principal officers of the university at their workplaces in the early part of June 2017, requesting them to participate in the study by responding to the semi- structured interview guide.

The principal officers of the universities were invited to participate in the study because of their managerial roles in the universities and also their interest shown in the study and their willingness to participate. The purposive sampling technique was used to select six principal officers, three each from the two selected universities.

The DE learners’ population for the study came from the University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, (KNUST) and University of Cape Coast (UCC). Three study centres were selected from each university. One study centre each from the three zones of each university namely Northern, Middle belt and Southern zones. The DE learners were also conveniently sampled to gather data for the study. Reasons for selecting the two universities and their study centres included easy accessibility and willingness of study participants to engage with the researcher.

For the selection of an accurate sample for the study, and to enhance the validity and reliability of the research, the sample size for the DE learners' population from the two universities was guided by the table for estimating sample size from a given population developed by Krejcie and Morgan, as cited in Sarantakos (2005, p.173). Based on the DE learners' population from selected study centres, respondents were invited to participate freely. A total of 632 DE learners responded to the survey questionnaire. (UCC-341) (KNUST- 291) with 100% return rate. The qualitative and quantitative sample frame are shown in table 3.3 and 4.4 below.

Table 3.3: Qualitative Sample Frame

Institution	Category of Respondents	Number Selected
UCC	Pro- Vice Chancellor	1
	Head of DE Unit	1
	Registrar	1
	Sub Total	3
KNUST	Pro - Vice Chancellor	1
	Head of DE Unit	1
	Registrar	1
	Sub Total	3
Total		6

Table 4.4: Quantitative Sample Frame

Institution	Zone	Study Centre	Number DE Learners
UCC	Northern	Bolgatanga	33
	Middle	Koforidua (Oyoko and Ghanaas)	99
	Southern	Cape Coast	209
	Sub Total		341
KNUST	Northern	Tamale	34
	Middle	Kumasi	186
	Southern	Accra	76
	Sub Total		291
Grand Total			632

3.8 Research Instruments

The research instruments used for the data collection for this study were:
Semi- structured survey interview guide and a survey questionnaire.

3.9 Personal Interviews

Semi-structured interview guide was designed for principal officers of the two public dual mode universities studied. The semi- structured interview guide is suitable for probing views, opinions and permits respondents to develop and expand on their own responses (Gray, 2009). The semi-structured interview guide was designed to gather information in the participants' own words (Fraenkael et al., 2012) so that greater insights could be gained about the institutional policies and commitment that support DE learners in public universities in Ghana. The semi- structured method of interviewing allows the interviewer to have more opportunities to probe beyond the answers provided the respondents. As May (2001) noted: "the interviewer can seek both clarification and elaboration on the given responses and enter into a dialogue with the interviewee" (p.123). The semi- structured method also allows the researcher to raise issues of concern to the study (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Further questions, which were not expected at the start of the interview, could also be asked as new issues arose (Gray, 2009).

Items on the semi- interview guide were centered on the main research questions and the institutional policies issues emanating from the seven constructs of policies areas of the Policy Analysis framework for studying DE institutions (PAF) used as the conceptual framework for the study. Gray (2009) and Cohen et al. (2007) advise that the issue of validity for both

structured and semi-structured interviews is addressed by ensuring that questions in the instruments to be used for data collection are related to the research questions/objectives. In order to achieve rich and constructive discussions, the interviewees (principal officers) were provided with the focus questions to afford them the opportunity to think about their responses before the commencement of the interviews, on the advice of Hackling, Goodrum and Rennie (2001). The semi-structured interview guide developed for principal of the public dual mode universities studied are provided as appendices.

3.10 Survey Questionnaire

One form, of a fifty-nine item three sections, predominately closed ended questions questionnaire was developed and used to gather data collection from DE learner respondents. The questionnaire was in three sections. Section A focused the background information of respondents. Section two focused on support services provided to support DE learners while section three was devoted as an open question for DE learners to add any information that they think may help the researcher's understanding of the problem under study. It has been noted that closed and open-ended questionnaires are useful to elicit both quantitative and qualitative data (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Also, many people's opinions can be elicited through questionnaires and participants could respond in a place and time convenient to them (Gray, 2009). The questionnaire was slightly adapted from existing surveys for studying institutional policies for DE delivery. The items were modified to suit the purpose and content of this study. Particular attention ensured that the items

constructed were unambiguous, unbiased, unloaded and relevant (Fraenkel et al., 2012). The questionnaire developed is provided as appendix.

3.11 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

The instruments were developed with the help of my two supervisors. The survey questionnaire and the semi- interview guide were made available to experts (reviewers) in the field of DE and Policies in higher educational administration experts for their comments and suggestions. The comments and suggestions from reviewers were used to revise the initial items. The instruments were further scrutinized by my supervisors. These actions were to ensure that items and their wording were appropriate for participants concerned and information to be obtained could be used to make sound judgements (Sarantakos, 2005) on issues of the problem under study.

The survey questionnaire was pre-tested with DE learners at the University of Education, Winneba (UEW). The pilot studies of the students' questionnaire for DE learners were started by 44 DE learners and completed by 38 of them, representing an 86% response rate, at the close of trial. DE learners had 60 minutes to complete questionnaire. Questionnaires were distributed to them at their study centres during the weekend face- to –face sessions. The six incomplete responses were found from the pre-test reliability analysis. The DE learners' questionnaire was multidimensional in nature as it consisted of 11 primary scales -admission process, orientation and registration, course materials, examination proctoring, study centre related issues, course facilitation, face- to- face monitoring, assessment and learner satisfaction with the range of support service provided to support DE learners in the public

universities . Each scale was made up of a different number of items which were responded to on a five- point scale with extreme alternates of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The reliability of each scale was therefore determined to find out the internal consistency of the scales. That is the extent to which the items that constitute the scale “hang together” (Pallant, 2007, p.85). This was done using the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient computed for each scale. The obtained reliability of the instrument was 0.89.

Reliability coefficients are measured by using scale from 0.00 (very unreliable) to 1.00 (perfectly reliable) (Gray, 2009), Henderson, Fisher, Fraser (1998) indicated that alpha coefficient values ranging from 0.62 to 0.77 and exceeding the threshold of 0.60 are acceptable reliabilities for research purposes. Responses of closed ended questions indicated that the wording of the questions was appropriate to the respondents concerned. The scales generated for the survey in this research were therefore considered reliable for the study. The final survey questionnaire was then constructed and labelled, for the thesis as indicated in the appendix respectively.

3.12 Validation of Interviews

First and foremost, care was taken to ensure that items on the interview guide were directly related to the purpose of the research (Cohen et al., 2007; Gray, 2009). In addition, a “member checking” (Fraenkel et al., 2012, p.458) process was used to validate all interviews; Member checking is a process whereby respondents/interviewees are asked to verify the accuracy of the research report (Fraenkel et al., 2012). In this study, all interviews were recorded and transcribed. After the recordings were transcribed, a copy of the transcript was

forwarded to the respondents requesting them to verify the accuracy of the information. Respondents were also asked to modify, revised and/or amend the transcript as necessary before any part of the transcript was used in the study.

3.13 Data Collection Procedure

Collection of data for the study was done in two stages – interviews of principal officers of the universities and the administration of survey questionnaires to DE learners.

3.14 Administration of Questionnaires

A survey questionnaire was developed for the DE learners. The survey questionnaire was administered to DE learners at selected study centres with the help of two research assistants to each of the six selected study centres from the two universities studied. DE learners were briefed about the research and purpose of the research explained to them. Their consent was then sought for them to participant in the research study by responding to the survey questionnaire. Copies of the survey questionnaires were later distributed to them in their respective tutorials session rooms. They were given 60 minutes to complete the questionnaire after which the research assistants collected them for submission to the researcher for future actions.

3.15 Conducting the Interviews

Two forms of interviews were conducted: face- to- face and the use of Skype. The face- to- face interviews were conducted with the principal officers of the universities who were less busy and created time to physically participate in the personal interviews. The Skype interviews were organized for some principal officers of the universities whose work schedules made them very

busy and had limited time to respond to the survey interviews. The Skype platform was used as an alternate means to the face- to -face interviews because it was cost effective to the interviewees and the study.

All the interviews were conducted at dates and times convenient to the respondents. Respondents in the face- to- face interviews selected the location for the interviews. Each interview was started by the researcher with an exchange of greetings and a note of thanks for the interviewee's acceptance to participate in the study. After a brief self-introduction, the researcher reviewed the purpose of the research study and how the information was going to be used. Interviewees were assured that their responses would be treated confidentially and would be used only for the purposes the research study. All interviewees, both face- to-face and Skype, were also reminded that the interviews were being audio recorded and that they could ask for the recording to be stopped if they were not comfortable with it. Each interviewee was then asked to introduce him/herself.

As part of the interview protocol, the principal officers of the universities were prompted to mention their names before given the chance to speak. It was therefore not difficult to identify, in the transcript, the individuals who were speaking, and this method provided easy retrieval of the themes that emerged from the interview data.

In the course of the interviews, the researcher listened attentively to the interviewees and probed to clarify information as and when necessary. With regards to the face- to- face interviews, eye contact was maintained with the interviewees and some non- verbal expressions such as nodding and smiling

were used to acknowledge responses and to indicate interest as the researcher made notes (Gray, 2009). For the Skype interviews, asking for clarification, occasionally reaffirming the interviewee's opinions expressed and an occasional "OK" were used to show interest and provide appropriate feedback to the interviewer. Each interview was closed with an expression of appreciation to the interviewees for their time and their contribution made to the research study. The researcher rounded up each interview by asking the interviewees about contacting him/her for additional information should the need arise.

3.16 Data Processing and Analysis

Data from the DE learners' survey questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistical methods (including means, standard deviations where appropriate) and inferential statistics- independent sample t-test and ANOVA. The quantitative data gathered from the DE learners' survey was used to substantiate findings from the qualitative data.

The qualitative data gathered from the interviews of the principal officers of the universities were audio recorded and transcribed using Nvivo 12 for Windows (QSR International Pty Ltd. Version 11, 2016). This was to organize the materials by coding them into nodes which provided easy retrieval of the themes that emerged. Where quotes are used within the body of this thesis, they were chosen because they were representative of the statements of most of the respondents. The production of accurate and verbatim transcripts was integral to establishing the credibility and trustworthiness of data collected for this research study.

3.17 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval is a requirement for research activities undertaken at the University of Ghana. An official request for ethical approval was made to the University's Educational Research Human Ethics Committee (ECH). As required by ECH, detailed statements about the nature of the research study, how data would be collected and used, and the role of the participants were forwarded to ECH for its consideration and approval. The documents submitted included participants information sheets and consent forms. Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of the data gathered as indicated in the appendices. That is all names and identifying details in any verbal, written or published reports were changed into pseudonyms. Audio-tape recordings and observation notes were also kept in a locked cupboard and were accessible only to the researcher and supervisors.

These materials would also be kept for five years and then destroyed. Following the granting of ethical approval (refer to Appendix A for a copy of the ethical approval letter in appendices), letters were sent to the selected public universities to seek their permission to conduct the research study. Upon agreement, respondents were contacted to seek their informed consent. Information sheets and consent forms were sent to the institutions to respondents who confirmed their participation in the study (refer to appendices for copies of information sheets and consent forms). Participants indicated their willingness to be part of the research study. In the case of the survey questionnaire, respondents were asked to read the information sheet carefully before completing the questionnaire. It was understood that by reading the survey questionnaire, they had consented to participate in the research study.

However, the participants had the right to withdraw from the study if they wanted to do so without penalty

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings gathered from the personal interviews of Principal Officers of the two public universities selected for this study are presented in themes and sub- themes based on the Policy Analysis Framework (PAF) used. The principal officers by virtue of their positions are supposed to be the planners, implementers, evaluators and custodians of policies. For the purpose of anonymity, the two universities were given pseudonyms as university A and university B. The Three interviewees from each of the universities were also labeled as A1, A2, A3 and B1, B2 & B3 respectively.

4.2 Institutional Policy Issues

This section focuses on the main findings relating to availability of institutional policies for Distance Education delivery in dual mode public universities selected for the studied. For the purpose of anonymity, the two institutions were given pseudonyms as university A and university B respectively. Data for this report were gathered from selected Principal Officers of the two public universities studied. These officers are supposed to be the planners, implementers, evaluators as well as the custodians of institutional policies in these institutions.

Findings from this section were used mainly to address research question one.

Research question one sought to find out about the availability of institutional policies that exist if any, in the study areas.

The findings from this study reveal that, institutional policies for DE delivery are not available in the public universities studied. Although the mandate to expand access by DE is captured in their Strategic Plans, the universities are rather using scattered pieces of several undocumented procedures, practices, conventions and guidelines to deliver DE. However, there was a clear evidence of commitment from both universities in coming out with DE policies for DE very soon, in order to meet their expectations as dual mode universities.

However, in university A plans are far advanced for a draft policy document to be endorsed for DE delivery. The content of this draft policy does not stray away very much from main university policies for the campus-based students. The draft policy document is also very much linked with the mission, vision and the Strategic Plan of the university as mentioned by interviewees (A1 & A3) respectively.

Interviewees reiterate this position:

“We try to link everything to the main university policies, especially the Vision, mission and our strategic plan, so that we don’t go astray; and therefore, our vision; and mission, in IDL, is very well linked to the mission of the main University. We make sure that planning goes in line with the University’s strategic plan” (A1)

“Yes. And then our policies reflect our vision and mission which of course do not deviate from the main university. It’s aligned to the main university policies. We ensure that we didn’t throw away the university’s main policies even in bringing in these internal rules” (A3)

From the narration, interviewee A2 & 3 indicated clearly, that before the draft policy document, university A. did not have any official institutional policies that guided DE activities. The DE unit was using almost the same institutional policies of the campus-based students to run DE. Though the draft

document is still going through processes of approval, that document largely guides activities of the DE wing of university A.

Interviewee A2 stated thus:

“We have a draft policy document which is going through processes of approval. But that notwithstanding, that document largely guides our activities, especially in the areas that are more controvertible. We use that as guide for our activities. Hitherto, we were following the same policies and processes in terms of the main university but then by application, we realize that it doesn't fit entirely in the DE system. So, we had to modify them to suit us. And then because we didn't have official permission for these modifications, it became necessary for us to get a document that would support our activities. So that is how come we came up with the draft policy for IDL” (A2)

“The University does not have separate policies for the different modes. But the University must ensure that existing policies which are in place before DE go down well with the DE learners. What we find out at the early stages was that most the main university policies, were not suitable for the distance learners So what we did in our own way was to use the information we were getting from the field to come up, or draw some rules or some conventions the kind that can take care of the distance learning activities. But sometimes there is the tendency to carry policies formulated for the campus- based students to cover the Distance Education learners” (A3)

Interviewee A3 further indicated thus:

“In dual mode institutions such as my university we service two different groups of people and when formulating institutional policies for the conventional mode, there is the need for a caveat for some activities that are solely done by DE learners. A lot of things happen with these adult students so in planning these adult students need to be well captured and taken care off by the main university policies (A3)

An interesting trend that emerged from the findings in university A is that there were contradictory statements made by interviewee AI as against the

statements made by interviewees A2 and A3 in relation to the availability of institutional policies for DE delivery in university A. As evidenced from the findings, interviewees A2 and A3 mentioned in their narration that there were institutional policies for DE delivery in the university A, except for the several pieces of procedures, practices, conventions and guidelines that have been developed around the main university policies for the regular campus-based students and the draft policy document. Contrary to their views, interviewee A1 stood on his grounds to firmly claim that institutional policies were available for DE delivery in university A. He made the statements below after several probes by the interviewer:

“Yes, we have institutional policies that govern students, facilitators, even payment of allowances to people who work over the weekends for IDL” The university one is there, and you find that some of the things that exist here cannot be by the university policy. So, the IDL one is there, and I am not guessing. It is a document I have seen and worked with. It’s there. I have seen it; I have worked with it; we have used it to resolve some issues” (A1)

He further submitted thus:

“A copy of the policy document is with the IDL Registrar. If you have time to talk to him, he will give you a copy. It is the distance learning policy document that guides activities at IDL. It is in that document you will find the structures and schedules; and that differ from the main University. There is a separate policy document for IDL” (A1).

Interviewee A3 further mentioned the need for faculty to have the flexibility to balance their roles in ensuring equality of support and provision for the two delivery modes. He mentioned that sometimes some faculty neglects their responsibilities towards the DE learners when they get too busy on the campus- based programme. This is happening because there are no clear -cut institutional policies to guide DE operations.

He remarked thus:

“I am beginning to think is a departmental sickness. They concentrate more on the regular students more than the distance learners in all that. And sometimes we ask a lot of questions when students are not making it in a course. Because we know the caliber of lecturers who work for IDL. They take the distance programme as part time jobs. Once they become very busy in the regular programme, they are tempted to neglect their responsibilities towards the DE learners. Sometimes faculty is also part of DE learners’ problems. I wish somebody will do a study and apportion percentages to the reasons why DE learners sometimes cannot accomplish their academic goals on schedule on most DE programmes” (A3).

Contrary to the contradictory statements made by interviewees in university A, all three interviewees in university B. indicated in the findings that there were no clear- cut institutional policies available for DE delivery in university B. Similar to university A, interviewees mentioned that the university is now trying to put up some policies together for DE delivery However, the policies have not been drafted yet as it is the case with university A. The university initially did not have any separate institutional policies for DE delivery, but management is now trying to transport some of the policies for the campus-based students into DE environment as indicated by interviewee BI thus:

“I will say that the University has no institutional policies for its DE programme delivery. And largely, those policies were formulated for the on-campus students and programmes. When the Distance Education came into the picture some years back, the university did not have any institutional policies for distance education. And so, at the initial stages of the distance education implementation, the then Director of the Center for Distance Education and the Board were left to come up with their own ways of doing things. It is recently that the University is trying to put in place policies for distance education. And we cannot blame

the University because even as a nation, the national the Accreditation Board itself didn't have any policy for distance education delivery" (B2)

He further mentioned thus:

"The University is now trying to transport some of the institutional policies for the campus-based students unto the Distance Education programme. Because they say it is a dual mode and so whatever they run for the campus-based students must affects the distance mode for parity of esteem. But all of us know that in formulating such policies we also know that we are dealing with distance learners. And therefore, not all policies suit the distance education environment. Therefore, there was the urgent need for management in university to come out with clear cut institutional policies bothering on distance education delivery and management is acting accordingly. So, we urgently need to actually come up with clear cut institutional policies bothering on distance education" (B)

Similar to university A, Interviewee B1 again reported that DE delivery in university B was guided by some initial procedures, practices and guidelines which later matured into some informal conventions for DE delivery. Interviewees were frank in their submissions to remarked that the DE wing of university B, was given the free hand to operate when the programme started, with whatever procedures and guidelines they deem fit to deliver DE programmes, so long as there were no problems that dragged the image of the university into disrepute. The findings show that the university was not deeply involved in the activities of the DE wing at the commencement of the programme but now the university is in the process of formulating institutional policies carved around the main university policies for the campus-based students for DE delivery. Interviewee B1 remarked thus:

“Sure! They were given the free hand to do everything. The University allowed or gave DE the unit the freehand to operate so long as there were no problems that dragged the image of the University into disrepute. It was when the Programme started expanding and the fact they are taking our certificates, then the university now sat up to really focus on the distance education and looked at how best policies could be formulated to make it work better. But initially that was not there” (B1).

Like university A interviewee B1 further reported that in university B, the vision and mission of the university were considered in coming out with the new institutional policies for DE. And the mandate to use DE for expansion is well captured in the strategic plan of the university. This assertion is also supported by both interviewees B2 and B3. Interviewee B1 further mentioned that once DE is captured in the university strategic plan as a key thrust, then the appropriate institutional policies would have to be formulated in order to achieve the long-term goals of the university in the strategic plan. He continued that looking at the strategic plan of university B, the part that talks about DE delivery in the university is looking at going online, using Information Communication Technology (ICT) to teach, among others, all geared towards improving the quality of DE delivery in the university. The interviewees shared their insights on the institutional policies issues for DE in university B. thus:

“I believe that eventually, whatever, policies that would come up for DE will be policies that would reflect what is in the strategic plan and what is in the strategic plan is also going to feed into the mission and vision of the university and then eventually into the act that established the university. Now if you go into the strategic plan of the university, there is a key thrust that captures DE. It is

captured that the University would look at expanding and improving on distance education. And once it has gotten into strategic plan as a key thrust, then institutional policies would then have to be formulated to be able to achieve what is in the strategic plan” (B1).

“Whatever we do you know, ours is the dual mode and because it is the dual mode, whatever pertains to the regular, also pertains to the distance. So, if you are looking at the admission requirements, whatever requirements are, it is the same, they are same requirements that we also demand, you know, yes. We don’t bend the rules” (B2)

“To be frank with you there are no clear-cut institutional policies on distance education delivery in this university and as I speak with you now, we don’t have them” (B3)

4.3 Institutional Commitment

The findings show that public universities selected for this study appeared to be committed towards DE delivery, though a few problems exist in their DE environments. The narrations, most of the interviewees from the two public universities indicated an expression of institutional commitment of their universities towards DE.

Interviewee AI and A3 mentioned that the expressions of DE in the policy documents of university A such as the corporate Strategic Plans, Records and IDL Strategic plans indicate the appropriate placement of DE within the organizational structure of university A. The interviewees believe that this is an indication of the university’s commitment towards DE. They were however quick to add that irrespective of the university’s show of commitment towards DE, information on DE hardly appear in internal promotional documents such as the University diary and calendars (2005-2010). Interviewee A2 however

had a different view about the commitment of university A towards the DE. Interview A2 expresses views on institutional commitment towards DE in university A thus:

“The other one we may not want to say but real is that the University is really interested and committed to IDL because it provides the University with a lot of resources. IDL provides the University with funds. And because the university knows that at any point in time, when it is in dire need for funds, it could fall on IDL and for this reason, they are very much interested in what goes on in IDL” (A2).

Interviewee A3 corroborates the assertion by interviewee A2 and remarked thus:

“All over the world, the reasons for most universities to embark on distance education delivery are two. The first is to increase access to tertiary and second that is less spoken about is the business aspect which is the hidden agenda but the major reason” (A3).

Furthermore, interviewees in university A, mentioned that the university by way of commitment makes sure that examinations are conducted under strict quality assurance principles as well as the issuance of the same certificate for both campus- based and Distance Education learners to ensuring parity of esteem. To them, this act of the university depicts its commitment towards Distance Education delivery.

Interviewees also mentioned that the Distance Education wing of university A still does not have documented institutional policies or procedures to follow to run their activities. Often when they had adopted the policies and principles of the main university to suit them, people will raise issues to the challenge actions but eventually, the university as a body comes to accept their peculiar circumstance and agree to what they are doing. Interviewees and believe that

although they are not strictly following the university processes and procedures, the university is always ready to relax its strict administrative position for Distance Education delivery and learners. In this respect, it gives the impression that the university is committed towards the growth and sustenance of Distance Education in university A. Interviewees also expressed the university's commitment towards Distance Education when they made the statements below;

“The Institute of Distance Learning is represented in major decision-making bodies of the university such as the Academic Board and the Executive Committee of the University. This is an indication of the University's commitment towards DE” (A3).

With regards to institutional commitment towards Distance Education, All three interviewees in university B expressed similar views as that of university A. However, the expression of institutional commitment in university B include support from the central administration, that understands the peculiarities of DE delivery, commitment of all staff from the Vice Chancellor to the cleaner in supporting DE activities, flexibility in financial management of DE funds, and the provision support services to DE learners. DE is also mentioned as one of the key thrusts in the university strategic plan of university A. To exhibit full commitment university B gives the DE wing partial administrative autonomy where Head of the DE reports directly to the Vice Chancellor in all administrative matters pertaining to DE in the university. All three interviewees explained that the reason for this arrangement by the university management is remove all bureaucratic procedures and other bottlenecks that might mitigate against the smooth running of DE activities because of the peculiarities in the DE environment. The interviewees in university B consider this single act by the university as a

full show of commitment that any dual mode university could offer to its DE wing. Notwithstanding the activities of the DE wing are under the close watch of the central administration.

The three interviewees in university B made the following statements below to indicate the degree of commitment of the university towards DE thus:

“The truth is that everybody is involved. It’s all hands are on deck. The VC, the Pro- VC, Fortunately, the current Pro -VC used to be the former Director of our DE unit so he is aware of the nature of DE. You know from their end, from management level to even the cleaner, everybody is committed” (B1).

“If I want to quantify the institutional level of commitment towards DE, I will say it is about 85%” (B2).

“The institution’s commitment to distance education is to place the unit directly under the office of the Vice- Chancellor to avoid any bureaucracy and avoidable challenges” (B3).

4.4 Institutional policies Areas Currently Being Addressed by the Public universities

4.5 Issues on Academic Policies

The academic policies emanating from the data analysis include Academic Calendar, Admission process, Orientation, Face-to-Face Monitoring, Registration, Deferment, Transit, Completion Rate, Withdrawals, and Evaluation of Courses/programmes.

During the interview sessions with the Principal Officers of the public universities, interviewees were asked to share their insights on ways the established institutional policies of their universities guide the admission processes of DE environments in their universities. The findings indicate that DE academic policies issues of the universities, the trend that emerged was that DE activities in the dual mode public universities in Ghana predominately revolve around academic issues. Policies issues in this area probably have the

most widespread impact on the DE learners' attitude towards the universities and their own success. Generally, all the above- mentioned policies areas were found to be the most common academic issues found in the daily activities of the DE wings of the two universities studied and were explicitly guided by written and unwritten rules and regulations. The analysis again shows some differentials on how the academic policies were used to service DE learners in the various universities.

In university A, all three interviewees explained that they extend the academic areas to include pre-admission through to examinations and to graduation. In doing so, they abide by the university rules and regulations. Overall, institutional policies that guide practices in terms academic policies in university A are almost the same for both DE learners and campus-based students with slight modifications to suit the DE environment. Basically, the academic policies issues are the same for the two modes especially at the graduate level. This notwithstanding, the interviewees stated that they knew they were dealing with learners who are not on campus but on distance learning. But sometimes they are tempted to be silent on the main university academic policies especially when they get feedback from the field that certain academic policies issues were not going down well in the academic environment of the DE.

The results from data also indicate that in university A, academic programmes are faculty based therefore all DE programmes are affiliated to the various Faculties and Departments, as such some academic decisions are taken by the Departments and the feedbacks communicated to DE. The DE wing has very

little control over academic issues as most decisions taken on DE learners are based on Faculty and Departmental rules and regulations. The main academic policies issues areas in university A are discussed below;

Pre-admission and Admission process: Basically, policies on admission processes for DE in university A is not too different from the main university academic policies based on government and Faculty requirements. Advertisements are made as a pre-admission support in which programmes offered, admission requirements and its prospects are made known to the general public through radio, the internet and the use of flyers provided at the study centers. Prospective applicants respond to the advertisements by looking at the programme/course areas they think they qualify and apply to the various academic departments who collate all applications and finally admit the applicants depending on Faculty criteria. List of successful applicants are then forwarded to IDL. Interviewees admitted that IDL does not have the mandate to admit applicants expect for their own courses mounted at IDL. The interviewees further explained that they follow these processes because the management of the university wants to maintain some kind of quality in the admission process and the fact that there a current university policy affiliates all successful applicants to the various Faculties and Departments irrespective of delivery mode, since all students admitted belong to the university.

All three interviewees from university A further mentioned that sometimes, the DE wing attracts very good applicants who could have made it to the conventional Campus-based mode, but because the prospective applicants are workers, they are unable to come into residence for the conventional mode.

Others opt for DE because most of them could not meet the strict departmental criteria for admitting students on the campus-based mode.

Interviewees in university A, shares their insights on admission processes in the DE environment of their university thus:

“In fact, to a very large extent, I will say we use the university’s admission pre-requirements but there is a slight difference with IDL” (A1).

“For sure! The university doesn’t compromise on quality if it is in IDL; they insist that we use the same requirements for admission and everything academic. We don’t compromise on quality. But all that notwithstanding there is some form on flexibility in the DE admission processes and in other academic areas” (A2).

“You go to the Graduate School in the distance education mode; the students will do the same as their colleagues in the normal conventional arena will do. So that’s a good example of how we abide by the university rules in terms of the academic policies areas” (A3).

Like university A, DE activities in university B revolve around the main university academic policies as listed above. However, in university B, by way of pre- admission support to prospective applicants, the sale of admission forms is advertised on radio, selected banks halls, post offices, and regional offices and selected study centers across the country. Qualified applicants buy the forms to be enrolled on the DE programme through two entry points. That are the direct admissions and the Matured Entrance Examinations (MEE). The direct admissions are given to applicants with the requisite government entry requirements. Applicants who meet government approved requirements, but with weak grades are prepared by the College of Distance Education of university B to write the Matured Entrance Examinations for admission. Dissimilar to university A, university B mandates the College to admit its own applicants. The university through the College of Distance Education,

organizes four-week residential tutorials in specialized subject areas for such applicants at designated study centers across the country. After the preparatory classes, applicants are subjected to rigorous examinations. Successful applicants after the Matured Entrance Examinations (MEE) are given admission into the Distance Education programme based on their performance in the MEE examinations and their West Africa School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) examination results.

In responding to a question posed to inquire whether established institutional policies in university B guide the admission processes of DE in university B, Interviewees explained that the university adhere to its expected role as a dual mode university and so whatever pertains in on the campus- based mode in terms of admission pertains to DE but with some form of flexibility. Interviewees affirmed that they do not bend the university rules to favour DE learners though the central administration appreciate the peculiarities of the DE environment. Management is poised in ensuring that Quality Assurance principles of the National Accreditation Board (NAB) are followed through in the DE environment and the university as whole.

The interviewees further indicated that this is the standard the university has maintained over the years and at the end of the day, when DE learners have successfully completed their programmes of studies, it is the same university B certificate that is given to both categories of students who pass out of the university. There are no specifications on the certificates of graduates.

Moreover, interviewees mentioned that though the entry requirements are almost the same for the two modes, programme durations differ with DE learners spending a longer period (five years) to obtain a bachelor's degree as against four years by the campus-based mode. The disparities in programme duration for the two modes is attributed to limited contact hours of the DE learners

Interviewees provide their insights on preadmission and admission processes of university B. by the following statements:

“Ours is the dual mode. We don't bend the rules. No! It is the same entry requirements. So, the person who comes unto the distance programme, that person could also at the same time, if he so wishes can also go for the regular” (B1)

“Yes, admission policies of the university still apply to DE with a little bit of flexibility” (B2)

“Admission processes of DE programmes follow the same established admission criteria of the university. Applicants who do not qualify by the main admission criteria are prepared to write the Mature Entrance Examination for admission” (B3)

4.6 Orientation and Registration:

During the interview sessions, interviewees were asked to comment on the organization and duration of orientation for newly admitted DE learners in their universities. Orientation for newly admitted DE learners was found to be very important to the management of the two universities as mentioned by all six interviewees of both universities A&B. The findings of the study revealed that orientation for distance learners is very important to the management of the universities because management believes that DE learners are a cohort of learners who are not seen often in the university on campus unlike the campus-based students who are residential on the university campus.

Interviewees in university A indicated that orientation is organized for newly admitted DE learners before the commencement of their face-to-face sessions. Interviewees hinted that orientation used to be two days, but management reduced it to one day due to time and other logistics difficulties for some time but now management has decided that henceforth, orientation will be organized twice a year for every cohort of newly admitted DE. This is because management recognizes the fact that about 70% of newly admitted DE learners attend the orientation for the first time but most of the challenges that these new learners face throughout the programme duration come from the remaining 30% who were absent during the orientation. The decision of management now is that in the subsequent years, a day's orientation will still be organized for the newly admitted learners the orientation sessions will be recorded and uploaded permanently on the virtual classroom (V-Class) before learners' start face-to-face tutorial sessions. The import for this new form of orientation as explained by the interviewees is for the new learners to access the orientation sessions anytime anywhere Learners could contact the Guidance and Counseling unit of the university for assistance, if they have questions on the orientation programme.

Discussing the organization of orientation in university A, Interviewees mentioned that during the orientation, the newly admitted learners are invited to the regional study centers namely Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, and Tamale to undergo the orientation. The content of the orientation programme includes a talk about university A, IDL operations, support services as well as examination rules and regulations. Greater part of the orientation period is spent on orienting learners on examination rules and regulations. Interviewees

hinted that this is done because the management believes that the university has had enough problems with the conduct of examinations in the DE environment.

Moreover, the interviewees mentioned that the one day orientation does not end there. They further mentioned that during the face- to- sessions within the departments, a lot of issues about the requirements of the departments are also discussed at that level. So, the orientation becomes a continuous process. Interviewees were however frank to opine that, the one-day orientation is inadequate for DE learners, but the good news is that a new orientation strategy is expected to roll out come next academic year. Interviewees shared views on orientation programmes in university A thus:

“The orientation comes before matriculation and at our last management, it was agreed that we do the orientation twice in a year” (A1).

“Orientation as you are aware is very important in any educational institutional set up, not only for distance learners but it is key for distance learners because these are people you wouldn’t see often on the university campus” (A2).

“The one-day orientation, personally, I think is not enough, but the good thing is that when they go for face- to-face, a lot of departmental requirements are discussed. So, the orientation becomes a continuous process” (A3).

Orientation programmes organized for newly admitted DE learners in university B is almost like that of university A. The findings of the study indicated that orientation is organized for newly admitted DE learners in university B is just the same as it is done for the campus-based students. Interviewees explained that during the orientation sessions, resource persons are invited to speak to new DE on topics such as time management, learning styles, examination rules and regulations, availability of student support

services and how to access those services as well as guidelines on primary health care among others beneficial topics. As in the case of university A, interviewees complained about the inadequacy of one orientation to the new DE learners as against a five-day orientation period for the campus-based students. Interviewees hinted that orientation for new DE learners is done on the morning of the day of matriculation and learners are rushed through the whole orientation exercise. The interviewees expressed their dissatisfaction about the orientation sessions in university B, describing scenario as a situation worrying that needs immediate attention. They argue because orientation sessions are held for one day few hours before matriculation it is obvious learners do not benefit the sessions and management needs to take a second look at the orientation for newly DE very seriously, for the learners benefit fully from the exercise.

The study has shown that orientation in university B is organized in zones namely the northern, middle belt and southern zones. Like university A, DE learners are invited to the zonal centers to participate in the orientation. In university B, orientation is also day just like university A. However, is done on the morning of the day of matriculation alongside other activities, unlike in university A where the orientation though one day, is separated from the day of the matriculation.

The approach to organizing the orientation programmes for newly admitted learners is very similar but both universities have a problem with the duration of orientation which all the interviewees describe as not being adequate. However, it was evident from the findings that both university A and B have

the desire and the commitment to improve upon future orientation sessions to enable DE learners to fully enjoy the intended benefits of the support service.

Registration: The findings from the study show that a programme line up of a typical orientation session for newly admitted DE learners in university A include how the learners are to register for the courses on the V- Class they are admitted. Interviewees mentioned that registration in university A is done at the beginning of every semester because the university mounts different courses on the various programmes every semester. Registration is done in two forms. Registrations for the two modes are the same and student follows the same procedures. To register, DE learners first register online using their usernames and passwords to log on unto the university database for the registration.

In addition to the online registration, DE learners also go through biometric registration for fingerprints verification. The biometric registration is scheduled for a day where personnel from the university Information Technology Systems (UITS) go to the various study centers to take the fingerprints of DE. DE learners' registration processes are deemed to be have been complete after the biometric exercise. Interviewees in the narration hinted that the only condition on registration is that DE learners could only register after 50% payment of the whole academic year's fees. Failure to comply with this directive, learners will not access to the data base to register. When registration is complete, learners submit their registration by e-mail to their various departments and a copy is sent to IDL. Interviewees mentioned that this registration arrangement exist in the DE environments of university A

because the policy of the university currently is that all DE learners belong to a department and the university irrespective instructional modes.

The findings of the study reveal that in university A, the DE unit only plays a coordinating role in the admission, registration through to even graduation of DE learners while authority and power to manage the DE learners remain with the central administration and the various academic departments. Moreover, the findings of the study show that DE learners' registration is done with a lot of problems including registration. The university management, however, keeps on resolving the problems in order to have a perfect e-service system to service the DE environment.

Interviewees share their views on registration in university A:

“When they register, they don't submit the registration to IDL, but to their departments There is now a policy in the university now for all distance education learners to be affiliated to their parents' departments to take care them” (A1)

“They use their username and password to log unto the main university data base then the registration system would have been prepared, they just go there and register. But the problem here is that for us you need to pay 50% of your fees the year” (A2).

“IDL has gone into E-format but it created a lot of problems for which registration is part” (A3).

Academic Calendar: Interviewees were asked to share insights about the academic calendars for DE activities and how face-to-face sessions are organized in their universities. From the findings interviewees in university A indicated that the academic calendars for both the modes are about the same. It is one of the areas the institutional policies areas that the DE wing do not stray very away from the main university policies. They again mentioned that the DE wing of the university follow the same principles and procedures of the

main university academic policies. Interviewees indicate that their semesters run alongside that of the main university with modified variations. The interviewees explained that sometimes the DE begins the semester a bit earlier between two to four weeks before the main university re-opens because the DE programme runs only on weekends and the arrangements for the weekend activities call for longer period of contact hours. But when it comes to the calendar itself, within the semester, DE. By blocking, the semester is divided into two or three blocks depending on the number of courses a particular programme is running.

Usually, there are three blocks for a semester and each block has three weekends. The courses for the semester are also blocked. Interviewees further mentioned that Distance Education learners are assessed at the end of each block for continuous assessment, but all examinations are differed till the end of the semester. Distance Education learners write their examinations within the same period as the conventional campus-based students but not necessarily the same time. Re-sit examinations for Distance Education are however taken once a year at the end of the second semester for both first and second semester courses by the Distance Education unit's own calendar for re-sit examinations. For graduation, it is expected that DE learners graduate at the same time with the regular campus-based students, but interviewees explained that because of the attrition problem that generally characterizes most DE programmes, sometimes quite a few numbers of the DE learners can graduate on schedule. The views on the academic calendar of Distance Education in university A were shared by interviewees thus:

“For planning purposes, I will say the academic calendar is not very different from the main university calendar. They are almost the same” (A1)

“Yes. In fact, the semester runs alongside that of the main university’s semesters but of course with modified variations for the distance education” (A2).

“We follow the same principles. But sometimes our semester begins a bit earlier than the main university” (A3).

The academic calendars of the DE and campus-based students in university B, in contrast to the academic calendars of the two modes of university A are not the same in terms of when it starts and when the semester ends. For instance, for the campus-based students in university B, a new academic year starts in August and ends in May as against that of the DE which starts in October and ends in September. The duration of a semester on academic calendars of the two of modes in university B do not actually match and therefore do not follow the university-wide calendar as explained by all interviewees of university B. The reason for the differentials in the academic calendars was attributed to the fact that campus-based students attend lectures five times a week and sometimes on weekends but the DE learners attend face-to-face every other week and only on weekends, hence the need for more time in order to get the required contact hours to attend face-to-face and to go through all the units and sessions of their study materials (modules) before they write their quizzes, assignments and the End year Examinations. For this reason, the two academic calendars cannot be the same for now.

Meanwhile, interviewees mentioned again that the university as part of its commitment to DE, is pushing for the synchronization of the calendars of the two modes but without much success. The interviewees indicated that the Academic Board sees the gap between the academic calendars of the two

modes to be very wide to the extent that DE learners complete their programmes of studies and they must wait for almost a year before they could graduate due to the different academic calendars.

The following statements were made by the interviewees on their views about the academic calendars in university B:

“The academic calendar is drawn and submitted to the Academic Board for approval. It does not follow university-wide calendar” (B1)

“So, you find that we have differences in terms of the calendar, they are not the same. We cannot, say that since the regular begins in August, distance should also start in August. No!” (B2).

“The academic calendars are not the same. That is why the university is pushing hard to synchronize the main university calendar with DE” (B3.)

Face-to-face facilitation and Monitor: Some of the successful distance education programmes that blend the traditional distance learning model with face-to-face sessions include universities A and B selected for this study.

The mode of DE delivery in university A as indicated by interviewee A1 is a blended mode in which a combination of predominately E-learning as a media support and occasional face-to-face interactions are used for instructional delivery in DE environment.

“Ours is the blended mode. Currently what we are doing is that we give the learners the modules and then the module writers would teach the courses in the studio. So, we record the teaching of the entire course. And we give them the videos and the recorded the lecture” (A1).

DE learners in university A are therefore required have any electronic device capable of receiving E-learning materials uploaded from the customized virtual classroom as study materials for their programmes of study. Interviewee A1 further mentioned that face- to- face tutorials are normally

held at weekends and DE learners interact with their course facilitators eight hours twice a month using a customized learning platform called the V-Class which is an online virtual classroom. The V-Class as described by interviewee A1 gives DE learners the opportunity to register for courses online, access examination results and download modules and videos of facilitation sessions by the lead facilitators who write the modules. The lead facilitators as shown by the data analysis are required as part of their contractual agreement to facilitate the modules that they write in a studio and the videos are made available to the DE learners to download as part of their learning materials on the V-Class. The lead facilitators' demonstration lessons are also put on slides for other facilitators to use during the face- to- face tutorial sessions. As regards the above-mentioned activities on the V-Class, interviewees mentioned because of the V-Class, that the university no longer prints modules for their DE learners. Learners could however download all modules online once they have access to the V-Class.

Interviewee A1 describes how face-to-face sessions for DE are organized in university A.

“Face – to-face is organized in two ways; we have the virtual asynchronous face-to-face where learners log onto the V-Class wherever they are to listen to on-going facilitations. And then we have the synchronous type where learners listen to recorded videos of already recorded courses online. Then we allow them to come to class for eight hours over two weeks and ask any questions that bothers them” (A1).

Interviewees also hinted that the current policy on technology usage in university A is to go totally electronic thus reducing the number of face- to- face sessions per every semester though they appreciate its importance. They further mentioned DE learners and faculty have not liked the reduction in the

number face-to-face sessions for personal reasons. The full implementation interviewees maintained, has not taken place because of the negative altitude of both faculty and learners. Notwithstanding the negative feedbacks, the University management is bent on maintaining the limited face-to-face because of current policy of university to totally go electronic soon. As mentioned by interviewee A3 thus:

“You know most of these Ghanaians are coming from that angle, the face- to- face angle and therefore anything electronic becomes a bit strange to them. Our policy now is to go electronic. We have started and we have reduced the number of face- to – face sessions and students have not loved it; lecturers have not liked it and a whole of lot problems, but management is bent on doing the so-called E- learning for DE delivery. And is taking a while because of all the negative things both the lecturers and students are saying but we still will maintain some face – to- face. I believe that drives away the attrition rate to such a very low point” (A3).

Interviewee A3 further lamented on the negative aspects of the face- to- face interaction for the DE learners. He noted thus:

“People attribute several benefits to the face-face-face sessions, but they forget about the negative side of it. There are a lot of negatives associated with the face- to – face sessions especially in a country like Ghana where there are accidents on our roads most of the time. We have observed Distance Education learners involved in some lofty accidents because they have to travel for face- to- face sessions of their programmes and this trend is even not documented” (A3).

Interviewee A3 attributes the dwindling of post graduate admission to the negative aspects of the face-to-face sessions especially where learners had to travel often to attend research seminars. Interviewees affirmed going predominately electronic is uniquely to the DE in university A, because that is not happening in the conventional mode of the university. Interviewees declared thus:

“We have gone electronic E- learning which is not happening in the conventional. Those are some of the difference between the two modes in our university” (A3).

The findings of the study further suggest that face-to-face monitoring in university A is the preserve of senior academic members and some designated senior members administrative such as the zonal coordinators who are stationed at the zonal centres to monitor the facilitators and to attend to DE learners’ queries. Interviewees indicated that there are no guidelines and clear-cut institutional policies that guide the face- to -face monitoring. Interviewee A2 echoed thus;

“We used just the senior members academic and we have some administrators at the institute joining the team. But hitherto, we sent all the monitoring team from the center. Now we have also reduced the number of monitors significantly because we have now appointed the Zonal Coordinators, so they are there to monitor both facilitators and learners attending their queries”

Interviewee A3 sees the absence of policy guidelines on the face-to-face monitoring as challenge and reiterated thus:

“Most people just travel out to do monitoring and come back without any report or feedback from the field and it appears there is lack of control in the Distance Education environment. These things are happening because there have been a lot of changes in the IDL, it appears things have not moved on well with IDL for the past four years as expected based on my own observation” (A3).

Interviewee A3 further argued that there are the needs for IDL to come out with common guidelines for reporting on face-to-face monitoring to empower monitors bring feedback from the field. Furthermore, Interviewee A3 lamented that currently, the monitoring teams come from the departments but

if monitors fail to write report, IDL is to be blamed but their authority over such issues are limited.

Interviewee A2 also indicated that the Quality Assurance Unit of university A also monitors the activities of DE especially during examinations but IDL had not seen any of their reports. Reports of the zonal coordinators however come to IDL and pertinent pick issues that need the immediate attention of the Director are acted upon. Interviewee mentioned this is the only source feedback from the field to DE of university A. It was also revealed from the findings that apparently, there are longer permanent senior members (Academic) at IDL, except for senior members from the other Departments who serve as lead course facilitators on part time for IDL and one retired former senior member. Interviewee A3 again mentioned that as part of the university's restructuring exercise, all academic senior members were reassigned responsibilities in their parent Departments leaving a skeletal administrative staff to manage the DE wing of university. Thus, placing the DE wing of university, A in a state of administrative dilemma.

Interviewees expressed their views about the face-to-face monitoring in university A thus:

“I know that some years ago when the former Registrar was around, we printed a lot of these guidelines. They were very detailed, but some lecturers haven't treated it as urgent as they will treat the conventional one and that has been a problem. Quite recently, we tried to upgrade all our guidelines and I tell you it is still on my computer, though the Director and the Deputy have copies, it is still not operational. The truth is that for the past four years, we've seen a lot of changes in IDL in terms of policies of who must do what and all those things, and personally, it appears to me that things have not moved as expected. I thought by now we should have reached a point where everything is in

order. Sometime ago, when we have senior members at IDL, they were part of the monitoring system. So anytime there is going to be monitoring we made sure certain things were looked it. Now you know our policies have changed and therefore we rely on the Departments, HODs and sometimes Deans depending on weather they interest in the monitoring. And there ii also that aspects when the monitoring team will come from the Departments” (A3). “Face- to- face are organized in ways. We have the virtual one that we call asynchronous face- to- face where the students log on to the V-Class where she/ he is, and then listens to on- going lectures. And then we have the synchronous one where the lecture is recorded, and students upload the video to which the lead facilitator taught in the studio. So, we have the videos recorded. So, we have even stopped the printing of modules” (A1).

“For the face- to- face, we meet them, as I indicated, on weekends and then for each course, currently we’ve limited the face- to- face to two meetings per course. But the face- to –face interaction helps because when a person is delivering and there are no students no students, you can only anticipate questions that students may asked and react to them. But that is different when the students are physically present to ask questions based on their level of assimilation. So, the face – to- face helps” (A2).

“Normally, you expect people write reports. I think some departments do that. I have seen some Departments not doing it. I think the blame should be put on IDL. If you were to give them a common format to follow, then I think that would have worked. But sometimes you have a whole Professor, I don’t. want to wash our dirty linen in public. Then you are only paid when you have submitted your report. A very big senior member going for monitoring and it is like I have gone and come. No report no feedback from the field. I think the way out is to make sure that we come out with a common guidelines document for reporting. Then you are only paid when you have submitted your report. We also have the Quality Assurance Unit. They also do some monitoring. I see them mostly during examinations, but I believe they go beyond that” (A3).

University B2, indicated during the narration that face- to- face sessions begin after registration courses and DE delivery mode is the blended mode like university A. However, the delivery mode is predominately by the print where modules and other study materials are used. The finding of the study revealed

that university B is yet to go fully electronic unlike university A. There is a recent attempt by the university to hook DE learners unto the University Communication Information Systems (UCOSIS) for the conventional campus-based students. DE delivery in university B is about 80% print and 20% media the very opposite of university A.

Interviewee B2 again mentioned that face-to-face sessions are held over the weekends in university like university A. But one unique feature about face-to-face sessions in university B is that they have a lot of face-face sessions per semester about 16 weeks excluding the periods for quizzes and examinations. Interviewee B2 declared thus:

“When you look at the face-to-face sessions at CoDE is every other week because it is distance, we meet the students on Saturdays and Sundays. But what is so peculiar about ours is that we have put them into two groups. We have group one and then we group two. So, assuming group one comes this week than the group two will come the following week and we expect group one to resurface again in the third week and then group two in the fourth week. We have separate times for quizzes and examinations” (B2).

The findings of the study show that dissimilar to university A, various categories of personnel including module writers, chief examiners, other senior members, senior staff, national service personnel and sometimes junior staff move from the headquarters of university B to the various study centers every week to monitor the weekend face-to-face activities. Interviewee B2 explained that these categories of personnel go to monitor course facilitators' facilitation and attendance, check on social amenities provided by host institutions, and to deliver send learners' study materials and other logistics support for both facilitators and learners and to respond DE learners' queries.

Interviewees B2 expressed dissatisfaction about the caliber of personnel that go the face-to-face monitoring and how the monitoring is done generally. He argued that if monitoring is done to improve quality of services provided in the DE environment to benefit of learners, than those who go for monitoring should be senior members who are knowledgeable in the subject areas being facilitated by the facilitators, such caliber of personnel he believes would be able to check on the facilitators' work, social services and also give counseling to learners and give proper feedback but not senior staff, national service personnel and junior staff. Interviewee B2 further opined that if the right caliber of personnel can do the face- to-face monitoring, it will have a direct bearing on improving the facilitators work and enhance learners' learning. Otherwise the whole monitoring process becomes checking of attendance of facilitators for payment. Furthermore, interviewee B2 reiterated that the wrong caliber of personnel is engaged to do the face-to-face monitoring in university B currently because of the large number of study centers numbering about 84. However, management is committed to strengthening the face-to- face monitoring procedures among others with view to improving the DE system gradually and it is hoped that all those problems in the DE environment will be resolved eventually to improve the system Interviewees expressed their views on the face-to-face monitoring in university A thus:

“Yes, let me add that as part of the university’s commitment towards DE, monitoring is done every week during the face-to-face sessions. But if you say you are going to monitor, then those who go on monitoring at the study centers must be senior members who are knowledgeable in the subject areas. You know, those are the categories of personnel that should go out to monitor the face- to- face and not senior staff, national service personnel and junior staff. To do what? So, I think we need to improve upon our monitoring and help the students to pass their

exams and understand what they study, pass their examinations so that they come out as well-prepared graduates who will be useful to the society. You see it starts with monitoring” (B2).

“For the monitoring of face – to- face, we don’t have any codified policies which tell us this is how we should do it. No. When we go there for monitoring, we just to find out whether the course tutors are doing the right things. You find that, monitoring process is virtually the same. Monitoring is also done by Vice Chancellor and the Pro Vice Chancellor as well as the Quality Assurance Unit. They all go to monitor because we want to achieve quality. So that is what we do. But I say that we have any laid down policies” (B1).

“I think that as an institution, if we really undertake the face- to- face, it should be face- to- face with an objective, it should be face- to- face with reports on feedback from the centers for management to attend promptly learners challenges I remember when I when was a Provost I made a suggestion that , apart from the senior members, we should rope in either the chief examiners and module writers, occasionally, to visit the study centers especially where examination results tell us that people fail to how the modules are being facilitated and collect students feedbacks. So far I have not seen any formal report from the monitoring” (B3).

4.7 Deferment, Transfer, Transit and withdrawals:

With regards to the flexibility in the academic policies in the DE environment of university A, the findings from the study show that because of the peculiar nature of the DE delivery, management allows the flexibility for deferments, transits and withdrawals in the DE environment. Interviewee B3 hinted this is one of the academic policy areas that the DE unit deviates significantly from the main university academic policies accepts the decision because of the peculiar circumstances of the DE environment of the university

Interviewees stated thus;

“Yes, here we allow students to defer because some of them have peculiar circumstances. For example, a fresher becomes pregnant and finds that she cannot continue and claims she needs medical attention will allow that person to defer on medical grounds” (A1)

“In university A, the academic policy is that students are permitted to defer in the first year, as a fresher unless the student completes the first year, he/she cannot defer his programme. But we had on countless occasions been given that flexibility to defer even before the commencement of their programmes” (A2).

Interviewee A3 added thus:

“Distance Education is typically meant for the working class including the Military, Police, Immigration officers and all manner of people. So, these categories of people apply, pay their fees, and then before the commencement of the programme, sometimes about two weeks into the programme, they must go on an official national assignment. When this happens, we do not have a choice than to allow the affected learners to defer and come back and commence with their programmes later. The main university allows deferral for only one year if it not on medical grounds, but we have created our own rules and regulations where learners can defer for more than a year on whatever grounds. Normally after deferment, because learners indicating their intentions of coming back to continue with their programmes. Once they communicate in writing they are re-instated to resume their academic work without any hindrances” (A3).

Transits are also permissible in university A for DE learners as mentioned by interviewee A2 & 3. Thus:

“Learners are informed about the flexibility that allows to do transits to other study center across the country so long as their programmes are being run in those study centers. All they need is to just introduce themselves to the study center coordinator using their identity cards and indicating how long they will stay in that study centre” (A2)

“In fact, we do allow transit from the students. one of the guiding principles in distance learning is flexibility for students. So, a student from Accra can transit in Tamale. When the student gets to Tamale, he must contact the Centre Coordinator. In fact, they can transit for both examinations as well as face –to- face” (A3).

The findings of the study indicated that the academic policy on withdrawal of the university is binding on all students including DE learners. So, like the main university academic policy on withdrawal, when a learner has quite

several referrals, he/she is made to withdraw from the programme. However, a learner can withdraw on his own volition.

Interviewee A2 again mentioned thus:

“Sometimes we make a case for learners who are trailing due to some genuine problems and circumstances beyond their control. At the Academic Board, IDL make cases for such learners to be re-instated to continue with their programmes of studies. And almost all the time, when we make such cases the learners are re-instated. And that allows the Distance Education some form of flexibility in terms of withdrawal over their counterparts on the conventional mode” (A2).

Similar to university A, flexibility to defer, transfer and transit from one study centre to the other are permissible to DE learners in university B as shown by the findings of the study. DE learners are also given the flexibility to defer their programmes of studies and later come back to continue. It is permissible for all learners to freely move from their study centers to either to attend face-to-face or write examinations on transits and to withdraw from the programme altogether when necessary. As it is in the case of university A, Interviewees in university B acknowledge the fact that DE learners have a myriad of problems that make the learning environment a peculiar one. So, deferment is always allowed for the learners to attend to their non-academic issues that disrupt their academic work.

The processes for deferment in university involve writing to inform management about their intentions to defer, indicating the reason(s) for deferment. The College then grants the deferment and learners are informed accordingly through the Student Support Unit and the study center Coordinators. Like university A, Interviewees in the narration indicated that academic policy on deferment for DE learners in university B deviates

significantly from the academic policy on deferment for campus-based students which allows a student to defer for only a year like the academic deferment policy in university A.

Furthermore, interviewees noted that generally a DE learner can defer for year in the first instance, but if for any reason, the learner feels that the challenge is persisting, writes for the extension. In so far as the challenges of the learner have not been resolved, the learner can write every year for deferment extension. Interviewees also hinted that as pertains in university A, when DE learners defer, they resume. To resume, they only write to the Student Support Services Unit for re-activation of their status in the data base system of the College.

The flexibility to move from one study to another study centre permanently (transfer) or temporary (transit) also exists in university B. In the narration, interviewees mentioned that because of the peculiar circumstances of the DE learners that is also available since all sort of workers subscribe to the DE programmes. For instance, when workers especially from the forces are on official duties outside their permanent station, they are given the permission to transfer permanently or transit temporary to another study of their choice. Again, they need to inform the College of their intention to transit ahead of time before they could be granted the permission. Interviewees hinted that, deferments and transits are some of the key support services they render to the DE learners in university to enhance the academic environment of DE for the benefit learners.

The findings of the study suggest that withdrawal is also permissible to DE learners if they deem it fit to do so. But hardly are learners withdrawn by management for non-performance of academic work. Learners could withdraw from the programme at their own volition. And even if that happens, management follows up on the learner to see if there could be any help in preventing the learner from withdrawing from the programme. Interviewee B1 hinted that the flexibility on withdrawal is unique to DE learners because the university takes a serious view on the academic performance of conventional students where nonperforming students are withdrawn every year for poor academic performance and sometimes on disciplinary grounds. Interviewees made the remarks below on deferment, transfers, transits and withdrawal in university B thus:

“Because of the flexibility in the distance education programme we don’t withdraw anybody. Even those who are failing the exams, unlike the regular we still give them the opportunity to redeem themselves because you would not know the circumstances that actually caused the failure” Policies guiding deferment in the DE environment is a bit different and hardly do we withdraw the distance students” (B1).

“It is also permissible for the distance students to move from their study center to another study center temporary on transit or permanently on transfer or change of study center. But as I said, very soon policies would be put in place” (B2).

“Yes, we allow them to defer. Most of them have differed based on financial grounds. A few have also deferred due to pregnancy related issues. So, there are all kinds of reasons why they defer. But largely deferment has been on financial difficulties. Students have to inform authority of their intention to defer transit, transfer or withdraw but they do not do so. Hardly are students withdrawn for both academic and non-academic purposes. On the regular mode deferment is only once. The maximum is twice. But in the DE, so far, we haven’t placed a cap on how many times a learner can defer. Academic Board has raised before, wanting to be placed on it like the regular mode but the argument was mounted that the DE students’ situation is very

peculiar, and they must be allowed to defer on countless occasions” (B3).

Evaluation of Programme and Courses: Constant evaluation of programmes and courses in any academic programme is very necessary. It helps to achieve results. It is therefore important for dual mode universities to evaluate their programmes periodically, to see if there is the need to modify, replace or scrap certain programmes or courses. In view this, interviewees were asked to share their insights on the evaluation of programmes and courses in their universities. It came out clearly from the findings of the study that both university A and B do not really perform this important function, except for the evaluation of end of year examinations which is done through their Examinations Mal-practice Committees of the main universities.

Interviewees from both universities indicated that normally all processes of their DE units are evaluated by the Department of Quality Assurance of the main university. They noted further that the National Accreditations Board (NAB) requires all accredited universities in Ghana to do periodic evaluation of their courses/programmes including Distance Education once in every five years. This is the core business of the Quality Assurance Units of the universities. Interviewees further note that evaluation reports from the Quality Assurance Units when received are thoroughly discussed by the Distance Education governing Boards and recommendations sent to the DE units for implementation and redress. Interviewees share their insights on programme/courses evaluation. Thus:

“We do not normally evaluate our programme and courses per say. Fortunately, you know that the National Accreditations Board even requires it so that ones we don’t have a choice. NAB would want to see a track of the industry engagement you have had, people who contributed, what changes you are making, or if

you are maintaining old systems, what is the reason, and normally they would want a report. They don't take it by word of mouth. So IDL the sessions end every four and NAB expects an evaluation reports" (A1)

"I won't say we actually evaluate our programmes and courses. Because I don't remember us sitting down to talk about probably looking at all aspects of our activities including programmes/courses. But usually when we go for retreats, we receive reports from our officers on administrative issues" (A2).

"We have the Quality Assurance Unit and Examination malpractice committee which meet to evaluate examinations and activities of CoDE. The reports from these committees are discussed by the University Management and decisions forwarded to DE for further actions. The Advisory Committee sometime evaluates the admission processes and orientation sessions for freshers as well as modules but not the evaluation of programmes/courses. (B1).

"We have gone for several retreats to discuss other issues but not the evaluation of programmes. Yes, that we have done. But I don't think from time to time we evaluate programme/ Courses. I haven't seen that and I think it is something we need to do because if we do that it may even tell us that certain programmes either need to be modified, certain programs need to be scrapped, certain programme need to be replaced and all that. We need to that and I have not seen that one" (B2).

4.8 Fiscal, Governance and Geographic Issues

The findings of the study revealed that both universities A and B generate their own finances internally to run DE without any support from government or the main university as indicated by interviewee A3. thus:

"Now when it comes to the financial resources, IDL generates its own finances. In terms of finances, we are not supported by the university. Our fees are not part of the government subventions but internally generated funds. IDL fees are not the same as the regular. We try to recover all costs from the students' fees" (A3).

In the narration, interviewee A1 mentioned that IDL has a semi autonomy to manage its financial resources but they are still guided by the main university financial policies of the main universities. With this notwithstanding the

university appears not to be very flexible on the release of IDL funds for its activities. Interviewee B2 hinted thus:

“The issue with the IDL funds is that it is seen as university “funds” and all regulations governing the use of university funds apply to IDL. Though IDL operates a separate bank account from that of the main university and have been given the autonomy to use the funds, accessing the funds from the central administration is always cumbersome and bureaucratic” (A2).

Interviewee A2 further mentioned thus:

“The only area that IDL could easily access funds easily is the funds for payment of facilitators’ travel allowances. For that one, as soon as the facilitators come from their travels money is readily made available for their payment because people had to pre-finance those activities before they are reimbursed. When IDL need other resources for administrative purposes, it becomes very difficult because the process goes through the same procurement processes as that of the conventional mode. The procurement committee members do not understand the peculiar nature of the Distance Education environment” (A2).

It was also gathered from the findings of the study that there is a university policy that stipulates that for every internally generated fund, some percentages on the gross income are paid to the main university. So, for all the funds that come to IDL, ten percent (10%) is paid affront to the main university. Whatever remains in the IDL account is still counted as university funds. So, when the Central Administration needs funds, they resort to the IDL funds again. Interviewee A3 argued that the truth about DE delivery in university A and any dual mode institution in every country, the objectives are two. People do not normally talk about the two. They only talk about the idea of using Distance Education to widen access to tertiary education. They do not talk about the unwritten one which is the generation of income which supersedes the “widening access”. Interviewee B3 believes this explains why accessing funds for DE activities in university A is sometimes not very easy.

Interviewees A2&3 share insights about the disbursement of IDL funds in university A thus:

“I know that the convention here is that for every internally generated fund, some percentages are paid affront to the university, so for all the money that come to IDL, we pay ten percent (10%) affront to the university but of course whatever is there is still a university funds. So, when they need money, they will come to IDL. Recently, we built a center at Moree. It’s not an IDL center. It is a university. But it was built with IDL funds. I am tempted to believe that they do that because they want to use IDL funds other purposes” (A2).

“We are in business know that. We don’t get support from the university. The university rather gets support from us. You see the truth about this distance learning programme in universities in every country, the objectives are two. People don’t normally talk about the two. They talk about one which is “widening access but not the generation of income. And if you are rating whether the generation of income is based on quantity or quality, you have no answers. They get a lot of support from distance learning. They have told us point blank that IDL money is not for IDL; it’s for the university. They have not hidden that from us, expect that we have the autonomy of keeping that money somewhere and that is that” (A3).

In terms of fees fixing and payment plan, interviewee A3 indicated IDL, over the years has learnt from other universities, especially University of Cape Coast in terms of how much to charge and the payment order. Interviewee explained that, they do that because all the public dual mode universities in Ghana are currently competing for the very few students’ workers who want to top up knowledge on their careers. Therefore, if they out-priced the DE fees, far above their competitors, it means losing prospective applicants so they are always on the look out to see how much other universities are charging for DE expect for the Science areas where the Departments make inputs because of laboratory and field trips which add additional cost. Interviewee A3 further hinted that they are mindful of the fees of other universities especially

programmes that are being run by almost all the dual mode university such as the business programmes. But for programmes that are unique for university A, which they do not have too many competitors the fees for such programmes go up almost every academic year.

The findings of the study show that fees payment schedules for DE learners in university A, is that learners are expected to pay sixty (60%) of a whole year's fees before registration and pay the rest before the start of the first semester examinations. Interviewee A2 hinted that DE learners do not find this arrangement very comfortable and are always in default of payment to the extent that they are sometimes prevented from writing examinations. Since management is very strict when it comes to payment of fees because IDL runs on the learners' fees.

Interviewees made the following remarks on fiscal policies in university A;

“Yes, when it comes to setting the fees and even collecting them, we've learnt from the universities, university of Cape Coast especially in terms of how much to charge and because of the competition, these days, you know we are all competing for the very few students who want to top up whatever knowledge they want to acquire and because of that when you outprice, your competitors, it means losing prospective students because students are also on the lookout for who is asking for the minimum payment. But when it comes to some of the programme, the Departments add some inputs” (A3).

“Formerly, we used to allow them not even pay before registration. You just register and start. And we realized that we were losing a lot of money, because the students will hold on to their money and then pay at some point, meanwhile the institute must run. So, we instituted a policy to have them pay sixty percent (60%)” (A1)

The findings from the study, indicated that geographically, IDL has 13 study centers across Ghana with study centers in Dubai, Nigeria and Cameroon.

Interviewees indicated accessibility to study centers by DE learners is not a

problem, since almost all study centers are well located mainly in the regional capitals. Apart from the Kumasi and the Accra study centers, the weekend face-to-face sessions are organized in hired host institutions especially in the polytechnics across the country. Interviewees made the statements below in relation to geographical service areas in their university;

“The accessibility to a large extent, I can put it fifty to sixty percent” We have thirteen study centers with study centers in Dubai, Nigeria and Cameroon (A1).

“We are mostly located in the polytechnics and they are well located so people have access to places without any difficulty with means of transport” (A2).

“The polytechnics are well situated so we don’t have problems in terms of accessibility” (A3).

Governance is closely related to finances and geography. It relates the kind of Board responsible to oversee the activities of the Distance Education units of dual mode universities.

The governance structure of university A&B as indicated by the findings of the study begins with the University Council, a Board of Directors nominated from faculties whose academic programmes are replicated on the distance mode and Provosts from the five Colleges of the university. The University Academic Policies Board constitutes the governing Boards.

However, in university A, below the Board of Directors is the IDL Management Board whose membership includes the IDL Director as the chairman, Registrar, and the Accountant of the institute and experienced senior members who work for IDL. Interviewees mentioned that normally the IDL Board gives input and receives feedback from the Board of Directors. Below the IDL Board, are the various committees, the Director and his administrative staff who oversee to the day to day activities of IDL.

Interviewee A3 Shares his insights about the governance structure of university A thus:

“Yes, there is a University Council. We do have a Board of Directors, Board members and they come from all the faculties that run part of their programmes in distance learning. I have just been told that all Provosts are even part of this IDL Board. And below that structure we what we call the IDL Management Board. Then the Director again, the Registrar of the Accountant of the institute; we have the “old boys” of the institute like me. So, this people manage the day- to- day activities of IDL. Normally we give inputs and receive feedback from the board members. And below that structure comes, the Director and his administrative staff. After that you are coming to what the Zonal Coordinators”

Interviewee A3 further explained that the Zonal Coordinators were recently appointed to replace the study centre coordinators. Thus:

“We didn’t have Zonal Coordinators. We only have what we call study Center Coordinators at the various centres. The Zonal Coordinators were recently appointed. They senior members administrative who man the study centres in the Zones. And it is part of the University’s main Governing Structure”.

Interviewee AI also hinted that DE learners in university A are not represented on any IDL Boards. The DE learners’ university A do not also have any students’ association as suggested by the data analysis Interviewee A1 offered this statement;

“You see the IDL policies and actions follows and actions and whatever we do flows the university, the Graduate Students and SRC rep; these two groups represent all students on the university council and other committees. But when it comes to IDL management and the Board, the students’ voice is supposed to be represented by the Zonal Coordinators. You see the difficulty we have is that a lot of the meetings and decisions about IDL are done during the weekdays and these are IDL students who are also workers. That’s one challenge. The second challenge is that the university has refused to recognize the IDL students as any separate students” (A1).

Interviewee A3 was quick to indicate again that the governance structure of IDL has not been very stable due to a lot of changes that have occurred in the Institute for the past four years for which he sees as very worrisome. Yet other senior members come from the Departments come to work for IDL on part time. Interviewee A3 leveled some strong argument on the transfer of the Academic Senior members of IDL to the various departments and remarked that because those senior members who come from the departments are not full time members of IDL, sometimes when they get busy on the conventional mode, they are tempted to neglect their responsibility towards the Distance Education learners. He eloquently describes his experience:

“And we do ask a lot of questions, because we know the caliber of our lecturers too. Once they get busy on the regular programme. They tempted to neglect their responsibility towards the DE learners. And the truth is that for the past four years, we’ve seen a lot of changes in IDL in terms of activities, in terms of policies, who has to do what, and personally it appears to me that things have not moved as expected. By now we should have reached a point where we could say yes everything is in order at IDL” (A3).

Interviewee B3 further hinted thus:

“I told you something earlier that personally I think IDL is still not very stable because of the many changes in policies, because of the changes in personnel, and those things. The university has not been able to solve that problem yet. But notwithstanding that, those who work for IDL, either as committees or as individuals, play the role that the permanent senior members would have played. But I do conceive their challenges. That is a fact. I want to see the day that there will be stability in IDL in terms of policies that we are discussing” (B3).

The findings from the study show that the most fiscal policy issues emanating from university B are not very different from that of university A since both are public dual mode universities with similar characteristics. Similar to university A, Interviewee B3 mentioned that the main sources of income in university B to run DE activities are internally generated funds predominately

sourced from the DE learners' fees and sometimes from little investments from the extras of fees after all overhead costs have been recovered. He stated further that the College of Distance Education does not receive any form of support from the main university or the government just like university A. The university rather gets support from the College of Distance Education when the need arises. Interviewee B1 explains the issues in the following statement thus:

“Discussing financial issues of the College is a very delicate one. But then in terms of sources, predominately, the word is predominately, it is from the school fees collected from the students. That is our main source. So, it internally generated. And then occasionally from some little investments we make after all overhead costs have been recovered. We don't get any support from the Government or the main University. We rather support them. So, it is like, it goes up. It doesn't come down. That is how it is” (B1).

The interviewee BI again affirmed that though the College of Distance Education has a semi financial management autonomy like university A. However, the College is very prudent in the use of funds and are always guided by the main university's policies on the use of funds as well as the Public Procurement Law. As a result, the DE unit in university B is very prudent in the way they manage their financial resources. They believe that though the funds are generated internally it is still public funds and they are accountable to the university and the Public Accounts Committee of Ghana. Interviewees indicated there are checks and balances in their financial management as the Vice- Chancellor and the Director of Finance and a team of officers are constantly monitoring the use of DE funds with the view to ensuring the prudent use of the funds.

Interviewee B2 stated thus:

“If you look at the university, Colleges, Schools and Faculties admits students and these students pay their fees into a central university account, then the University apportions the funds to the various units. Now when it comes to the College of Distance Education, it is about the only section of the University where the University has almost made it a policy to allow them to manage their own finances, even though under the close watch of the University. So, their students do not pay their fees into the University’s Accounts. They pay into the College’s Accounts. The University knows that the College needs to establish satellite campuses nationwide; therefore, for them to do this, they need to manage their finances. And of course, the University Auditors will come in to make sure we do the rights as we are accountable to the National Public Accounts Committee at the end of the day” (B2).

Interviewee B1 further added that:

“The main university financial policies are there. And then we also recognize the fact that if we are not prudent in the way we manage our finances, and the Public Accounts Committee takes on, it will not be good. It is public money. You cannot just disburse the funds anyhow. Yes, there are checks and balances. The Vice Chancellor is there to make sure that you are spending within limits” (B1).

Interviewees mentioned that the College of Distance Education has enjoyed a very strong financial stability over the years through good leadership. Despite this achievement, interviewee B1 was insistent that the only period that the College nearly went bankrupt was during the tenure of office of a Director when there was a change in leadership of DE wing. Interviewee B1 in support of the argument remarked thus:

“In terms of financial management of the College, most of the time it depends on who is the leader, because I know that there was a time when we almost went bankrupt. Where we could not even honor our certificates of payments for goods and services procured for the College’s activities” (B1).

Interviewee B1 believe that there is a strong relationship between the leadership of DE wings of dual mode universities and its financial

management outcomes. This is because all operational activities of most DE units are carried out with internally generated funds.

In terms of fee charged and payment plan in university B, the findings of the study reveals a very flexible charges and payment plan for DE learners in university B. Interviewee B1 shares views about thus:

“Distance Education learners’ fees compared to the convention mode are on the low side and the payment plan is very flexible. Usually, what we do is that when they come as fresh students that one I think they pay all fess affronts. Yeah as for that one is universal. We demand that they make full payment but then, for the continuing students we usually give them certain amount of money to pay. So the payment for the DE students is very flexible. But we insist that since we need money to run our activities for the programme we ensure that by the end of the second semester, or before we start the second examinations, they would have up. This is an arrangement by the College and not a university policy” (B1).

Interviewee B1 further hinted thus:

“Oh, regulations on the payment of fees by Distance Education learners keeps on changing. The rules are not straight forward. And sometimes some of us get a bit worried. You know it worries us because it’s like rules are not consistent. The situations where sometimes even during the semester, if someone has not made full payment, the person is not allowed to write the exams. Then at other times too, when we have even said don’t allow defaulters to write, then a superior officer comes to say that no let them write. So, there is so much confusion, and inconsistency” (B1).

So, management keep changing the mode of fee paying every time depending on the feedback received from the field.

Interviewee B3 concluded the discussion on fees payment in university B by indicating thus:

“Students could make half or more payment of their fees during the beginning of the semester and pay next at the beginning of the

second semester. Those who have genuine financial challenges could approach management to make flexible payment” (B3).

The governance structure/ system currently in the DE wing of university B is new and still evolving as shown by the findings of the study. The university had just adapted the collegiate system. The DE wing of the university has been upgraded to a College with a two-tier status. Therefore, practices and processes for DE delivery are not clearly defined.

Similar to university A, the governance structure currently starts with the University Council, a College Board, whose composition include representatives from all the five Colleges of the university. However, in university B other key stakeholders such as the Ghana Education Service, Colleges of Education as well as the Ghana National Association of Teachers and people from the industry form part of the governance structure. The findings of the study suggest that the College Board exercises the overall responsibility of the governing of the College of Distance Education. There is an advisory committee comprised of academic senior members of Professorial rank in the College and other designated officers of the College, a middle management committee whose composition include all senior members of the College of which some are Unit Heads and Unit Coordinators in addition to the full members of the Advisory Committee. Below these structures are the offices of the Provost, Heads of Departments, the Registrars, the College Finance Officer and their office personnel as well as the Regional Resident Tutors and their office staff that see to the day to day activities of the College at the regional levels. Interviewees indicated that apart from the University

Council, the Provost of the Distance Education chairs the governing Board of the College as well as all Committees of the College.

The findings of the study reveal that the management of the College of Distance Education takes active interest in the activities of Distance Education Students Association (DESAG) and gives them support. DESAG is recognized in university B and the association has a representation on the College Board unlike in university A where there is no such Distance Education learners' association and therefore Zonal Coordinators representing DE learners' voice on the IDL Board. Interviewees describe the governance system in university B generally as very open with effective chain of command and information follow to the benefit of both staff and DE learners.

Interviewees in university B shares insights on the governance structure in university B with the following remarked thus:

“So, when it comes to the administration or decision making, as far as ours is concerned. I will say it is open. We have a Governing Board, when you look at the constitution of the Governing Board, you will be excited. It is not just people from the College. We have people from the Ghana Education Service, Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), and Colleges of Education and from industry. The Colleges of the university also have their representation on the Board. You know, with the Board chaired by the Provost was not like that initially. It was the Pro-Vice Chancellor who was the Chairman and personally, if I have my own, I will say we should go back to old practice. Yes, you see you can't have the Provost chairing the Advisory and other committees and also chair the Governing Board. You see it is not right. But that is the structure now. May be in future there may be some changes, because the collegiate system is still young and we now evolving. The practices and procedures have not been clearly defined yet. The governance structure is still evolving”
(B1)

“Well before it became a College, it used to a center and we had Board chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor. And then we had the Director. And working with the Director at that time we had two deputy Directors; Academic and Operations. The Center didn’t have clear – cut Departments so it was the Board, the Director and the Units. So that was how the structure was. Now when it became a college, the Board was dissolved but chairmanship of the Board was given to the Provost. And alongside the Board is Advisory Committee is the middle Committee. The Advisory Committee takes the day- to-day decisions of the College and reports to the Board. The Provost chairs the Board, Advisory Committee as well as the middle management, The Advisory Committee is made of Professors and Heads of Departments. The Board is made up Advisory Committee members plus representatives from other Colleges of the University, reps from GES, reps from Teacher Education. So, the Board is both external and internal composition while the advisory committee is only internal” (B2).

“The College’s Management Board has active interest in the activities of Distance learners and supports them. The student Association has a representation on the Governing Board of the College. The College Board exercises overall responsibility for the governance of the College” (B3).

Geographically, university B has about 84 study centers across the country in the various regions and districts Interviewee B1 declared thus:

“We have a study centres spread across the country we not extend our services outside the country. We should have our own buildings, because now most of the facilities that we are using, they are or less rented premises. We are using school classrooms, some in Senior High schools Colleges of Education and the Polytechnics. But the good news is that we have started putting up our buildings. Accra, we have one which was completed in 2012 and they have started using the place. There is one at Dominase, Kumasi, which has been commissioned to be used. Bolga and then Wa, work is progressing steadily, they are almost at the roofing stage. Then recently we cut a sword for the construction of the Jumapo one. In fact, we have acquired plots of land in all the regions to put up at least a regional center” (B1).

The geographic services areas or study centers in university B are normally located in host institutions except for the headquarters and the Accra regional centers that are in the College's own ultra-modern complex buildings in Cape Coast and Accra.

Furthermore, interviewee B1 declared that the College has acquired plots of land in all the regional capitals of the country and plans are far advanced for the College to put up its own regional offices. The Ashanti region office has been completed but was not in use. The upper East and Upper West regional study centers were under construction and work was progressing steadily.

Interviewee B1 again mentioned that despite the fact that the services areas of the College are mostly located in host institutions, proximity to these services areas/ study centers for the DE learners has always been the priority of the College and that explains why management has opened a lot more study centers for the accessibility of the DE learners.

By implication, the finding of the study reveals that DE learners choose their study centers by proximity and therefore do not have many problems reaching their study centers except for some restrictive centralized activities and services that are provided only at the headquarters of the College and at the main university. Interviewees cited activities and services like academic counseling and advising, graduation, academic records and assessment, collection of detailed results, transcripts and certificates as the activities that are centralized and DE learners are most likely to have challenges in assessing in terms of geographical difficulties.

Interviewees made the under- listed remarks regarding geographic issues in the DE environment of university B:

“So, we don’t have problems in terms of accessibility” our face-to-face sessions are held mostly in host institutions which are well located in the regional and district capitals and they are easily accessible to our Distance Education learners”. (B1)

“I think for now our DE learner don’t have problem with accessibility. It for this reason of carrying our services to them as close as possible to them that is why we keep opening new centers. I don’t know the number of study centres we started with, but as I speak, we have over 84 study centers spread across the country and we are still opening. So, when we realize that in a centre some of them come from very far and remote places we try to look at that catchment area and plant one. So, in terms of accessibility I think so far, we have tried to send our service as close as possible. Normally we encourage the learners to choose their study centers by proximity to their places of residence” (B2).

“Learners therefore do not have difficulties going to their study centers except for some centralized services that are provided only at the Headquarters and at the main university DE learners sometimes have some form of difficulties in accessing their details results, academic transcripts and certificates because these services are provided to the learners only at the Headquarters.” (B3).

4.8 Faculty Issues

The finding of the study indicates that faculty policies issues, in both university A and B are similar. Both universities use course facilitators/course tutors to represent faculty on the DE programmes. Some facilitators/course tutors are also faculty members of the conventional mode who serve as facilitators on the DE mode. Almost all the facilitators/course tutors for the two universities serve as part time staff for the DE wings of the universities except for a few permanent senior members in university B.

In university A, there are two categories of course facilitators, senior members of the university nominated from the Departments and those from industry with requisite qualifications to facilitate courses that run at multiple centers demanding practical skills. Interviewee A2 mentioned that the facilitators nominated from the Departments do not go through any rigorous interview as they are already staff. They are just nominated by their Heads of Departments to serve on the DE on part time basis. But for programmes, which are run at multiple study centers, people from the industries are appointed to reduce cost. Such prospective applicants are interviewed by IDL.

There are no clear-cut institutional policies guiding the selection of facilitators and orientation. There are however guidelines that IDL, follow taking cognizance of the main university policies on appointments.

Interviewee A2 hinted thus:

“There are no specific guidelines in relation instructional delivery on DE and for the appointment of facilitators No! But what we do for all facilitators at par is that at the beginning of every semester, we have what we call facilitators workshop. So, we bring the facilitators together at one place and then the lead facilitator who is usually the module writer. And as part of their duties, will take other facilitators through the slides and the videos they have developed. This will enable the facilitators to become aware of what they are supposed to do” (A2).

Interviewee A3 added that for programmes that run at multiple centers, they usually prefer outsiders especially people from industry and that is also part of the selection criteria. Interviewee A3 also stated thus:

“As you are aware all lecturers who serve as facilitators for DE are from the University here and they have already been interviewed. So, they are just nominated by their Heads of Departments to serve on part at the DE. But for some programmes we will prefer using outsiders, because it is cost effective and you find them in the industries in the regions. And

when that happens, then the facilitator from the university will be the lead facilitator for that course. So that link is there. For the same human resources for facilitation, the new law is that those coming from outside are appointed by IDL and those from within the university also appointed by the university” (A3).

It was also gathered from the findings of the study that all facilitators go through an orientation when they are appointed. Interviewee A2 indicated that normally in university A, a lead facilitator is appointed among other facilitators for the various courses. The lead facilitators normally develop the course modules and teach the modules in a studio. This is done to equip the facilitators to become aware of what they are expected to cover within each course block, the extent to which they can go at any given time, in order that all facilitators will be at par with the rate of course delivery. All facilitators during the workshop are made aware their roles and responsibilities, workload, class size, remuneration, learners’ expectations and any challenges that they envisage that will mar/ make their progress as facilitators are also discussed. Facilitators are also monitored regularly and assessed by the lead facilitators, DE learners and the Quality Assurance Unit of the main university with the view to ensuring good quality of programmes and courses. This becomes evident when interviewee A2 remarked thus:

“The students do assessment of the course facilitators. When the assessment is done, the Quality Assurance Unit has a way of rating the facilitators so if a course facilitators rating is poor, he/she is written to as form of query to improve or face the consequences of being dropped from the position. Most often course facilitators when they have been written to improve on their services quality” (A).

Interviewee B3 again mentioned that there are no permanent senior members academic solely for Distance Education activities. Senior members academic

who work currently at IDL are drawn from the Departments to work on part basis for IDL. Below are interviewee's statements about faculty issues

“And the truth is that is that for the past four years, we have seen a lot of changes in IDL in terms of activities, in terms of policy, who has to do what and all of those things, and personally, it appears to me that things had not moved on well as expected. I thought by now we should have reached a point where we will say that yes everything is in order now. We are using the policy were told to use and unfortunately, it looks as if the changes are still on going. Today, a Duty is not there; all senior members have been transferred to the Departments. People need to learn on the job. This is not the best. Sometime ago, when we had senior members at IDL, they made sure certain things were looked at. Now you know the policy has changed and therefore we rely on the Departments, especially the HODS depending on whether they show interest in our activities” (A3).

Faculty issues in university B, as the findings of the study show are very similar to faculty issues in university A. University B predominately represent faculty with course tutors hired from other educational institutions outside the university. Interviewee B1 explained that the reason for this internal arrangement is that the College of Distance Education has so many study centers for which the university cannot service with senior members (faculty) from the main university. However, there are a lot of senior members academic who serve at CoDE as module writers, chief examiners or course facilitators. Interviewee B1 further hinted that there are no clear-cut institutional policies that guides recruitment and responsibilities of courses tutor/facilitators. There are however some guidelines and procedures crafted around the main university policies for staff recruitment which CoDE uses for course tutors' recruitment over the years. It was gathered from the findings of the study that one unique feature about course tutors/ facilitators' recruitment in university B is that irrespective of the applicant's academic qualifications,

by the demands of the university, there is the need for the applicant to have a professional education background. The reason assigned to this demand is that the focus of DE in university B is to improve the professional competencies of workers who are mainly teachers. Interview B1 indicated thus:

“Whatever the person intends to teach the person must have both academic and professional education background, so once the person satisfies that condition then we look at the number of years the person has taught. Then we check competencies on the subject content area. So, all these are part of the criteria that we use. These are not policies. They just process we evolved over the years. It’s working for us. I know that sometimes some people have differing views on the approach. But for now, that is what we do” (B2).

Interviewee B1 further mentioned that recruitment of course tutors starts by the applicants submitting their applications including photo copies of their certificates and curriculum vitas through the Regional Residence Tutors to the various Heads of Departments at the Headquarters Heads of Departments shortlists the applicants after a thorough scrutiny of the applications. Shortlisted applicants are invited for interview at the CoDE (Headquarters) and qualified applicants appointed. Appointment letters are issued by the Vice- Chancellor to the qualified applicants as part time staff of the university in their capacities as course tutors/facilitators. Interviewee B3 stated thus:

“Prospective applicants submit their application including photocopies of their certificates and CVs. They are then called for interview and qualified ones appointed. Appointment letters are issued by the Vice Chancellor” (B3).

The only laid down guidelines or procedures for the course tutors is that they are not lecture but to facilitate the modules written by a team of experts in the various courses/programmes.

By facilitation, it means that course tutors are expected to help Distance Education learners to understand the issues that they do not understand after

reading the module which has been written in an interactive mode with the in-house styles of the College of Distance Education Interviewee B2 indicated thus:

“The only laid guideline or procedure for course tutors is that once they are appointed as course tutors, they are told that the delivery method is not lecturing but facilitation, and facilitation means helping the students to understand issues that they do not understand in the module and so when you with them, you let them come up with their problems and then together with them, you discuss and help them to understand what they are reading in the module. That is facilitation.” (B2)

By implication, in university B, course tutors are appointed to facilitate learners’ understanding of the modules as form of support service with the view to creating a supportive learning environment for the learners’ success.

With this notwithstanding, Interviewee B2 further hinted thus:

“But you see, two things, one facilitation is skill, lecturing is a skill. I am looking at a day where we would say that all those who have been appointed as course tutors and are going to facilitate, come for a two-week refresher course on how to facilitate. You see, and we take them through the facilitation procedures. Otherwise we are not helping them. Facilitation is a very different ball game and people need to be trained and helped to do it well. This is missing in the course tutor’s orientation sessions after recruitments” (B2).

In their candid opinions, interviewees made a strong argument that the situation is worrisome since most of the facilitators on their permanent jobs do not facilitate during instructional delivery. Interviewee B2 during the narration indicated that it appears most of the course tutors teach in the Senior High Schools where they teach their students and therefore lack facilitation skills. Consequently, they are likely to handle the DE learners in the same as they handle their own students in the senior secondary schools, and they cannot be blamed for the situation. Interviewee B2 were also of the view that both course

tutors and senior members of the university who serve as course tutors on the DE programme should all be equipped with facilitation skills since the senior members also lecture on the conventional mode.

Currently, course tutors are oriented on their course, class size, remuneration and professional ethics in relation to their work. Interviewee B2 reiterated the need for course facilitators to acquire some form of facilitation skills when he remarked thus:

“There are two things in the instructional delivery of the two modes. These are facilitation and lecturing skills. How do we facilitate? You see, we need to take them through. Otherwise because most of them are teaching in Senior High Schools, they do not facilitate they teach. The person has not facilitated before and you are saying go and facilitate. So, when go and meet them, they are handling the Distance Education learners like their own SHS students, and we cannot blame them. We need to give all facilitators including colleague facilitators because they also lecture. They all need some refresher courses and equip them on how to facilitate” (B2).

The findings of the study show that the course writers are normally given the opportunity to serve as chief examiners and sometimes to monitor course tutors’ facilitation. Unlike university A, the findings also suggest that in university B, apart from course tutors and the other senior members from other Departments, CoDE has its own permanent academic senior members appointed by the university to work exclusively for DE but extend services to the conventional mode when need be. CoDE senior members also facilitate serve as course facilitators and chief examiners for DE. There are three categories of facilitators on the DE at university B.

Interviewee B2 mentioned thus:

“The course writers are normally given the opportunity to be chief examiners and facilitators. But in fact, we have permanent

senior members academic who also serve as facilitators in addition to the course tutors. These senior members take on some administrative responsibilities as Heads of Departments and Unit Heads. And by our new policy they again lecture at their parent Departments. So, for us we have I think three categories of facilitators on our DE programme and it is good” (B2).

4.8 Legal Issues

From the findings of the study most legal issues in both universities A&B are centered on ownership and intellectual property rights of modules production. The findings of the study show that there no clear-cut legal policies in the DE environments of both universities. The main university policies on legal matters that are binding on DE. However, there is always some form of written agreements between module developers and the universities to covers legal issues.

Interviewee A1 shared insights on the modalities for module development in IDL thus:

“In fact I don’t know if I should call it a policy, there is a form that such people fill and consent to the fact they are aware of the content of the contract and its agreement that the university would not cover them when copy rights issues come up and therefore the material you are submitting is wholly your work. And wherever you have made use of somebody’s work, you have duly cited. So they sign that document before they are commissioned to write the module and even when they submitting, there is one of the sheets that state the copyright agreement and the issues on plagiarism So I don’t know, I have not spotted any policy or written documents apart from these but at least I have written four modules for IDL, and I have signed the agreement in each case.”(A1).

When a module is finally accepted and payment has been made, interviewees indicated that at this stage, the intellectual property rights of the module still belong to the writer could use the material for other purposes but when the

material has been put in the interactive mode, it becomes the property of the university. This becomes evident when interviewee A2 mentioned thus:

“We don’t pay royalties. So, we tell the module developers that the material is theirs and they can do whatever they want with it at the initial stages. But when they submit the material to us, we have others who put it in the interactive mode. When we have put it in the interactive mode, they can’t use the material for any purpose though the basic content belongs the module developer, it then becomes the property of IDL”

Interviewee A3 explained further thus:

“The current Director’s philosophy and I believe, and it is shared with management of university is that we have open access and therefore people should benefit from the educational materials produced by the writers. That is the more reason why the writers are not paid royalties. I think their institutional policies on legal issues of IDL, stating issues like copy rights, ownership of materials and things like that no! It is the same main university policies that we are all using. That is why every now and then the university lawyer is the one who speaks to legal issues. Nobody from IDL will even say anything” (A1).

Interviewees in the narration were insistent that there are problems with the intellectual property rights in DE environments of university A, especially with the payment and the use of the module for promotion which is currently not permissible. However, there are plans for future changes in the legal environment of IDL but for now the old procedures and policies prevail.

Regarding the legal issues in the DE environment of university B, the findings show that like university A, the legal issues mainly bothers on modules development. There are no clear guiding policies on legal matters but there are guidelines which change from time by the central administration. Interviewee B1 indicated thus:

“In terms of intellectual property and ownership rights of module writers, this is what we do. And it is so simple, but then I must say that human institution as we are, are decisions are not

static. They are dynamic. So, from time to time we want to experience some changes from the central administration and such changes may affect the guidelines for module writing. Time was when those wrote the modules, they paid them a percentage and then they also had the chance to enjoy what we term as royalties every year for ten years. So, when it started from 2000 to 2010, all those who wrote the modules, they had the chance to be given some royalties at the end of every year. But when the ten years elapsed, they stopped. But now, what we are doing is, you will be engaged to write the module, and then we pay you off and that ends it. You don't owe the module again. The module becomes the property of the university that is the College of Distance Education" (B1).

Interviewee B1 further mentioned thus:

"Currently, the guidelines are that, when module writers are engaged, they are given forty percent (40%) of the agreed amount to start with, then when the work is complete they are paid the remaining sixty percent (60%) and that ends the contract between the writer and management until after five years when all module writers are invited to review the modules at the cost of the university management. After the payment to the writers, the module becomes the permanent property of the university that is the College of Distance Education. However, the writer could use up to three modules developed to apply for promotion" (B2).

Unlike university A, where the modules are written in blocks by the lead facilitators who develop the slides for all course facilitators' use, in university B, a team of experts collaborate to write a module. Hardly would an individual write a module for the CoDE because the guiding principle is that a team of experts should share ideas and collaborate to write a module. Modules are written in Units and Sessions and in credits hours and payment is made based on this criterion. Course tutors use the printed module to facilitate DE learners study the same module unlike university A where the modules are put on slides and learners download videos as study materials.

Furthermore, interviewee B1 during the narration mentioned that though there are no specific institutional policies guiding the legal issues in the DE environment of university B, the DE unit follows through the main university legal guidelines always, in order to avoid any contentions, quarrels, litigations, and anxieties in the environment.

4.9 Student Support Services Issues

The findings from the study indicate that the provision of student support services for DE learners is a prime concern of both university A & B. However, there are no institutional policies covering provision of student support services in the DE environments of the universities.

Interviewee A3 indicated thus:

“For those of us who distance learning, we cannot run away from students’ support services just because the students are not there and then they need to go through the academic work just like any other student in the university and therefore as you aware, IDL, we have so many student support services. We have a help desk that takes care of all these and we have struggle for a very long time to get the right people to take charge. We are getting the right caliber of people to do that work now because a lot of warnings have been issues to people in that area in terms of how they talk, how they smile and all those things. So yes, we have a help desk. You know. This is the so-called help desk, only available at the IDL campus office. We expect the Zonal Coordinators to do same at the other offices” (A3).

Interviewee A3 further noted thus:

“And if it comes to things like examinations, we try to explain things in their booklets that talks about examination rules and regulations and their conduct for writing examinations. We also try to help students to with cases of deferments, transfers and transits. They many other support services like being recognize with the same ID cards, that the regular students would have to possess. So, they have the same ID cards. We recognized them as our university students when it comes to utilizing on campus resources such as the university hospital. And of late we ‘ve been

struggling to try to hook them on the E- libraries. And we have been partially successful. They can also use the main library. What we have not done is that no arrangement has been made for them to access libraries outside the main university campus. But with the E-library and with the fact that we've given them log in account to access the E- materials on the internet, I think we have achieved part of what we wanted to achieve. So, when it comes to student support services that is where we even conform to a lot of the main university policies" (A3).

The findings further show that limited face-to-face sessions are provided to DE learners in a form of support services. This is to guide learners through course outlines, course structures, timetables and the use of slides and videos and the opportunity to ask questions that may be agitating their minds about the programme. DE in learners in university A enjoy the use of a customized module platform called the V-Class. The V-Class has been uniquely created solely for used by DE learners in university A.

Basically, the usage of the V- Class in two forms; for post graduate pure online programme and the lead facilitators teaching which are later developed into facilitators slides. DE learners also download modules, videos of the lead facilitator's facilitation and other study materials on the V-Class. DE learners also pay fees, register, and accessed results on the V-Class.

Interviewee A2 shares insights on the usage of the V-Class.

"On the V-Class, we have the modules there; we have the Videos there and the DE learners have the opportunity to download the videos. When you are admitted, you are given a password and a username and these give you access to download the modules, register, pay your fees and access your results. So, we have a portion for results, a portion for registration depending on your programme"

With regards to academic advising and other forms of counseling services for DE learners, the findings of the study show that IDL have challenges some in these areas of these support services.

Interviewee A2 indicated thus:

“Examination officers are supposed to act as academic counselors. But because all examination officers are stationed at the headquarters usually what happens is that when they have collated the results and they realize that the results of some learners are bad, the examination office invites such learners for academic counseling. For the other forms of counseling, coordinators at the study centers though non-professionals are expected to take on that responsibility” (B2).

The range of other support services that exist in university A include transfers, deferments, transits, student identity cards, shuttle buses for a fee, E- library and pre- admission services are the other forms of student support services. Facilitated Face- to- face sessions are also provided using limited print and electronic materials by local facilitators who support and direct learners as they work through the supported materials provided. Support services are also provided at the study centre to the DE learners.

Interviewees views on the provision of support services in university A.

“A range of support services exist in IDL and the main university for the DE learners, but we don’t have any policies guiding the provision of student support services. The support services of the main university are extended to cover DE students as well. After you have been admitted then all the main university support services are made available to you” (A1).

“ For those who do distance learning like IDL, They cannot run away from student support services just because learners are not there and they need to go through their academic work from a distance .Therefore management is aware of their peculiar circumstances so in IDL we have so many students’ support services. We have a help desk, a handbook on examination rules and regulations; we allow transits, transfers and deferments. There are many other support services like being recognized with

the same Identity card that the normal students would have to possess. We recognize them as our university students when it comes to utilizing the library and hospital. So, when it comes to support services that is where we even conform a lot to the main university policies. We don't have physical libraries, but the students can use their usernames and passwords to log unto the main university e-library" (A3).

The range of support services available to DE learners in university B as shown in the findings of the study, are not very different from the range of services provided to DE learners in university A. The support services as depicted in the findings include receptionists at first points of contact for DE learners and other visitors who visit the headquarters and the regional offices. The receptionists, at university B, like the personnel at the help desk in university A, attend to DE learners' enquiries and complaints and assist them to locate the appropriate personnel or offices to attend to their needs. DE are also provided with identity cards for recognition as DE learners of university B. The identity cards provided to the DE learners in university B is not the same as the identity cards issued to the conventional campus-Based students as it is the case in university A.

There are no library facilities at the regional offices and the study centers for DE learners' use. Interviewees in their candid opinions during the narration indicated DE learners in university B hardly use the main library of the university. By implication, DE learners only concentrate on their printed modules and do not read outside these modules even when they are preparing for quizzes and examinations. Interviewees see the situation as worrisome and hope that the situation is changed very soon. Interviewees further hinted that

plans are underway for the CoDE to have e-libraries when the College goes e-learning soon.

Interviewee B2 shared his view about the lack of some support services in university B.

“You see, we don’t have counselors and libraries for our students, and I think that is a bigger problem. I think our DE learners’ lack these aspects of the support services and we need to change certain things because counseling, advising and library facilities are very important for DE learners. I think the E-libraries will be good. We give them the pin codes and so long as they are on the internet, wherever they are, they log unto the E-library, look at the resources there and pick something to read to supplement their modules”

Like what is happening in university A in relation to academic counseling and other counseling provision for DE learners, the situation in university B is not very different. There are no academic counselors and other forms of counseling for DE learners. Regional resident tutors, course tutors and study center coordinators have taken up the responsibility though not professional and official. This became evident when interviewee B2 declared thus:

“You see the counseling service, which is one of the support services that we give to our learners in order that they will be able to overcome their challenges on the programme is inadequate and it is a weakness on our programme delivery. Now, I can count about just three of four counselors located only at the headquarters. But then at the regional and the study centers we must depend on the regional resident tutors and center coordinators who render those services. It is not like we have engaged them formally, but they do that out of their own volition” (B2).

4.10 Technical Issues

The findings of the study indicated that in university A, policies towards technology use in the DE environment have been fully implemented. Technology use include an E-learning facility. A customized E-platform, (V-

Class) used for teaching and thereby limiting the number of face-to-face sessions and module printing. The usage of the V-Class also includes orientation, registration, uploading modules, and assessment of academic results, Skype, thesis defense. Interviewees in the narration mentioned that the university has taken a decision to make teaching and learning in the DE environment as close to eighty percent (80%) E-Learning which is highly technology-based hence the creation of the virtual classroom (V-Class). Facilitators could also log on onto their page on the V-Class from anywhere and facilitate their lessons.

From the findings of the study, there are no physical libraries at the various study centers but DE learners in university A have access to the e-libraries of the main university as well as the University Information Technology System (UITS). The personnel from the unit go around the IDL study centers to do biometrics for DE learners as a form of verification of their online registration. Interviewees again mentioned that technical strategy in university A is not ongoing. Everything is set for DE learners' use and if there is anything needed on the technical strategy in university A, then that it is probably something that is going to enhance the technical strategy.

Technical issues in university A are indicated by the interviewees thus:

“Personnel from the university Information Technology Systems go to the study centers to do biometrics for the IDL students” (A1)

“Our technical strategies have been fully implemented and everything is in use. If there is anything, I'm sure probably it will enhance it but everything is in use” (A2).

“We have a whole e-learning facility now and so far, as we have moved into the e-learning, people can get there, use all the gadgets and the e-resources and many other things” (A3).

In contrast to university A, technology use in university B has not been fully implemented. Technology use in university B is gradually evolving and systematically approaching adaptation but there are teething challenges as shown in the findings of the study. Some DE learners have been provided with tablets and it is expected that when the CoDE goes E-learning, the modules would be uploaded on the tablets for learners but that has not been done. Not all learners have had the chance to purchase the tablets. The private company contracted to supply the tablets has not been able to supply to all DE learners.

Interviewee B1 made this declaration thus:

“The whole technology system in our university is evolving. It is a gradual process you know, there are a lot of things we think can be done in terms of technology but then we need to be careful not to rush. Because today, when you look at what we are doing now, it is just the print mode, where we have only provided modules to the students and that is not the best. We are getting them the tablets. Some of them already have the tablets. We are thinking about how we can, review or edit our modules so that we can upload them unto the tablets, which will make it easier for the students to read. So, when you look at all these things, then you see that it’s a gradual process. We will get there. Apart from what we are doing now, we have not added anything” (B1).

“We can’t wait to provide those technical services to our DE students. So, the earlier we did it the better. For me, I think that they have mobile phones, and fortunately enough for us, through some negotiation that we did with Huawei, Ghana, most of the students have the tablets and it will not be difficult for them to access information from the internet. Today, at the College of Distance Education, we are taking bold steps at the Advisory Committee level towards enhancing our bandwidth and the going E-learning and to do Tele-conferencing. I mean we have innovative ideas. So gradually when all these things have been put in place, I believe that the students can take advantage of them” (B2).

Furthermore, interviewee B2 also hinted that a certain Company –Techno donated some E-library equipment to the CoDE and the equipment are still not

in use. They are now trying to activate that equipment for their E- learning technical strategy but the process is going at a very slow pace. The findings of the study indicated that even for records keeping and assessment of DE learners in university A, there are three (3) different soft wares provided by private individual that in operation at DE unit of University B. Thus, making the management of the DE learners' database very difficult. These became evident when interviewee B2 declared thus:

“We are now trying to hook the Distance Education freshers unto the main university data base. The continuing students were placed on different platforms at the time they were coming in and I cannot recollect the names of those platforms. But some three different platforms were in use and were manage by private persons. This was not making the data management of the College of Distance Education easy. That is what prompted the University to hook the Distance Education learners also unto the main university data base starting from the fresh Distance Education learners” (B2).

Notwithstanding the challenges of technology use in university B, interviewee B1 during the narration mentioned that plans are far advanced to mount E- platform to beam live lectures to DE learners at the study centers. After reviewing of the modules, they will be placed on- line for learners to access.

The statements in relation to the technological issues in university B. were expressed this way interviewee B3:

“Plans are advanced to mount E- learning platform to beam live lectures to the students at the study centers” (B3).

4.11 Philosophical Issues

Interviewees during the interview were asked to give their views on the whole idea of DE as an alternative mode of delivery in the public universities in Ghana, based on their personal opinions and other stakeholders of education.

Most of the interviewees during the narration indicated that DE in their universities is given the necessary recognition and acceptance.

From the findings of the study philosophical issues in university A, all three interviewees mentioned that whatever they are doing in university A is based on the mission, vision and core values of the university. Interviewees personally appeared to have embraced DE as a viable alternative mode of instructional delivery their university and is yielding very good results. They also mentioned that university A has identified DE as policy initiative for meeting institutional goals. They also stated that the overall mission statement of university A in the strategic plan of university A (2015-2025), provides an explicit policy objective for using DE to increase access of learners to science and technology programmes. The mission statement the university provides a guiding principle for the DE wing's mission statement of increasing flexible access to tertiary continuing education. The mission statement of the DE wing of university A carved out of the main mission of the university as quoted by interviewee A2 is;

“Increasing access to tertiary and continuing education and training through the distance education mode.”

The vision of university A interviewee A3, stated as:

“To be globally recognized as a premier center of excellence in Africa for teaching in science and technology for development, and producing high caliber graduates with knowledge and expertise to support the industrial and socio-economic development of Ghana and Africa”

The interviewees in university A explained their opinions and other stakeholder philosophy about Distance Education delivery in university A in the statements below:

“For the university, we have people who, left to them alone, we should close down IDL. They think we are compromising on standards and but for those who are really involved, know that it’s not about compromising standards. Of course, there may be problems with attendance, but they realized that it is not about compromising standards. The standards are about the same and for programmes; the lecturers prefer the IDL students” (A2).

It is worthy to note that notwithstanding the negative, pessimistic and conservative perception of some faculty, DE in university A, as mentioned by interviewee A2, indicate that for those faculty who are really involved in the DE, know that DE as an alternate mode of instructional delivery in university A is not about compromising on standards. This category of faculty in university A realized that the standards of the two modes of instructional delivery are same. For some of the programmes these faculty members would even prefer the DE learners to the conventional campus-based students.

A senior faculty member interviewee who is very much involved in DE in university A also shares insight with regards to the philosophy of DE delivery in the public universities in Ghana as follows:

“Yeah, it’s very subjective worldwide. We know, yes there is a problem with distance learning in terms of quality and people complain. And I see it from another angle. It looks as if those who manage distance learning, either from the Ministry of Education or whatever, seem not to be checking on the quality assurance issues and nowadays we talk about access courses and all those things. If you leave this to the private institutions, what kind of access courses are they going to conduct? So, I have my reservations, on this issue” (A3)

This interviewee did not specifically discuss DE delivery in university A per se but gave an opinion about the whole idea and philosophy of DE delivery generally in the country. Interviewee A3 further indicated that there appear to be a lack of supervision by the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders of education on DE activities in public universities. To him it appears the lack

of supervision by the state agencies responsible is affecting quality standards of DE delivery in the country. He was however quick to conclude that these assertions are very subjective, and he has his reservations on the issue.

Contrary to the views of interviewees A2 and A3, interviewee A1 indicated that the philosophy of Distance Education is widely accepted in university A when he stated that *“In fact they have bought into it”*

Similar to the view of interviewee A1 in university A, interviewee B1 in university B, explained that DE is an integral part of the university and its philosophy is captured in the strategic plan of the university based on the mission and vision of the university. He further mentioned that DE is widely accepted by all stakeholders and their approach to Distance Education in university B is good and yielding very good results. Interviewee B1 further stated that DE in university B is like “hot cake”. And the situation of DE delivery in university B supports the idea of one author of education called Illich, who wrote about de- schooling societies, where he was even talking about the fact, that there would be a day when there would be no classrooms for education delivery except through DE. Interviewee B1 expressed views on the acceptance of DE in his university thus:

“You see, Distance Education at the College of Distance Education is like “hot cake”. Today when you look at it, in fact, long time ago, one author called Illich, wrote about de-schooling societies, where he was even talking about the fact, there would be a day when there no classrooms. That is what is happening now with introduction of Distance Education. The acceptance of Distance Education is happening in all over the world, because people are busy, and because of the difficulty in getting a job after

study leave and other problems people prefer to stay on the job and do upgrading by distance education” (B1).

Interviewee B1 affirmed that this is what is happening now with the introduction of DE in university B. He enumerated the reasons why he thinks DE is widely accepted in the university B. He mentioned that people are very busy all over the world and the difficulty in getting jobs, the working class would prefer to upgrade themselves through DE rather going on full time study leave and going back to lose their jobs. He said the moment prospective applicants leave their jobs, somebody comes to take over and even when Distance Education graduates upgrade themselves, upon their return, placement becomes a problem. Interviewee believes that is the main reason why the working class have widely accepted DE programmes especially in the public universities and patronizing it. Again, because the target group for the DE is mainly the working class which makes their market big to the extent that if one compares the numerical strength of DE learners in university B to its conventional campus- based students the difference is huge. He indicated further that the maximum intake for the regular campus- based is about 18,000 for all programmes currently, as against between 45,000 and 50,000 for the DE in university B.

Interviewee BI made this assertion when he declared thus:

“You go and upgrade yourself; you come back without a job. Who would want to do something like that? And so, you will find that people have interest especially the working class, in fact the interest, the market is big. And that is why when you even compare our numbers to the regular, you will see what I am talking about. The regular, you will see the maximum intake is about eighteen thousand (18,000). But at the distance, as I told, it is about forty-five and fifty thousand (45,000) and (Fifty

thousand), which is almost three times the number of the regular students” (B2).

Interviewee BI made a concluding remark on interviewee B2’s submission by indicating that DE in the university B is in higher demand because of the general demand of higher education in contemporary society and the fact that DE has the potential for job creation thus making DE in university BI demand-driven when he remarked;

“So, you find that the market for DE in the university is big. It is not surprising that three weeks ago we graduated more than 10,000 DE students from the College of Distance Education and the moment, we’ve even gone a step further by coming out post – graduate programmes” (BI).

The rationale for the DE University A as stated in the IDL Strategic Plan, 2008, was to provide opportunities for large numbers of working adults to combine work and studies. This idea is very consistent with the views expressed by interviewee B1 about DE delivery university B since their focus is on the working class.

Interviewee B2 also indicated that management has started formulating institutional policies around the main university policies and the mission and vision of the university is captured in the strategic plan of which DE is one of the major key thrusts. He quoted the mission and the vision in the statements below:

“Now, if you investigate the university strategic plan of the university, it is captured that the university would look at expanding and improving on distance education. The vision of the university thus: “To have a university that is strongly positioned, with a- worldwide acclaim” This statement is where the university sees itself in the future sets the tone for every strategic decision or choice that it has made. It sets the ambition of the organization and serves as the pedestal that every College,

Faculty, School, Department, functional division and individual must aspire to. In combination with its mission statement, the university has articulated a view of a realistic, credible and attractive future for itself: a target that inspires all stakeholders to maximize effort in bridging the gap between their current reality and their desired future” (B2).

He mentioned that the mission says the university is thus:

“The University of Choice. An equal opportunity university uniquely placed to provide quality education through the provision of comprehensive, liberal and professional programme that challenge learners to be creative, innovative and morally responsible citizens. Through distance learning, it extends expertise and facilities to train professionals for the education enterprise and business by employing modern technologies. The University constantly seeks alternate ways to respond to changing needs. The institution continues to expand its existing highly qualified Faculty and Administrative staff, by offering a conducive environment that motives them to position the University to respond effectively to the developmental needs of a changing world” (B2)

Interviewee B2 believes that eventually, whatever institutional policies that would come up for Distance Education will be policies that would reflect what is in the strategic plan to feed into the mission of the university and eventually into the act that established the university.

Interviewee B3 expressed almost the same views as that of that interviewees B1 and B2. He summed up to say that DE is captured in the mission, vision as well the strategic plans of the university.

All interviewees in university B were confident to indicate that the university’s vision and mission are clearly spelt out in its strategic plan around which all activities revolve including the formulation of institutional policies. This trend depicts the university’s formal commitment towards its DE

delivery. Finally, interviewees mentioned that views of key stakeholders of education such as the National Council for Tertiary Education and the Ghana Education Service are key in shaping the DE programme in university B. These stakeholders are involved in the policy guidelines of the College since they are fully represented on the College Board. And their inputs are always considered by the College.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 PRESENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises the analysis, presentation and interpretation of the findings resulting from the quantitative data of the study. The analysis and interpretation of data are carried out based on the results of the research questions formulated guide the study. The chapter is based on data obtained from 632 DE learners from all the 7 study centres of the two universities used for the study (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, (KNUST) and University of Cape Coast (UCC). Data were analysed using inferential statistics (independent sample t-test, one-way analysis of variance) and descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations). The first part of this chapter describes the demographic characteristics of respondents. In the second part, the research findings are presented based on the research questions that guided the study.

5.2 Profile of the Respondents Characteristics

This section of the questionnaire was designed to elicit personal information of the respondents (DE learners at the various centres). These demographic data include the respondents' university of study, gender, age, and level of study. Bar and pie charts were used to present the demographic analysis.

Distribution of Respondents by Gender (n=632)

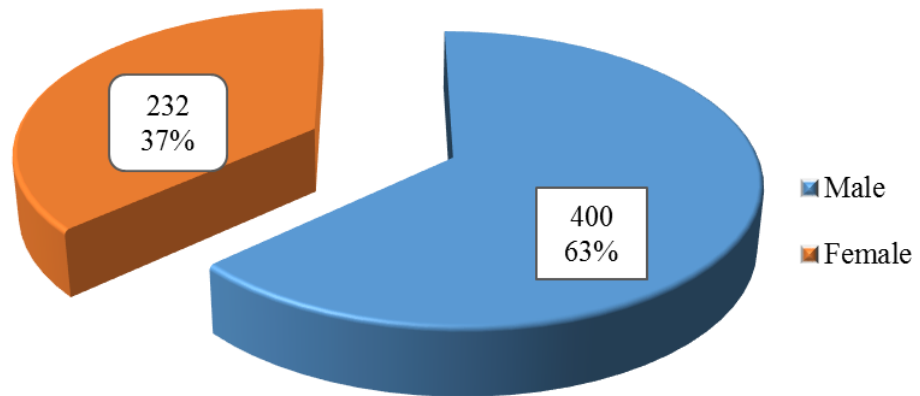


Figure 2.2: A Pie Chart Showing the Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

Figure 2.2 presents data on the respondents' gender. The data shows that there were more males than females

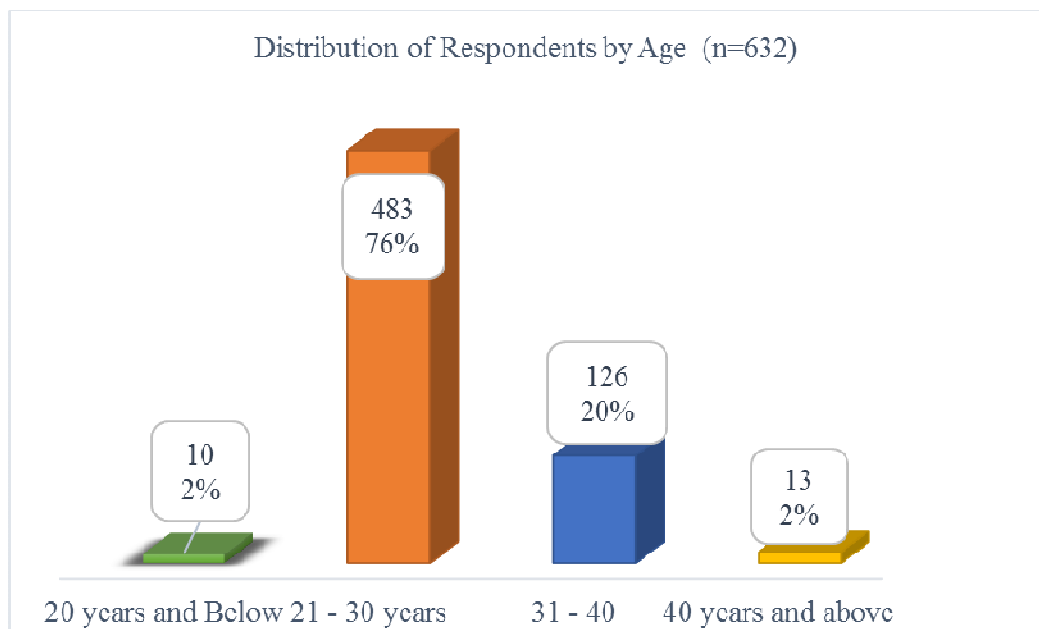


Figure 3.3: A Bar Chart showing the distribution of respondents by Age

Source: Field survey, (2017)

Figure 3.3 shows the age range of the respondents. The study showed that many of the DE learners were in the age range of 21-30 years with very few below 20 years and below. On marital status of the DE learners who took part in the study. Most of them were married 68% and 32% being single.

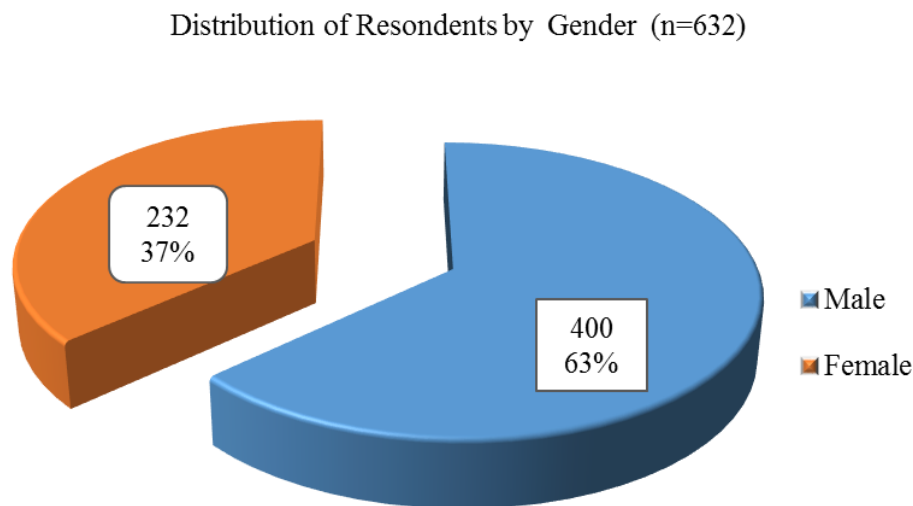


Figure 4 4: A Pie Chart showing the distribution of respondents by programme level.

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

The researcher again found out the programme level of the respondents. The results as presenting in Figure 4.4 shows that most of the DE learners were Diploma students. 65% were offering or pursuing diploma. This was followed by 31% offering bachelor's degree. Only few (4%) were offering Post graduate programmes.

5.3 Students Satisfaction of Support Services

To achieve the purpose of the research questions, descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) was deemed appropriate for the analyses. In this analysis, means provides the summary of the responses from DE learners and

the standard deviation indicates whether DE learner’s responses were clustered to the mean score or dispersed. Standard deviation ranges from 0 to 1. Where the standard deviation is relatively small (within 0), the DE learners’ responses are believed to be homogeneous (similar responses). On the other hand, where the standard deviation is relatively large (within 1), the DE learners’ responses are believed to be heterogeneous (dissimilar responses). On a five-point Likert scale, the DE learners were asked to indicate their levels of agreement or disagreement with the pre-coded statements in the questionnaire. A mean of 3.0 and above indicates the DE learner’s agreement to the item’s responses while a mean of 2.99 and below indicates DE learner’s disagreement to the item responses.

5.4 Admission Process

Table 5.5 Results on Admission Process

Admission Process	UCC		KNUST		Both Institutions	
	Mean	±SD	Mean	±SD	Mean	±SD
	(TV=3.0)		(TV=3.0)		(TV=3.0)	
The admission policies, procedures were clearly spelt out in the admission manual	4.76	.987	3.06	.977	3.91	1.847
Fees are increased yearly in my institution	4.09	1.98	3.79	1.90	3.94	1.421
I am comfortable with the yearly increase of fees	1.94	1.84	1.84	1.94	1.89	1.124
MM/Std.D	3.59	1.63	2.89	1.60	3.24	1.22

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

n=632

Table 5.5 presents the results on admission process as one of the institutional policies issue that exist in public Universities studied for DE delivery. The results indicate that generally, the admission process exists in the public Universities in Ghana for DE delivery. This was evident after the group obtained a mean greater than the Test value for UCC (MM=3.59 \pm SD =1.63, MM>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST (MM=2.89, \pm SD =1.60, MM>TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities. (MM=3.24, \pm SD =1.22, MM>TV=3.0, n=632).

On the issue of whether the admission policies, procedures were clearly spelt out in the admission manual, the results indicated that admission policies, procedures were clearly spelt out in the admission manual of the universities. For UCC (mean=4.76, \pm SD =.987, mean>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST (mean =3.06, \pm SD =.977, mean >TV=3.0, n=291) for both institutions (mean =3.91, \pm SD =1.847, mean >TV=3.0, n=632).

In relation to yearly increases of fees by the public universities, the DE learners indicated that there is an annual of fees in the public Universities studied. The results as stated as: for UCC (mean=4.09, \pm SD =1.98, mean>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST (mean=3.94, \pm SD =1.90, MM>TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities (mean =3.75, \pm SD =1.421, MM>TV=3.0, n=632).

Finally, on their comfortability with the yearly increase of fees, the results indicated that the DE learners are not comfortable with the yearly increase of fees. The results are specified as: for UCC (mean=1.94, \pm SD=1.84, mean>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST (mean=1.94, \pm SD =1.90, M>TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities (mean =1.89, \pm SD =1.124, M>TV=3.0, n=632).

5.5 Orientation and Registration

Table 6.6: Results on Orientation and Registration

Orientation and Registration	UCC (TV=3.0)		KNUST (TV=3.0)		Both Inst. (TV=3.0)	
	Mean	±SD	Mean	±SD	Mean	±SD
The orientation seminar procedures were comprehensive and the content beneficial to me	3.71	.877	2.51	.777	3.11	1.059
My institution has clear cut policies on registration	3.36	.953	3.78	.653	3.57	1.945
In my institution registration every semester is very cumbersome	3.36	.880	3.96	.860	3.66	1.762
Registration Assistants are very helpful to all learners during the process	3.75	.800	3.75	.890	3.75	1.970
The students' handbook stipulates regulations on admissions, withdrawals, transfers, transits and resumption.	3.36	.962	3.22	.983	3.29	2.066
The rules and registrations regarding examinations were well explained to me during the orientation sessions	3.45	1.56	2.51	.777	2.98	1.077
I am aware of all examination malpractices and its associated sanctions of my institution	2.61	.456	1.78	.653	2.19	.984
The orientation seminar procedures were comprehensive and the content beneficial to me	3.64	.953	3.77	.560	3.71	1.059
My institution has clear cut policies on registration	3.67	1.05	3.96	.860	3.81	1.945
MM/Std.D	3.48	.940	3.10	.753	3.29	1.622

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

n=632

Table 6.6 illustrates results on orientation and registration in public Universities studied for DE delivery. The results give evidence to believe that orientation and registration is quite not satisfactory for DE learners in both universities. This becomes evident with a mean greater than the Test value. For example, DE learners from UCC produced a group mean of (MM=3.48, \pm SD =.940, MM>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST (MM=3.10, \pm SD =.753, MM>TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities (MM=3.39, \pm SD =1.622, MM>TV=3.0, n=632).

Dwelling on some statements, the results showed that the orientation sessions procedures were comprehensive and the content beneficial to UCC students but not in the case of KNUST. For example, students from UCC produced a group mean of (mean=3.71, \pm SD =.877, M>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST the results was different indicating that the orientation sessions procedures were not comprehensive and the content not beneficial to them (mean=2.51, \pm SD =.777, M<TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities the results show that orientation seminar procedures were comprehensive and the content beneficial to them (mean=3.11, \pm SD =1.059, M>TV=3.0, n=632).

In assessing whether the universities have clear cut policies on registration, the results show that institutional policies on registration are not clear cut. From UCC students, their response produced a group mean of (mean=3.36, \pm SD =.953, M>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners, their response produced a group mean of (mean=3.78, \pm SD =.653, MM>TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities (mean=3.57, \pm SD =1.945, M>TV=3.0, n=632).

With respect to whether the registration for every semester is very cumbersome, the results show that both universities experience cumbersome

registration procedures. For UCC DE learners, the majority indicated that registration for every semester is very cumbersome. (Mean=3.36, \pm SD =.880, $M>TV=3.0$, $n=341$). The result from KNUST DE learners was not different in that most of the learners clearly indicated that registration for every semester is very cumbersome (mean=3.96, \pm SD =.860, $M>TV=3.0$, $n=291$). Both universities, the results were (mean=3.66, \pm SD =1.762, $M>TV=3.0$, $n=632$).

With regards to the provision of students' handbook to DE learners, the results from the two universities studied give ample evidence to the fact that the students' handbooks are given, and it stipulates regulations on admissions, withdrawals, transfers, transits and resumption for both universities. For UCC DE learners, the results indicated as (mean=3.36, \pm SD =.962, $M>TV=3.0$, $n=341$). The result from KNUST students was not different from that UCC DE learners (mean=3.22, \pm SD =.983, $M>TV=3.0$, $n=291$). For both universities, the results were recounted as (mean=3.29, \pm SD =2.066, $M>TV=3.0$, $n=632$).

Further results indicated that orientation seminar procedures were comprehensive, and the content is beneficial to the DE learners. For UCC DE learners, the results revealed as (mean=3.64, \pm SD =.953, $M>TV=3.0$, $n=341$). The result from KNUST DE learners was different from that UCC DE learners' responses (mean=3.77, \pm SD =.560, $M>TV=3.0$, $n=291$). For both institutions, the results are reported as (mean=3.71, \pm SD =1.059, $M>TV=3.0$, $n=632$).

To find out whether the institution has clear cut policies on registration, the results display that institution have clear cut policies on registration. This result was evident in both institutions. For example, on UCC DE learners the results showed as (mean=3.67, \pm SD =1.05, $M>TV=3.0$, $n=341$). The result

from KNUST DE learners was like that UCC DE learners' results (mean=3.96, \pm SD =.860, $M>TV=3.0$, n=291). For both institutions, the results were conveyed as (mean=3.81, \pm SD =1.945, $M>TV=3.0$, n=632). However, a critical situation is that DE learners are not aware of examination malpractices and the associate sanctions in both universities ($M=2.19$. = $SD=.98$).

5.6 Course Materials

Table 7.7: Results on Course Materials

Course Materials	UCC (TV=3.0)		KNUST (TV=3.0)		Both Institutions (TV=3.0)	
	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD
All course materials for every semester are provided to me on time	3.76	.987	2.60	1.915	3.18	1.895
All course materials provided by my institution were suitable and aided my learning	3.09	1.98	3.98	1.119	3.54	1.339
The course modules are easy to understand	2.94	1.84	2.99	1.017	2.96	1.287
The course modules encourage collaborative work	3.06	.987	3.71	1.918	3.38	2.408
The academic calendars are always favourable to me and suited my work schedule	3.19	1.98	3.82	1.043	3.51	2.443
The teaching time most often meet learners' preference.	3.04	1.84	2.32	1.011	2.68	1.164
The examination time for every semester is flexible and allow learners enough time for revision	2.76	.987	2.69	1.950	2.73	1.950
MM/Std.D	3.12	1.519	3.15	1.424	3.14	1.926
Source: Field Survey, (2017)						n=632

Table 7.7 reports on course materials which serves as one of the key components of DE delivery in public Universities. It could be reasoned from the results that learners in both universities are quite satisfied with course materials related issues. This was evident after the group obtained a mean being greater than the Test value of 3.0. For example, DE learners from UCC produced a group mean of (MM=3.12, \pm SD =1.519, MM>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the results was reported as (mean=3.15, \pm SD =1.424, M>TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities are stated as (mean=3.14, \pm SD =1.926, M>TV=3.0, n=632).

Because all course materials for every semester are provided to the DE learners on time, the results give evidence to believe that course materials are provided for every semester for UCC DE learners. For example, DE learners from UCC reported that they are provided with course materials for every semester (mean=3.76, \pm SD =.987, M>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners results show that the course materials are not provided for every semester to the DE Learners (mean=2.60, \pm SD =1.915, M>TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities the results is designated as (mean=3.18, \pm SD =1.895, M>TV=3.0, n=632).

Most of the DE learners in the two universities indicated that all course materials provided by their institution were suitable and aided learning. In the case of UCC, the results stand as (mean=3.09, \pm SD =1.98, M>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE Learners the result portrays as (mean=3.54, \pm SD =1.119, M>TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities the results are reported as (mean=3.28, \pm SD =1.339, M>TV=3.0, n=632).

In another evidences, the DE learners from both universities recounted that the course modules are not easy to understand. UCC DE learners reported that the course modules are not easy to understand as such they fall on course tutors for deeper understanding (mean=2.94, \pm SD =1.84, M<TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners result describes that they find it difficult to understand course modules (mean=2.99, \pm SD =1.017, M<TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities the results is reported to show that they are not satisfy with the course modules (mean=2.96, \pm SD =1.287, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

However, on the issue of whether the teaching time most often meet DE learners' preference, unanimous responses from DE learners in the two universities give ample evidence to settle that the teaching time meet their preference. From DE learners in UCC, the results stance as (mean=3.04, \pm SD =1.84, M>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the result describes that the students find it difficult to understand course modules (mean=3.32, \pm SD =1.011, M>TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities the result is reported to show that they are all satisfy with the time schedules (mean=2.68, \pm SD =1.164, M>TV=3.0, n=632).

Responses from whether the examination timetable for every semester is flexible and allow learners enough time for revision was different in that most DE learners in the two universities averred that examination time is not flexible for them. For UCC DE learners the results stance (mean=2.76, \pm SD =.987, M<TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the result shows that they find it difficult to understand course modules (mean=2.76, \pm SD =.987, M<TV=3.0, n=291) for universities the results show that they are all not satisfy with the time schedules (mean=2.73, \pm SD =1.950, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

5.7 Quizzes and Examinations Proctoring

Table 8.8 Results on Quizzes and Examination Proctoring

Quizzes and Examination Proctoring	UCC (TV=3.0)		KNUST (TV=3.0)		Both (TV=3.0)	
	Mean	±SD	Mean	±SD	Mean	±SD
The institution always provides enabling environment for examination proctoring	2.16	.287	2.60	.715	2.36	.595
Invigilators are always up to their task and do not threaten learners unnecessary	2.01	.798	2.18	.169	2.1	.839
Examination questions are clear and easy to comprehend and meet the expectations of learners	2.24	.864	2.11	.917	2.17	.987
The institution always releases examination results on time with little complains from learners	2.86	.787	1.79	.818	2.33	.808
I am comfortable with the length of time slated for examinations	2.29	.928	2.82	.743	2.55	.743
MM/Std.D	2.31	.738	2.30	.672	2.31	.794

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

n=632

In the quest of accomplishing the purpose of the study, the researcher examined the quizzes and examinations proctoring in the public Universities studied. Largely, the results prove that DE learners from both universities are not comfortable with quizzes and examination proctoring that their institutions. For example, DE learners from UCC produced a group mean of (MM=2.31, ±SD =.738, MM>TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the

group mean was reported as (mean=2.30, \pm SD =.672, MM<TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities is stated as (mean=2.36, \pm SD =.794, MM<TV=3.0, n=632).

To assess whether the universities always provides enabling environments for examination proctoring, the results proved that the institutions do not always provides conducive environments for examinations proctoring and this could affect the DE learners academic performance. From UCC DE learners the results stand as (mean=2.16, \pm SD =.287, M<TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the result was not different (mean=2.60, \pm SD =.715, M<TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities the results is reported as (mean=2.36, \pm SD =.595, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

The results on whether invigilators are always up to their task and do not threaten learners unnecessary was consistent with that of conducive environments issues. DE learners in the two universities gave unanimous responses to indicate that invigilators are not always up to their task and do threaten learners unnecessary. For UCC, it was reported as (mean=2.01, \pm SD =.798, M<TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the result was not different (mean=2.18, \pm SD =.169, M<TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities the results is stated as (mean=2.1, \pm SD =.839, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

In different sphere on whether the universities release examination results on time with little complains from learners, the students lamented in their responses that they struggle getting their results on time. From the table the results stand as: UCC (mean=2.86, \pm SD =.787, M<TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the result was parallel (mean=1.79, \pm SD =.818,

M<TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities the results reflect that DE learners in both institutions suffer similar fate (mean=2.33, \pm SD =.808, M<TV=3.0, n=632). The results prove that DE learners are not comfortable with the length of time slated for examinations in the two selected universities. The result is reported as: UCC (mean=2.29, \pm SD =.928, M<TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the result was equivalent (mean=2.82, \pm SD =.743, M<TV=3.0, n=291) for both universities the results reflect that DE learners in both institutions suffer alike of the problem (mean=2.55, \pm SD =.743, M<TV=3.0, n=632). The study established that examinations results were not released on time resulting in DE learners' complaints (M=2.33 SD=. 08)

5.8 Study Centre Related Issues

Table 9.9: Results on Study Centre Related Issues

Study Centre Related Issues	UCC (TV=3.0)		KNUST (TV=3.0)		Both Institutions (TV=3.0)	
	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD
My institution always creates a conducive learning environment for my academic work	2.16	.587	2.94	.915	2.56	.496
My study centre is adequately resourced with social services and amenities that enhances my academic work	2.41	.498	2.68	.269	2.55	.669
My study centre is adequately resourced for academic work	2.74	.464	2.51	.617	2.63	.287
I have access to a library at my study centre for academic work	1.86	.387	2.19	.518	2.03	.398
I have access to a computer and other laboratories	1.29	.328	2.52	.643	2.19	.763
MM/Std.D	2.09	.452	2.56	.592	2.33	.522

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

n=632

Table 9. 9 presents result on study centre related issues. The descriptive results (means and standard deviation) show that generally the DE learners in both universities show some level of displeasure with study centre related issues. The overall results clearly revealed that most DE learners are not satisfy with study centre related issues. For example, DE learners from UCC produced a group mean of (MM=2.09, \pm SD =.452, M<TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the group mean was conveyed as (mean=2.56, \pm SD =.592, M<TV=3.0, n=291) for both institutions is stated as (mean=2.33, \pm SD =.522, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

The means and standard deviation results suggest that the DE learners' institution do not always creates a conducive learning environment for my academic work. For instance, DE learners from UCC produced a group mean of (mean=2.16, \pm S adequately resourced with social services and amenities that enhances their academic work. For example, evidence from UCC DE learners group suggest that their study centres are adequately resourced with social services and amenities that enhances their academic work (mean =2.41, \pm SD=.498, M<TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the group mean was conveyed as (mean=2.68, \pm SD =.269, M<TV=3.0, n=291) to mean that their study centre is not adequately resourced with social services and amenities that enhances their academic work. For both universities the results are reflected as (mean=2.55, \pm SD =.669, MM<TV=3.0, n=632).

In relation to whether the study centres are adequately resourced for academic work, the results were deep-rooted that DE learners in both institutions experience similar issues. With respect to the responses from UCC DE learners, their group mean show that their centre is not adequately resourced

for academic work (mean =2.74, \pm SD=.464, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=341$) for KNUST DE learners the group mean also suggest similar results (mean=2.51, \pm SD =.617, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=291$). For both institutions the results are revealed as (mean=2.63, \pm SD =.287, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=632$).

On the issue on the fact the DE learners have access to a library at the study centres for academic work, the results from the table suggest that DE learners do not have access to libraries at their study centre for their academic work. The results from the institutions is reported as: UCC (mean =1.86, \pm SD=.387, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=341$). KNUST (mean=2.19, \pm SD =.518, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=291$). For both institutions the results discovered as (mean=2.03, \pm SD =.398, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=632$). Results from accessibility to computers and other laboratories were not different in the two institutions. Indicated that they do not have access to computers and other laboratories (mean=1.91, \pm SD =.763, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=632$).

5.9 Course Facilitation

Table 10.10: Results on Course Facilitation

Course Facilitation	UCC (TV=3.0)		KNUST (TV=3.0)		Both Institutions (TV=3.0)	
	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD
I am comfortable with the facilities of the number of units per tutorials	2.46	.182	2.94	.115	2.70	.291
The course tutor returned graded assignments to me in a reasonable length of time	2.97	.291	3.68	.369	3.33	.129
The course tutors provide me with positive feedback during the course	2.04	.362	1.91	.217	1.98	.382

Table 10.10 Continued

I feel comfortable relating with course tutors	2.67	.587	2.69	.418	2.68	.651
I feel comfortable communicating with course tutors and other staff on mine social problems	2.29	.438	2.32	.543	2.31	.516
MM/Std. D	2.48	.378	2.70	.332	2.58	.393

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

n=632

Assessing the DE learners' views on course facilitation was deemed appropriate in the quest of accomplishing the purpose of the study. From the Table 10, the results give evidence to believe that DE learners from both universities agree that course facilitation exist in the DE environments of their universities. The overall computed means and standard gives statistical evidence to that effect. For instance, DE learners from UCC produced a group mean of (MM=2.48, \pm SD =.378, M<TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the group mean was conveyed as (mean=2.70, \pm SD =.332, M<TV=3.0, n=291) for both institutions the results is reported as (mean=2.59, \pm SD =.393, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

Dwelling on few statements on course facilitation, it was quite clear that all the items scored a mean less than the test value (3.0). For instance, with respect to whether DE learners are comfortable with the number of units in the module per tutorials, the result suggests that most of the DE learners in UCC are not comfortable with the number of units per tutorials UCC (mean =2.46, \pm SD=.182, M<TV=3.0, n=341). The result was recurrent among KNUST DE learners (mean=2.94, \pm SD =.518, M<TV=3.0, n=291). For both institutions the results are revealed as (mean=2.70, \pm SD =.291, M<TV=3.0, n=632)

indicating that most of the DE learners in both institutions are not comfortable with the number of tutorials per session.

In accordance with the statement “The course tutor returned graded assignments to me in a reasonable length of time”, the results portray that DE learner in UCC institutions are of the view that course tutor do not returned graded assignments to them in a reasonable length of time. However, KNUST DE learners shared different view. On statistical evidence, UCC DE learners’ responses produced a group mean of (mean =2.97, \pm SD=.291, M<TV=3.0, n=341). The result was different among KNUST DE learners (mean=3.68, \pm SD =.369, M<TV=3.0, n=291). Combining the results from both institutions the results is revealed as (mean=3.33, \pm SD =.129, M<TV=3.0, n=632) indicating that most of the DE learners in both institutions are of the view that course tutor do not returned graded assignments to them in a reasonable length of time.

Further results suggest that course tutors do not provide them with positive feedback during the course. Here, DE learners in both institutions indicated that course tutors do not provide them with positive feedback during the course. On statistical indication, UCC DE learners’ responses produced a low group mean of (mean =2.04, \pm SD=.362, M<TV=3.0, n=341). The result was not different among KNUST DE learners where their responses produced lesser mean of (mean=1.91, \pm SD =.217, M<TV=3.0, n=291). Merging the results from both institutions, the results is revealed as that DE learners in both institutions shared similar idea (mean=1.98, \pm SD =.382, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

Related evidences from the DE learners in both institutions specify that they do not feel comfortable relating with course tutors. UCC DE learners’

responses produced a squat group mean of (mean =2.67, \pm SD=.587, $M < TV = 3.0$, n=341). The result was similar among KNUST DE learners where their responses produced alike mean of (mean=2.69, \pm SD =.418, $M < TV = 3.0$, n=291). Integrating the results from both institutions, the results it was revealed that DE learners in both institutions shared parallel ideas (mean=2.68, \pm SD =.651, $M < TV = 3.0$, n=632).

Similar results were recurrent on the fact that DE learners in both universities feel uncomfortable communicating with course tutors and other staff on their social challenges. Dwelling on the individual means, UCC DE learners' responses produced a small group mean of (mean =2.29, \pm SD=.438, $M < TV = 3.0$, n=341). The result was similar among KNUST DE learners where their responses produced alike mean of (mean=2.32, \pm SD =.543, $M < TV = 3.0$, n=291). Incorporation the results from both universities it was discovered that DE learners in both universities shared corresponding idea (mean=2.31, \pm SD =.516, $M < TV = 3.0$, n=632).

5.10 Face -to -Face Interaction

Table 11.11: Results on Face -to -Face Interaction

Face to Face Interaction	UCC (TV=3.0)		KNUST (TV=3.0)		Both Institutions (TV=3.0)	
	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD
During face to face tutorials, course tutors relate to me more as facilitators of self-directed learners rather than lecturers transmitting information	2.88	.302	2.86	.675	2.87	.141

Table 11.11 Continued

The study centre coordinator, course tutors and other staff attend to all mine question adequately	2.43	.892	2.68	.611	2.56	.156
Tutorials at the study centre are learner centre not teacher centre	3.04	.662	3.71	.317	3.0	.482
the study centre coordinator is normally a source of information to me	2.67	.587	2.69	.418	2.68	.451
MM/Std.D	2.75	.615	2.98	.505	2.87	.3075
Source: Field Survey, (2017)					n=632	

Table 11. 11 depicts the results related to face -to -face interaction as one of the key rudiments of the institutional policies that exist in public Universities in Ghana for DE delivery. The inclusive results from the table shows that most DE learners in both institutions are not satisfy with face -to -face interaction issues. On the overall results, DE learners from UCC produced a group mean of (MM=2.75, \pm SD =.615, M<TV=3.0, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the group mean was stated as (mean=2.98, \pm SD =.505, M<TV=3.0, n=291) for both institutions the result is reported as (mean=2.81, \pm SD =.3075, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

On the issue of whether during face- to- face tutorials, course tutors relate to DE learners more as facilitators of self-directed learners rather than lecturers transmitting information, the result shows that learners in both universities are dissatisfied satisfy with course tutors' relationship with learners at the study centres. From UCC DE learners, their responses show that course tutors do not relate very well with learners (mean =2.88, \pm SD=.302, M<TV=3.0, n=341). The result was comparable among KNUST DE learners where their responses

produced a mean to show that their course tutor do not relate well with learners at the study centres. (Mean=2.86, \pm SD =.675, M<TV=3.0, n=291). Fusion the results from both universities, it was revealed that DE learners in both institutions shared similar idea (mean=2.87, \pm SD =.141, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

The results further show from both universities that the study centre coordinator, course tutors and other staff do not attend to all DE learners' questions adequately. From UCC DE learners, their responses show that course tutors and other staff do not attend to all their questions adequately (mean =2.43, \pm SD=.892, M<TV=3.0, n=341). The result was different from the responses of DE learners in KNUST where their responses produced a mean to show that study centre coordinator, course tutors and other staff do not attend to all their question adequately (mean=2.68, \pm SD =.611, M<TV=3.0, n=291). Synthesis of the results from both universities, it was pointed out that DE learners in both institutions are not comfortable with the way their course tutors and other staff attend to them (mean=2 56, \pm SD =.156, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

5.12 Face -to -Face Monitoring

Table 12.12: Results on Face -to -Face Monitoring

	UCC		KNUST		Both Institutions	
	(TV=3.0)		(TV=3.0)		(TV=3.0)	
	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD
Face to Face Monitoring						
Staff from head office regularly monitor the programme to ensure quality standards	2.88	.202	2.06	.145	2.47	.341

Table 12.12 Continued

The monitoring interacts and give me advice on my academic work	2.43	.392	2.98	.151	2.71	.606
The monitoring team attend to learners complains, counsel and give guidance	2.84	.462	2.11	.237	2.48	.342
The monitoring team monitor other social services in my study centre apart from academic work	2.91	.385	2.02	.328	2.47	.486
MM/Std.D	2.77		2.29		2.53	

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

n=632

Face -to -face monitoring serving as one of the major policies that exist in public universities in Ghana for DE delivery was also evaluated extensively. Table 12.12 presents results that depict that from the DE learners view, face -to -face monitoring is not at its optimal level. The study found the face to face monitoring as weak at both institutions (Mean=2.02 SD=0.443).

To ascertain whether staff from head office regularly monitor the programme to ensure quality standards, the results indicate from UCC DE learners, head office do not regularly monitor the programme to ensure quality standards (mean =2.88, \pm SD=.202, $M < TV=3.0$, n=341). Accrued results from KNUST DE learners presents similar findings (mean=2.06, \pm SD=.145, $M < TV=3.0$, n=291). Blending the results from both institutions, it was obvious that DE learners in both institutions agreed that office do not regularly monitor the programme to ensure quality standard (mean=2.47, \pm SD =.341, $M < TV=3.0$, n=632).

Similar results were found on the fact that monitoring interact to give the DE leaners advice on their academic work is not frequent in both institutions.

Reporting on UCC DE learners' responses, it was evident that monitoring that helps to give the DE learners advice on their academic work is not frequent in UCC (mean =2.43, \pm SD=.392, $M < TV = 3.0$, $n = 341$). KNUST DE learners shared similar idea (mean=2.98, \pm SD=.151, $M < TV = 3.0$, $n = 291$) to mean that the monitoring done to give advice on learners' academic work is not at its best at KNUST. Combining the results from both institutions, it was probable that DE learners in both institutions have related experience (mean=2.71, \pm SD =.606, $M < TV = 3.0$, $n = 632$).

To ascertain whether the monitoring team attend to learners complains, counsel and give guidance, the results prove that monitoring team from both institutions do not attend to learners complains, counsel and guidance. From DE learners of UCC responses, it was apparent that the monitoring team in UCC do not really attend to learners complains, counsel and guidance (mean =2.84, \pm SD=.462, $M < TV = 3.0$, $n = 341$). KNUST DE learners shared comparable opinions (mean=2.11, \pm SD=.237, $M < TV = 3.0$, $n = 291$) Joining the results from both universities, it was plain that DE learners in both universities have correlated experience (mean=2.48, \pm SD =.342, $M < TV = 3.0$, $n = 632$).

Lastly on issues related to face -to -face monitoring, the results suggest that DE learners from the two institutions believe that monitoring teams do not monitor other social services in their study centre apart from academic work. From DE learners of UCC responses, it was evident since their responses produced a group mean less than the test value (mean =2.91, \pm SD=.385, $M < TV = 3.0$, $n = 341$). KNUST DE learners shared similar experience (mean=2.02, \pm SD=.328, $M < TV = 3.0$, $n = 291$). Linking the results from both

institutions, it was evident that DE learners from the universities have parallel experience (mean=2.47, \pm SD =.486, $M < TV=3.0$, n=632).

5.13 Technical Support

Table 13.13: Results on Technical Support

	UCC		KNUST		Both Institutions	
Technical Support	(TV=3.0)		(TV=3.0)		(TV=3.0)	
	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD	Mean	\pm SD
The institution ensures that the technology used is appropriate to the nature DE learning environment	2.88	.272	3.16	.125	3.02	.240
My institution provides assistant to faculty and learners having trouble in using technology	2.83	.292	3.98	.175	3.41	.899
MM/Std.D	2.85	.280	3.57	0.15	3.21	.569

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

n=632

Table 13. 13 presents result on technical support that DE learners receive from their institutions. The results show that DE learners from KNUST are satisfy with technical support they receive but UCC learners reported otherwise. Reporting the total results, DE learners from UCC produced an overall group mean of (MM=2.85 \pm SD =.280, $M < TV=3.0$, n=341) for KNUST DE learners the group mean was greater than the test value mean (mean=3.57, \pm SD =0.15, $M > TV=3.0$, n=291) however, for both institutions, the result is reported to mean majority of the DE learners are not satisfy with technical support they receive (mean=3.21, \pm SD =.569, $M < TV=3.0$, n=632).

To ascertain whether the institution ensures that the technology used is appropriate to the nature DE learning environment, the responses from the UCC DE learners gives reasons to mean that UCC do not ensures that the technology used is appropriate to the nature DE learning environment (mean=2.88, \pm SD =.272, $M < TV=3.0$, n=341). The responses from KNUST DE learners was different in that according to their responses their institution ensures that the technology used is appropriate to the nature DE learning environment (mean=3.16, \pm SD =.125, $M > TV=3.0$, n=291). Yet, for both institutions, the result is reported to mean that majority of the DE learners agreed that the institutions ensures that the technology used is appropriate to the nature DE learning environment (mean=3.02, \pm SD =.240, $M < TV=3.0$, n=632).

In relation to assistance given to learners and faculty experiencing difficulty in using technology, the results showed that DE learners in UCC and faculty do not get assistance when they are experiencing difficulty in using technology (mean=2.83, \pm SD =.292, $M < TV=3.0$, n=341). The responses from KNUST DE learners was dissimilar in that according to their responses their institution provides assistant to faculty and learners experiencing difficulty in using technology (mean=3.98, \pm SD =.175, $M > TV=3.0$, n=291). But when merging the results from both institutions, the result is interpreted to mean that majority of the DE learners agreed that their institutions aids faculty and learners having trouble in using technology (mean=3.41, \pm SD =.899, $M < TV=3.0$, n=632).

5.14 Learner Assessment

Table 14.14: Results on Learner Assessment

Learner Assessment	UCC		KNUST		Both Institutions	
	(TV=3.0)		(TV=3.0)		(TV=3.0)	
	Mean	±SD	Mean	±SD	Mean	±SD
I am aware of all issues pertaining to assessment and grading system	2.18	.377	2.76	.125	2.47	.240
I am comfortable with the mode of assessment in my institution	2.81	.892	2.98	.175	2.89	1.99
There are specific institutional policies to determine student's progression and success in my institution	2.58	.452	2.66	.325	2.62	.740
Assessment results are mostly release on time and without much complain from learners	2.03	.542	1.98	.675	2.01	.919
The study centre coordinator and course tutors are highly committed to their work	2.98	.562	2.36	.325	2.67	.716
The coordinator and all the course tutors adhere strictly to their professional ethics	2.53	.432	2.48	.315	2.51	.899
I personally like their attitude towards work	2.78	.352	2.86	.345	2.82	.740
The course tutors motivate me to complete the programme	2.26	.912	2.08	.245	2.17	.817
I am satisfied with the structure of the DE programme of mine institution	2.68	.142	2.99	.365	2.84	.840
MM/Std.D	2.54	.762	2.57	.456	2.56	.654

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

n=632

Table 14.14 presents results on learner assessment as one of the key institutional policies issues that DE learners receive from their institutions. The results show that overall, DE learners from both institutions are not satisfied with assessment related issues in their DE environments. Reporting the total results, DE learners from UCC produced an overall group mean of ($M=2.54$, $\pm SD = .762$, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=341$) to mean that they have issues with their assessment. For KNUST DE learners, they also produced a group mean less than the test value (mean= 2.57 , $\pm SD = .456$, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=291$). Corroborating results from both institutions, the result is reported to imply that majority of the DE learners from the two institutions are not all happy with the assessment issues (mean= 2.56 , $\pm SD = .654$, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=632$).

DE learners from both universities confirmed they are not aware of all issues pertaining to assessment and grading system. UCC DE learners result is reported as (mean= 2.18 , $\pm SD = .377$, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=341$). The responses from KNUST DE learners was similar (mean= 2.76 , $\pm SD = .125$, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=291$). When integration the results from both institutions, the result is construed to mean that majority of the DE learners believe that they are not much aware of all issues pertaining to assessment and grading system (mean= 2.47 , $\pm SD = .240$, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=632$).

With respect to whether the DE learners are comfortable with the mode of assessment in their institution, UCC DE learners indicated that they are not comfortable with the mode of assessment in their institution (mean= 2.81 , $\pm SD = .892$, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=341$). The responses from KNUST DE learners was not different (mean= 2.98 , $\pm SD = .175$, $M < TV=3.0$, $n=291$). Incorporating the results from both institutions, the result mean that most of the DE learners

believe that they are not comfortable with the mode of assessment in their institution (mean=2.89, \pm SD =1.99, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

In relation as to whether there are institutional policies to determine students progression and success in the institutions, UCC DE learners indicated that such institutional policies to determine students progression and success do exist in their institution (mean=2.58, \pm SD =.452, M<TV=3.0, n=341). The responses from KNUST DE learners was not different (mean=2.66, \pm SD =.325, M<TV=3.0, n=291). In fusing the results from both institutions, the result suggests that both institutions do not specific institutional policies to determine student's progression and success in their institution (mean=2.62, \pm SD =.740, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

Overall, DE learners from both institutions indicated that they are not satisfied with the structure of the DE programme of their institution. For example, UCC DE learners pointed out that they are not satisfied with the structure of the DE programme of their institution (mean=2.68, \pm SD =.142, M<TV=3.0, n=341). The responses from KNUST DE learners correspond with that those from UCC (mean=2.99, \pm SD =.365, M<TV=3.0, n=291). Combining the results from both institutions, the result suggests that both DE learners are not satisfied with the structure of the DE programme of their institution (mean=2.84, \pm SD =.840, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

5.16 Learners Satisfaction with DE Programme

Table 15.15: Results on Learners Satisfaction with DE Programme

Learners Satisfaction with DE Programme	UCC (TV=3.0)		KNUST (TV=3.0)		Both (TV=3.0)	
	Mean	±SD	Mean	±SD	Mean	±SD
I am satisfied with the structure of the DE programme of my institution	2.71	.972	2.14	.198	2.43	.113
I am satisfied with the structure of the course models	2.91	.477	2.96	.145	2.94	.270
I am satisfied with the fees charged and the mode of payment	2.87	.112	2.68	.125	2.78	.699
I am satisfied with the number of quizzes and examination conducted each semester by my institution	2.78	.452	2.66	.325	2.72	.840
I am satisfied with the information flow from management to learners	2.53	.432	2.38	.275	2.46	.119
I am satisfied with the learning environment and course delivery	2.68	.362	2.76	.225	2.70	.316
MM/Std.D	2.75	.425	2.59	.256	2.67	.567

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

n=632

Table 15.15 presents results on the DE learners' satisfaction with institutional programmes. The computed means for the DE learners responses to the items gives reason to believe that most of the DE learners from both institutions are not satisfy with the institutional programmes. Reporting the results for all the categories, DE learners from UCC produced a total group mean of (MM=2.75, ±SD =.425, M<TV=3.0, n=341) to mean that they are not satisfy with the

institutional programmes. For KNUST DE learners, they similarly produced a group mean less than the test value (mean=2.59, \pm SD =.256, M<TV=3.0, n=291), for both institutions, the results is stated as (mean=2.67, \pm SD =.567, M<TV=3.0, n=632). This implies that learners in both institutions are not satisfied with the programmes of the institution.

For instance, to assess whether the DE learners are satisfied with the structure of the DE programme of their institution, the results show that they are not satisfied. UCC DE learners (mean=2.71, \pm SD =.972, M<TV=3.0, n=341). The responses from KNUST DE learners was not diverse (mean=2.14, \pm SD =.198, M<TV=3.0, n=291). Synthesizing the results from both institutions, the results suggest that students from both institutions are not satisfied with the structure of the DE programme of their institution (mean=2.48 \pm SD =.113, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

In relation to course modules, the results show that they are not satisfied with the course modules. The results were stated as: for UCC DE learners (mean=2.96, \pm SD =.145, M<TV=3.0, n=341). The responses from KNUST DE learners was similar (mean=2.60, \pm SD =.270, M<TV=3.0, n=291). After amalgamation the results from both institutions, the result suggests that students from both institutions are not satisfied with the course models of their institution (mean=2.75, \pm SD =.113, M<TV=3.0, n=632).

5.16 Differences and Similarities between the major Centres (UCC and KNUST)

The researcher went further to assess the differences between UCC and KNUST DE learners with respect to the services the institutions provide study

centres. To obtain this, independent sample t-test was used for the analysis. The results are presented in Table 16.16.

Table 16.16: Independent sample t-test of the differences between UCC and KNUST DE Learners with respect to the Satisfaction of the Services provided by the Institutions

Institutions	Mean	S.D.	Df	t – value	p – value
UCC-DE Learners	76.87	13.28	630	-1.70	.007
KNUST- DE Learners	118.60	68.37			

Source: Field Data, (2017) **Significant at $p = 0.05$ (2 - tailed)

Table 16.16 illustrates the results of independent t-test analysis test of the differences between UCC and KNUST DE learners with respect to the services the institutions provide. From Table 17, there was statistically significant difference between UCC and KNUST DE learners with respect to the services the institutions provide. That ($t(630) = -1.70, p = .007, p < 0.05, n = 632$). In evaluating the mean scores, KNUST DE learners were identified as being more satisfied with the services the institutions provide (mean=118.60, SD=68.37, n=291) than UCC DE learners (mean =76.87, SD=13.28, n=341). The above therefore suggest that difference exist between UCC and KNUST DE learners and as such, KNUST DE learners indicated to more satisfy with the services the institutions provide.

5.17 Differences and Similarities among UCC Centre

The researcher again sought to find out the differences among UCC Study centres located at (UCC campus, Oyoko, Bolga and Koforidua Ghanaas) with regards to their satisfaction level with the services provided by the institution. To materialize this, One- way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted.

However, prior to conducting ANOVA test, certain statistical assumptions need to be met. This include normality assumption (Kolmogorov-Smirnov^a and Q-Q Plot), test for Homogeneity of Variance etc. The below Tables presents results of some of the assumptions.

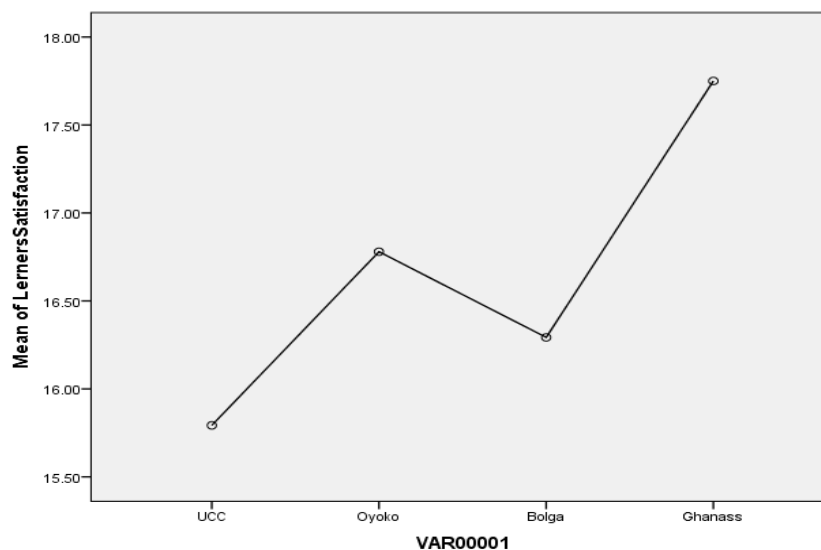


Figure 5.5: Means Plots

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

Figure 5.5 provides an easy way to compare the means scores for the different Study Centres at the University of Cape Coast. It is obvious from Fig 5.5 that Koforidua Ghanaas recording the highest mean score followed by Oyoko Centre and Bolga centre. UCC centre recorded the lowest mean scores. Per the means comparison, one could conclude that UCC centre had the least satisfaction level with regards to the services. However, to give more statistical conclusions, further tests were conducted.

Table 17.17: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.432	3	338	.000

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

** significant at p=0.05 (2-tailed)

From Table 17.17, the Significance value (Sig) for Levene' test is 0.000 which is less than the alpha or critical value of 0.05. This implies that the assumption of homogeneity has been violated for this sample [$F(3, 338) = .432, p = .000$ at the .05 alpha level] hence, the Robust Test of Equality of Means was also conducted in the analysis.

Table 18.18: Robust Tests of Equality of Means

	Statistic ^{a1}	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	3.077	3	99.711	.031
Brown-Forsythe	3.015	3	222.888	.031

a. Asymptotically F distributed. ** significant at p=0.05 (2-tailed)

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

Table 18.18 shows the result of the Robust Tests of Equality of Means. This test was used because the assumption of the homogeneity of variances had been violated sample [$F(3, 338) = .432, p = .000$ at the .05 alpha level]. In this test, the Welch statistic or the Brown-Forsythe statistic for the equality of group variances based on performing an ANOVA on a transformation of the response variable were used to check the significance level (Sig). The Welch statistic or the Brown-Forsythe statistic is the F statistic resulting from an ordinary one-way analysis of variance on the basis that the result is significant. That is $F(3, 99.711) = 3.077, p = .031$ at the .05 alpha level.

Table 19.19: Summary of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	117.426	3	39.142	2.746	.043
Within Groups	5644.964	338	14.255		
Total	5762.390	341			

Source: Field Survey, (2017) ** significant at p=0.05 (2-tailed)

Table 19.19 shows whether the overall F ratio for the one-way ANOVA is significant. It noted that the F -ratio (2.746) is significant ($p = .043$) at the .05 alpha level. This implies that there was a significant difference somewhere among the mean scores of the Distance Learning centers in University of Cape Coast (UCC, Oyoko, Bolga and Ghanaas). However, the sig value of 0.043 did not tell the differences between the satisfaction levels among the centres. The statistical significance of the differences between each pair of centers is provided in multiple comparisons as indicated in Table 20.20.

Table 20.20: Multiple Comparisons (The Post-Hoc Tests)

Dependent Variable: Learners Satisfaction					
	(I)		Mean		
	Centres	(J) Centres	Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Games- Howell	UCC	Oyoko	-.98728	.44782	.124
		Bolga	-.50009	.50987	.761
		Ghanaas	-1.95741	.73412	.054
	Oyoko	UCC	.98728	.44782	.124
		Bolga	.48719	.51113	.776
		Ghanaas	-.97013	.73500	.557
	Bolga	UCC	.50009	.50987	.761
		Oyoko	-.48719	.51113	.776
		Ghanaas	-1.45732	.77437	.251
Ghanaas	UCC	1.95741	.73412	.054	
	Oyoko	.97013	.73500	.557	
	Bolga	1.45732	.77437	.251	

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

** significant at $p=0.05$ (2-tailed)

Table 20.20 showed the result of Post-Hoc test (Games-Howell). The Post-Hoc test shows where the differences among the centres with regards to their satisfaction of the services institution provide to them. From the Post-Hoc test, it is clear that even though there were differences between most of the centres, however, none of the results gave a significant value. For example, between UCC and Oyoko, the Mean Difference and Standard Error of (MD=-.98728, SR= .44782, Sig, =.124) shows that there was a difference the two institutions, however, the results is not significant. Again, between UCC and Bolga Centre, is it evident that there was mean differences between the centres, however the difference is insignificant that is (MD= -.50009, SR=.50987, Sig, = .761). Koforidua Ghanaas and UCC produced a Post Hoc of (MD=1.95741, SR=.73412, Sig, = .054).

5.18 Differences and Similarities among the KNUST Centre

The researcher again sought to find out the differences between the studies centres of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Kumasi, Tamale and Accra) with regards to their satisfaction level with the services provided by the institution. To achieve this, One- way Analysis of Variance was conducted. The results are presented as below.

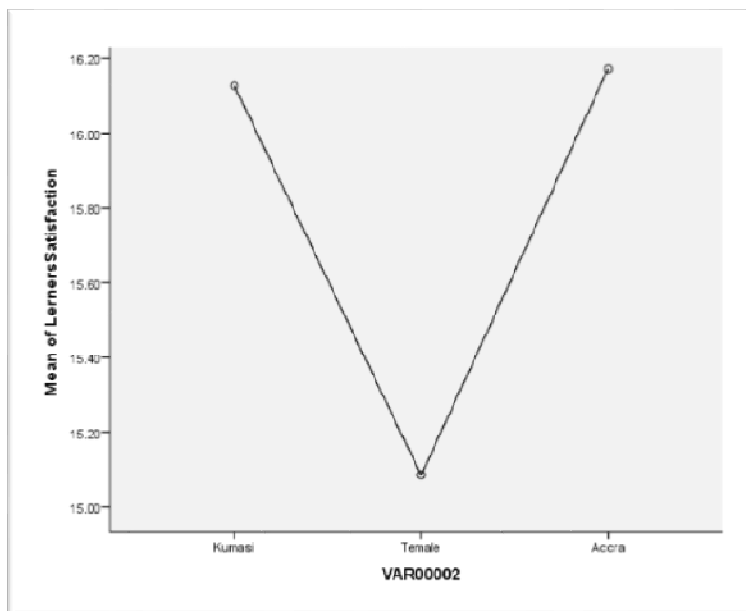


Figure 6.6: Means Plots

Figure 6.6 provides an easy way to compare the means scores for the different Study Centres in the Kumasi Zone. It is obvious from Fig 5 that Tamale study centre recorded the lowest mean scores followed by Kumasi Centre and Accra Centre recording the highest mean scores.

Table 21.21: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.204	2	288	.015

Source: Field Survey, (2017) ** significant at p=0.05 (2-tailed)

From Table 21.21, the Significance value (Sig) for Levene’ test is 0.015 which is less than the alpha or critical value of 0.05. This implies that the assumption of homogeneity has been violated for this sample [$F(2, 288) = .204, p = .015$ at the .05 alpha level] hence, the Robust Test of Equality of Means was also conducted in the analysis.

Table 22.22: Robust Tests of Equality of Means

	Statistic ^a	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	2.468	2	88.990	.001
Brown-Forsythe	2.590	2	135.261	.009

a. Asymptotically F distributed. ** Significant at p=0.05 (2-tailed)

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

Table 22.22 shows the result of the Robust Tests of Equality of Means. This test was used because the assumption of the homogeneity of variances had been violated sample [$F(2, 288) = .204, p = .015$ at the .05 alpha level] In this test, the Welch statistic or the Brown-Forsythe statistic for the equality of group variances based on performing an ANOVA on a transformation of the response variable were used to check the significance level (Sig). The Welch statistic or the Brown-Forsythe statistic is the F statistic resulting from an ordinary one-way analysis of variance on the basis that the result is significant. That is $F(2, 88.990) = 2.468, p = .001$ at the .05 alpha level.

Table 23.23: Summary of One-way of Analysis Variance (ANOVA)

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	68.379	2	34.189	2.630	.075
Within Groups	2418.267	186	13.001		
Total	2486.646	188			

Source: Field Survey, (2017) ** significant at p=0.05 (2-tailed)

Table 23.23 shows whether the overall F ratio for the one-way ANOVA is significant. It noted that the F -ratio (2.630) is not significant ($p = .075$) at the .05 alpha level. This implies that there was no significant difference among the mean scores of the Distance Learning centers located in Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Kumasi, Tamale and Accra). Hence no Multiple Comparisons (The Post-Hoc Tests) was conducted.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings from the study of institutional policies and commitment for supporting distance learners in public dual mode universities in Ghana are discussed in relation to the research questions formulated to guide the study. The findings are discussed based on the data gathered from the interviews of the principal officers of the public universities and the students' questionnaires that guided the study. The research questions were:

1. What institutional policies exist in public dual mode universities in Ghana for distance education delivery
2. What institutional policies are currently being addressed by public universities in Ghana
3. How are the public dual mode universities committed in supporting distance learners' success?
4. To what extent are Distance Education learners satisfied with the range of support services provided by the public universities.
5. How effective are the institutional policies in promoting distance learners' success?

6.2 Institutional Policies available for Distance Education delivery in

Public Dual Mode Universities in Ghana

The institutionalization of distance education in dual mode universities all over the world includes the development of institutional policies. Institutional policies provide the framework for all the operational activities in the distance education environments of dual mode universities. Rogers, (2003) maintains

that one key indicator that Distance Education is moving into the mainstream education system is the increased emphasis on the need for appropriate institutional policies to guide its effective growth.

In order to provide a basis for investigating the institutional policies and commitment for Distance Education delivery in the public universities in Ghana, institutional policies were classified into seven constructs with identified key issues. The classification was based on an adaptation of a theoretical framework by King et al. (1998) and Berge (1998). The key policy areas of the framework included: academic, fiscal geographic and governance, faculty, legal, students, technical and philosophical.

Overall, the major objective of this study was to find out about the institutional policies available and the formal degree of commitment for supporting Distance Education learners' success in dual - mode public universities in Ghana. The key findings of the study generally show that there are no discrete institutional policies available for Distance Education delivery in the public dual- mode universities in Ghana. Except for some scattered unofficial, undocumented guidelines, procedures and practices carved around the main university policies for the conventional students which were modified for operation in the Distance Education environments of the public universities, no laid down institutional policy exist Hitherto, the public universities were applying same on-campus university policies to run the DE programmes until it became evident that those policies did not entirely fit into the distance education environments. This is a serious administrative flaw as it has been argued in literature that traditional institutional policies and practices could be

at odds with what may be required in DE environments of most dual mode universities.

Notwithstanding, the absence of clear-cut institutional policies in the DE environments of the public universities, the findings of this study depict evidence of high degree of institutional commitment of the universities towards provision of quality distance education for their clientele. The findings further suggest that the public universities are admitting and turning out large numbers of graduates every year to take up responsibilities in the work force.

The success stories of distance education delivery in the public universities in Ghana become questionable. Stakeholders of education may wonder how the universities are able train the Distance Education learners effectively without the appropriate institutional policies and yet become successful in their DE delivery. The situation presupposes that the public universities are turning out half-baked graduates for monetary gains as perceived by many stakeholders as an interviewee claimed that there was lack of quality assurance mechanisms in the distance education environments of the public universities which go unchecked by agencies responsible. For this reason, believed that apart from the government mandate to the universities to increase access to tertiary education through distance education, there appears to be a hidden agenda for monetary gains by the public universities. This statement that;

“There is a problem with distance education in terms of quality and people complain. It looks as if those who manage DE from the ministries and other agencies seem not be checking on quality. You see the truth is that distance education in universities in every country, the objectives are two. People don’t talk about the

monetary gains from the innovation but always talk about increasing access” conforms the assertion

UNESCO, (2000) in support of this assertion argues that there is growing demand for increasing access to higher education and pressure from civil society is forcing the traditional universities to commence delivering distance mode. In some cases, the monetary purpose to augment income in the face of shrinking public funding led to the conversion of single mode traditional universities into dual mode. Could this assertion be true in the Ghanaian context per the findings of this study? This is very necessary since distance education delivery in public universities in Ghana is making great strides for the past decade increasing access to tertiary per the government mandate. The need for the universities to create enabling environments using the appropriate institutional policies and a higher degree of formal commitment to promote learners’ success is essential. This is very important since access to conventional campus based tertiary education in Ghana is increasingly becoming more expensive. Distance education presents the best option and therefore should be managed well by the public universities mandated to provide the service to enhance the prospects it holds for all stakeholders of education in Ghana.

It therefore becomes questionable for the public universities to be making great strides with the innovation without the appropriate institutional policies. This is a serious research gap that needs bridging to enhance DE delivery as a viable alternate mode to the conventional campus mode of delivery in the public universities in Ghana. The non-existence of appropriate institutional policies in the public universities for DE delivery also appears to undermine

the credibility of DE programme and its products thereby creating skepticisms about the innovation.

At the university of Science and Technology, Kumasi, there is a Distance Education learner specific draft policy document which was under the processes of approval. The University of Cape Coast on the other hand, was now planning to come out with specific institutional policies for DE delivery. Generally, these public universities studied at the initial stages of DE implementation gave the DE wings the freedom to operate with unofficial conventions, procedures and guidelines which were modified for use in the DE environments. However, the universities saw the need to come out with specific institutional policies to guide DE activities when the units started to expand.

The non-existence of appropriate institutional policies to guide DE operations in the public universities so far suggests that the public universities failed to conduct policy audit before embarking on the DE provision as argued by COL,(2003); Badu- Nyarko,(2010); Akuamoah-Boateng et al,(2012); Osei et tal,(2013) and Ohene et al(2014) in literature. For instance, the COL (2003). Report mentions that Distance Education is different from the conventional campus –based education in its delivery; how materials are delivered to learners, and how learners actually learn and interact with their peers. However, these differences between the two modes of instructional delivery may not be considered when many dual mode universities develop institutional policies. In support of this assertion, Osei, Dontwi & Mensah, (2013), affirmed that a major challenge to successful DE provision in Ghana is

that institutional policies at the start of most DE programmes are often based on the needs of the regular campus- based students and faculty. This assertion is very consistent with findings of this study which indicates the nonexistence of institutional policies currently for DE delivery in public universities. To corroborates this assertion, Barasa, (2010) also submits that the major challenge to the orderly growth of Distance Education in Africa is the absence of national and institutional level policies clearly delineating a path for Distance Education to run and the failure of dual mode universities to conduct needs assessments including institutional policy audits before changing from single to dual mode universities.

It therefore follows that although Distance Education delivery in public universities in Ghana is growing for the past decade, it appears institutional policies for the orderly growth of the innovation is lacking. This finding of the study aligns with review of literature on distance education including planning documents (Bates,2000; Epper,1991; Frantz & King,2000; Simonson, Smaldino, Albright &Zevack,2000; King, Russell, Lacy,1991; Berge 1998 and Gellman- Danley, 1995) that with some exceptions, institutional policy -oriented frameworks that guide practice in the distance education movement are just emerging and as a result, most dual mode universities lack a “system” perspective to developing institutional policies.

However, two remarkable issues that emerged from this study in terms of policy development that are commendable is the idea that the universities do not intend to have separate institutional policies for the different modes. The mission and vision of the universities are also captured in the draft policy document as well as other guidelines for DE operation. This is highly

commendable since the use of the integrated approach where the mission and vision of the universities are considered in developing of institutional policies for DE in dual- mode universities. This idea is supported by King et al., (1998) where they argued that integrated institutional policies for distance education are preferred in dual mode universities. In other words, institutional policies that provide guidance and direction to the dual mode universities should seamlessly incorporate the concept of distance education. In this regard, students are defined by their enrollment in a course or programme, not by whether they are conventional campus-based students or Distance learners (Simonson et. al., 2000). Simonson et al, (2000) further maintained that initially, distance education policies will probably need to coexist for some time with the institutional polices for the conventional campus-based students. Ultimately, the policies should be integrated to indicate that distance education is a routine and regularly occurring component of the dual mode universities since institutional policies are merely tools to facilitate programme integrity of the universities.

6.3 Institutional Policy Areas Currently Being Addressed by the Public Universities for Distance Education delivery

The modified institutional policies currently being addressed in the Distance Education environments of the public universities in Ghana include all the seven policy constructs in the Policy Analysis Framework used for the study.

These policies areas are discussed below:

By category, the current policies being addressed were found primarily in Academic, Fiscal Geographic Governance, Faculty, students, legal, Technical and Philosophy policies arena. It was clear that accreditation issues drive the academic policies development. Overall, most of modified institutional

policies and activities of the public universities studied focus on academic issues with emphasis to ensure course integrity. A plausible reason given for the differences in policies concentration on academic policies is that academic policies probably have the most significant effect on learners' attitudes towards the university.

In discussing the academic policies, one continuing theoretical theme that is of great importance is to ensure the equivalency of Distance Education programmes/courses to that of the conventional on-campus instruction. This equivalency covers a range of policy issues since detractors of Distance Education often raised concerns about the sacrifices in the academic quality of programmes because of its mode of delivery.

In elaborating this theory, Simonson (2007) argues that it should not be necessary for any group of learners to compensate for different, possibly lesser, instructional learning experiences. Distance Education learners should have learning experiences that are tailored to the environment and situation in which themselves. Thus, those developing DE systems should strive for equivalency in the learning experiences for all students, regardless of how they are linked to the resources or the instruction they require. These concerns may contribute to policy issues in the Distance Education environments of the public universities in Ghana.

Within the academic area of the public universities, there are many policies issues which provide evidence that the theory of equivalency is operational in the Distance Education environments of the public universities. This is evident in such policy areas such curriculum, examinations, facility usage, and

certification. Generally, the academic policy areas were similar in content but differ in operation at the various universities. They were found to be explicitly guided by the main university academic policies with a little bit of flexibility because of the dual-mode status of the universities.

Some of the guidelines in academic areas such as admission, rules and regulations for examinations, fresher orientation and graduation were carried with almost the same universities policies in both universities. Those policies, however, did not affect academic calendars, transfers, transits deferments, withdrawals and fees payment plan of the DE learners. The universities gave the DE A bit of flexibility.

For the public universities to operate with strict university academic policies in the Distance Education environment, appears to be exercising efforts in futility to the detriment of the Distance Education learners. This because DE learners are a cohort of learners in the university who operate in an entirely different environment. They are mostly adult learners who may have myriad of distractions in the academic environments and yet, may bring their experiences to bear on the learning processes. Therefore, they need the flexibility in their academic environment especially in the admission process. Most experienced DE educators recommend keeping the most academic policies in the DE environment flexible, allowing the programme to grow and succeed. Otherwise, the universities may not be able to tap into and attract many experienced prospective applicants who are mostly workers unto the DE programmes. Berge et al, (1998) also caution that if Distance Education practitioners force themselves into rigid guidelines of operation, the

innovation of DE is stifled, and their competitors may speed past them on the innovation highway. An interviewee shares insight about the rigid admission processes in KNUST. Thus:

“The process of admission in IDL is not too different from the main university admission. Because we want to maintain quality, so we go through the same processes to admit our DE students. Yes, it has negative implications. For example, most students may not qualify because of the hard-academic policies of KNUST”

This assertion also aligns with Barasa (2010) on the challenges of Distance Education delivery in Africa, submitting that most Open and Distance Learning universities are trapped in residential national education policy environments. National regulatory agencies prescribe the minimum entry academic qualifications that learners must possess in order to be admitted unto Distance Education programmes. Barasa believes that this practice in dual mode universities in Africa closes the window of flexibility to Distance Education enrollment in the universities and undermines the very philosophy upon which Open and Distance Learning is predicated.

With this in view, it would be prudent that the concept of Adult learning comes to play in the Distance Education environments of the public universities in order that practitioners will be able to differentiate between needs of the learners in the two modes and act accordingly. It will also be of great importance that personnel who provide services in the Distance Education environments in the public universities in Ghana go through some form of training in distance and adult education to be equipped with the necessary skills needed to manage distance learners for their success. This idea

appears to be the missing link between Distance Education planning and implementation in the public universities in Ghana.

There were evidence of some form of similarities, differentials and inconsistencies in the application and use of policies in the Distance Education environments of the public universities. The approach in carrying out DE activities such as Orientations, Registration, Matriculation and finally Graduation are similar. The few academic areas that the two universities often stray away a bit from the main universities were in the area of deferments, transits, withdrawal, fees fixing and the mode of payment. Institutional policies guiding these activities allow Distance Education learners to enjoy some form of flexibility over their counterparts on the conventional mode. DE learners are permitted move freely from study center to the other. Defer their programmes. They have a flexible fees payment plan and hardly were they withdrawn for non-performance.

A theme that is pertinent to the academic policies environment of Distance Education is that of integrating flexibility in all policy issues. Flexibility according to Simonson et al, (1999) is a necessary ingredient of the integrated approach to distance learning. They advise that policy makers and administrators should recognize that flexibility in academic policies for DE do not reflect a weakening of the institutional policies system or that the modification of policies is not a threat to academic integrity of the institution. Therefore, the universities in establishing some form of flexibility that allows them to chart a course for change in the academic policy arena to the advantage of the DE learners is a step in the right direction. However,

admission processes in the public universities differ. At the University of Science and Technology, DE admission is Departmental based with IDL playing a coordinating role as service unit. The reason assigned to this admission procedure is that the university considers all students as the university's students irrespective of the delivery mode. At the university of Cape Coast, the admission processes are in two categories; the Direct and the Matured Entrance Examination. The selection of successful applicants for admission and their welfare after enrollment is the sole responsibility of the College of Distance Education and not the various feeding Departments as it is in the case of IDL, KNUST. The findings of the study however confirmed that despite the differences in the admissions processes of the universities, they all abide by the main university academic policies for admitting students.

With regards to Fiscal, Governance and Geographic institutional policies issues in the universities, there was enough evidence from the findings of the study that the DE units of the public universities predominately operated with internally generated funds (IGF). The DE Units do not get any financial support from the university or the central government yet, funds accruing in the DE environments are by policy controlled by the central administration of the universities. Such funds are considered public funds and as such its use is guided by the financial policies of the university the, Public Procurement Law of Ghana. Further, it was gathered from the findings that sometimes the central administration of the universities diverts some of DE funds to service other sections of the university. This practice appears to be inappropriate and detrimental to the growth, success and the sustainability of DE programmes in the public universities in Ghana.

This assertion aligns with Mananan, (2012) when he argued that the financial management of distance education programmes appears to be less discussed but a very important issue for the sustainability of such programmes. He added that in some cases Distance Education is defined as the “World Bank” of most dual mode universities to support financial shortfalls in the other parts of dual mode universities. There is little understanding and appreciation of the uniqueness of Distance Education and the need for flexible financial management system in dual mode universities. In terms of fees fixing the universities learn from each other because of competition not to be out- priced. Generally, DE learners’ fees were seen to be on the low because they were not resident on the university campuses.

They were therefore exempted from paying for certain utilities user fees thereby reducing the amount of fees to be paid. There were very flexible fees payment arrangement yet, interviewees reported that learners did not see the payment schedules as flexible. Most of the DE learners were overwhelmingly dissatisfied with the fees charged and the mode of payment. While learners were dissatisfied with the fees charged and mode of payment, management of the universities believe that they have a reasonable rate and flexible payment schedules for fees to the advantage of the learners. The controversy may be emanating from the fact that the universities learn from each other in fees fixing and there were no policies guidelines on fees charged and payment schedules for Distance Education learners in the public universities. Moodley (2000) writing on institutional barriers caused by the organizational set up, indicated that the organizational set up of an institution may affect the quality of Distance Education delivery and may pose a challenge to the DE learners’

success. He identified those barriers to include physical barriers issues such as stringent admission requirements, high tuition fees, and the mode of the fees payment. The Distance Education learners' dissatisfaction with the fees charged and its mode of payment corroborates this assertion by Moodley. The findings generally suggest that the difficulty in assessing DE funds from the central administration for DE activities, fees charged, and the mode of payment are the major fiscal policy issues in the DE environments of the public universities studied. These issues present some form of institutional barrier to the Distance Education learners in the public universities.

The Governance structures within the universities are almost similar. However, the governance structure/system of the DE unit of the University of Science and Technology was undergoing some form transformation while the governance/system in university at the University of Cape Coast was evolving after the adaptation of the collegiate system of university governance quite recently. Therefore, processes and practices to carry out Distance Education activities were not clearly defined in the Collegiate system, but plans were underway in coming out with a well-structured and robust governance structure that will improve Distance Education delivery in the University. Until these plans are carried through, DE delivery at the University of Cape Coast stands the chance to suffer and the success of the learners will be not totally granted.

Generally, the findings of this study indicate that the governance structure of the public universities were guided by the main university policies on governance sometimes with slight modifications in the DE environments. The

governance system of the University of Science and Technology has not very stable for the past four years due frequent changes which was gradually affecting the smooth running of the Institute, resulting in a governance systemic confusion to the detriment of the Distance Education learners in IDL. The changes will take IDL sometime to stabilize its governance systems. A situation which has the potential to undermine the sustainability of the Distance Education delivery at the university and eventually affect learners' success.

However, DE learners at the University of Science Technology appear to be unaware of the unstable governance system of the university. They were satisfied with the information flow from management to learners. Contrary to this claim, Distance Education learners at the University of Cape Coast were not satisfied with the information flow from management to learners. At the university of Cape Coast, the findings described the governance system as very open with effective chain of command and information follow from management to staff and Distance Education learners. There is even a Distance Education Student' Association that represent learners' voice on the governing Board of the College yet, Distance Education learners claimed they were not satisfied with information flow from management to learners.

The design and nature of DE programmes requires a great deal of information flow within the environment to provide ways for learners to be actively engaged. Otherwise, there is the tendency for the learners to think that their expectations are not being met. And therefore, learners become frustrated if not checked, will negatively affect learner success and retention, leading to

attrition characterized with most DE programmes. Unless well planned and developed and delivered, information flow within the DE environment can even be more problematic than on the conventional mode. It appears that might be the problem at the university of Cape Coast and that explains why management thinks that the information within CoDE is open but the DE learners think otherwise.

With regards to the geographic areas of operation of the universities, the findings of this study indicate that both universities have very few study centers of their own. They are mostly located in host institutions where the weekend face-to-face sessions are held. The University of Science Technology has 12 geographic service areas/study centers mainly located in the regional capital towns of the country and one study center each in Dubai and Nigeria. Study centers at the University of Science and Technology are predominately located in the Polytechnics and accessible to Distance Education learners.

Geographically, the University of Cape Coast has about 84+ services areas/study centers across regions and districts of the country. The university however does not extend its geographic service areas beyond the boundaries of the country. Irrespective of this arrangement, accessibility to the study centers does not pose a problem to the learners. Most of the study the located in the Polytechnics which are mostly located in middle of towns. However, learners have problems in accessing some centralized services provided only at CoDE the main university. Such support services may include academic counseling and advising, graduation, transcripts and certificates. The major of

Distance Education learners (80%) at University of Science Technology were satisfied with their learning environments as against DE learners at University of Cape Coast where most of the learners overwhelmingly expressed their dissatisfaction about their learning environments. Interviewee B1 reported same on the learning environments of CoDE thus;

“Most of the study centers in our host institutions leaves much to be desired”.

Creating a supportive learning environment for DE learners’ success in any institution is a very important aspect of quality distance education delivery. By sheer numbers, the University of Cape Coast has a larger number of study centres among all the public dual- mode universities. Therefore, if DE learners are dissatisfied with the learning environments, there is the suspicion that this challenge will undermine the progress of work of both learners and facilitators at the study centres thereby creating a physical barrier against DE learners’ success at the end of the day.

There are no clear-cut institutional policies covering faculty issues in the public universities. Facilitators’ recruitments were guided by the main university policies on appointments and promotions. Facilitators do not go through any orientation on facilitation skills but were regularly monitored and accessed by both learners and management with the view to ensuring quality of programme and courses. Without facilitation skills, DE learners are at a disadvantage since they are adult learners and good facilitation skills are needed in order that they will be encouraged to bring their experiences to bear on what they are studying. Not only that, it will also be prudent for the

management of CoDE to also equip the facilitators with the skills of andragogy as method of educating adults.

There appears to be some slight differences in requirements for the course tutors /facilitators recruitment in the public universities studied. The University of Science and Technology recruits two categories of course facilitators in their DE environments - faculty members of the university, nominated by departments and those recruited outside the university. Not only that, to be a course facilitator at the university of Science and Technology, it is a pre-requisite for the applicant to be a computer literate since the greater portion of their learning materials are technology- based. The requirements for course tutor's appointment uniquely demanded at the University of Cape Coast is for the applicant to have a background knowledge of professional education in addition to the required academic qualifications. There are three categories of course tutors at the University of Cape Coast. These include permanent academic senior members of CoDE; senior members from participating departments and applicants recruited outside the university. With regards to course facilitation learners gave ample evidence that they were aware of course facilitation as a support service in the universities in the DE environments.

Other findings show that the University of Science and Technology takes legal issues in their DE environment very seriously. There were no clear-cut institutional policies on legal issues. The main university legal policies were binding on IDL. Legal issues in the DE environment of the university centered on mainly on module development. There is always some form of a signed

legal copyright agreement between the module developer and the university to cover those legal issues before the commencement of module development. Module developer at the University of Science and Technology does not get full payment until the module is run for a year. This is done to collect feedback from learners and facilitators before the final payment with some percentage going to the developer's department. Module developers were not paid royalties because of the shared philosophy of the IDL management and believe that as an academic institution, their intellectual and education materials should have open access for the benefit of the public society. However, the module developer could use the material at the initial stages after but after the material has been put in the interactive mode it becomes the property of the university. Module developers cannot use the module for promotion in the university. Further findings show that it appears the university has problems with the intellectual property rights especially with the payment and the use of the module for promotion which is currently not permissible. There were however plans for future changes in the legal environment of the DE unit of the university. DE learners appeared to be unaware of the legal issues in the university. This is likely to keep them in the dark in terms of copyrights and plagiarisms in carrying out academic such theses, dissertations and project work among others.

Legal issues in the DE environment of the University of Cape Coast also center around module development. Like the University of Science and Technology, legal issues in CoDE are guided by the main university legal policies. The current guidelines are that the module developers are engaged to write the modules with an initial forty percent (40%) payment. When the

module is complete the remaining sixty (60%) is paid and that ends the contract between the university and the module developers. The module produced becomes the property of the university. However, the developer could use up to three developed modules for promotion unlike the case of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. There were no specific legal policies in the Distance Education environment of university. Learners in both institutions were unaware of the legal issues.

Institutional policies towards technology use in the public universities were dissimilar. Technology use in the DE environment of the University of Science Technology has been fully implemented. These include a customized platform-V-Class used for learners' orientation, registration, uploading of course modules and slides, assessment of academic results, Skype, thesis defense as well as teaching and facilitation. The multi-purpose usage of the V-Class has limited number of printed modules and face- to- face sessions for DE. Aside the use of the V-Class, D E learners also benefit from the use of the main University Information Technology Systems (UITS) and the E-libraries facilities of the main university.

Technology use at the university of Science and Technology has been fully developed and any future addition would be to improve service quality and probably enhance the technology strategy as the university aims to run their activities with 80% technology and 20% print. In adapting of the blended mode of Distance Education delivery. Interviewee A3 declared that the V-Class have been uniquely mounted as the University's committed towards DE to enhance the learning environment. This goes to confirm why most of the

DE learners at IDL indicated that they were satisfied with learning environments. The end of the day, this will be translated to the learners' success.

In contrast, technology use at the University of Cape Coast has not been fully implemented but gradually evolving and systematically approaching adaptation. Even for Distance Education learners' academic assessment and academic record keeping and admissions, CoDE employ the services of private entities to provide technology service in the DE environment. The findings revealed that there were three soft wares currently in use in the DE environment are provided by private companies. Thus, creating a lot of problems in the data management. The university management is now trying to hook the DE learners unto the main university data- base for the conventional campus students and that exercise faces a lot of challenges. For now, only the first year Distance Education learners have been hooked unto the data- base as the bulk of the learners still on the three different software. With such technology usage problems in the DE environment of CoDE may account for the reasons why learners were dissatisfied with the learning environments. It appears the University has not shown much commitment towards technology usage to the learners' advantage.

Notwithstanding the problems in the DE environment of the University of Cape Coast, plans are far advanced for the university to mount E- platform in order to beam live lectures to DE learners when all the regional offices are completed with the view to creating a supportive learning environment for Distance Education learners.

Comparatively, technology use appears to very high in the D E environment of the University of Science and Technology for learners' support. Than the University of Cape Coast indifferent about technology use in their learning environments. The implication of this is that at the end of the DE learners at of IDL are more likely to be successful on their programmes of studies more than CoDE. No wonder IDL completion rate is very good as expressed by interviewee A2 thus:

“Yes, I will say yes. We have a very good completion rate, and attrition rate is quite minimal. We try to do our best to support them in every possible way”.

Interviewee A1 confirmed this assertion by adding thus:

“Generally, our graduation rate is around 70% and attrition rate at 30%.

It therefore follows that CoDE by sheer numbers may appear to be graduating a lot of learners. But in fact, percentage wise, IDL appears to be graduating a larger percentage of graduates than CoDE. This was confirmed by interviewee B2 thus:

“Our completion rate at CoDE is about 53% as against 81% of the regular with a very low numerical strength, then the unit need to sit up. We have a wide gap to close”

Philosophical aspect of institutional policy development for Distance Education is related to the institutional approach to the acceptance of Distance Education and how core values, missions and vision relate to Distance Education delivery. The findings of the study show generally that Distance Education has been accepted, given the recognition and acceptance in public universities in Ghana. However, there was an indication that sometimes, even

within the same university people had divergent views on Distance Education as an alternative mode of instructional delivery.

At the university of Science and Technology based their operations on the mission, vision and cores values of the institution. The university management appeared to have fully embraced Distance Education as a viable alternate mode of instruction delivery which is yielding good results for meeting institutional goals which is captured in the overall mission statement in the University Strategic Plan (2015-2025).

Irrespective of that fact that the management of the university is embracing Distance Education at the University of Science Technology, the findings of the study depicts that some faculty members within the university have some negative perception about the whole idea of Distance Education as an alternate mode of instruction in the university. The extract from the results provide evidence to this claim.

“For the university, we have people who, left to them alone, we should close down IDL. They think we are compromising on standards and but for those who are really involved, know that it’s not about compromising standards. Of course, there may be problems with attendance, but they realized that it is not about compromising standards. The standards of the two modes are about the same and for some programmes; the lecturers prefer the IDL students because of the experience that they bring to bear on the programmes as adult learners”.

The assertion aligns with Croft (1992) where she argues that instead of being a lecturer, the lecturer on a distance education programme becomes a facilitator and the dynamics of the course and the teacher- student relationship change. For this reason, faculty in most dual mode universities sees Distance

Education threatening the integrity of the traditional learning process. Croft further observes that nothing dispels the attitudinal aspects of the discomfort with distance education- fear of change concern; Distance Education learners may not get the education they deserve, about learners' own reputation, about job security, that Distance Education will make faculty superfluous, a resistance to learning new things, a worry that Distance Education learners will not adapt, skepticism about the abilities of Distance Education to deliver what it promises and the previous negative experience of Distance Education. Furthermore, Croft further asserts that it is a little wonder that faculty in traditional universities, no matter how strong their personal orientation in the academia, are unlikely to embrace Distance Education happily. Yet it survives and flourishes.

Millard (1991) adds to this assertion where he also argues that often faculty are justifiably concerned about standards, both for professional reputation and that of their institution. This is because the concern for standards is often based on the incorrect assumption that greater access will necessary result in decreased quality since there is a limited pool of ability population. Unfortunately, in this equation excellence and quality may become rationalization for denial of access and opportunity.

It is worthy to note that notwithstanding the negative, pessimistic and conservative perception of Distance Education to some faculty members in the public universities, the findings of the study further indicated that for those faculty members who are really involved in the Distance Education programme in the public universities know that Distance Education is not

about compromising on academic standards. At least, there was another category of faculty who sometimes prefer to teach the Distance Education learners instead of the conventional students because of the rich experiences that the Distance Education learners bring to bear on the instructional delivery as adult learners. This revelation from the findings of the study corroborates with Dhanarajan, (1997), on the convergence of Distance Education where he indicated that the debate is not a new one as subject to Edwards, Hugo, Cragg & Peterson (2001) assertion that “research generally shows no significant difference in the educational outcomes in course achievement and satisfaction with instruction between courses taught through distance education and those offered in the traditional classroom” (pg.119).

The findings further indicated that there appears to be the lack of a national policy on Distance Education delivery and supervision by the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders of education. Quality assurance in the Distance Education delivery environment of the public universities in Ghana generally appears to be a problem. These challenges seem to be affecting the quality standards of Distance Education in public universities in Ghana. This finding from the study is consistent with the assertion by Rogers, 1995; Simonson et al., (2000) who argued that of more direct importance to the success of Distance Education is its recognition as credible, of high quality and appropriate. The authors mentioned Distance education as new to most and misunderstood by many, and that publicity and attention are important components of a successful and acceptable distance education programme. The findings of this study generally show that though the acceptance of the whole idea and philosophy of Distance Education delivery in public universities

appears to be based on the subjective judgement of various stakeholders of education, is seen as an alternate mode of instruction delivery in the public universities in Ghana.

6.5 Public universities commitment in supporting DE Learners.

This is section of the findings answers research question three formulated for the study. Commitment from critical stakeholders in and outside the university is essential to the success of any DE programme. Offerman (2007) maintains that probably the most critical aspect of commitment is the intent, and the allocation of resources necessary, not only to launch the programme but to sustain it so that DE learners who enter are allowed the opportunity to complete their studies. He argues that the required commitment is best ensured by adhering to the institution's governance and oversight processes and the overriding concern. Offerman believes that an overriding concern will be quality assurance and a good deal of thought and effort devoted towards institution commitment. He further asserts that DE will succeed if the appropriate constituents are engaged in serious planning that considers mission, vision, and quality, impact on experience, required resources, and assessment to ensure that the stated purposes for the programme are being achieved. The research question three for study was formulated to ascertain from the research participants the level of commitment towards DE delivery and learners' success.

The findings from the study with regards to institutional commitment towards DE and learners' success generally show that the public universities studied appeared to be committed to DE and learner's success though no discrete institutional policies exist in the DE policies environments for delivery.

Regardless of the show of commitment, there appear to be a few challenges in the DE environments that threatens the total commitment of the universities in supporting DE learners' success.

The degree of commitment of the universities was evident from the expression of DE in the policy documents of the universities. Such documents included corporate strategy plans, key thrusts, and Records which indicate an appropriate placement of DE within the organizational structure of the university. Another indicator of the universities commitment was that the University accept the peculiar circumstances of DE and agree to their demands especially when it comes to the adherence of strict university policies. Often when DE had adopted the policies to suit the DE environment and critics raise issues, they eventually come to accept their peculiar circumstance, relaxes the strict policies to the advantage of DE learners. This gives impression that the universities are interested in the growth and sustenance of DE.

Irrespective of the show of interest in DE by the management of the universities, the majority of the study participants believe that the university management shows interest in DE because it provides the university with a lot of resources and monetary gains. The universities know that when they are in dire need of money, they can always fall on the DE units to service their debts and other financial needs of other sections of the universities. For this reason, they are very interested in the financial gains of the DE units of the universities. Other show of commitment by the universities is to ensure that examinations are conducted under strict quality assurance principles, the issuance of same identity cards and certificates to both conventional and DE

learners ensuring parity of esteem. There is the flexibility on some support services like deferment, transits, transfer and fees payment. The universities as part of its commitment have also given the DE units partial financial autonomy though the use of DE funds is closely monitored by the central administration of the universities of the universities studied.

This finding on financial management in the DE environment of the universities contradicts the assertion by Mbatha & Manana, (2012) that “There is little understanding and appreciation of the uniqueness of DE and the need for flexible financial management system” pp.285. The findings on financial management also indicated the flexibility and promptness in the payment for services rendered by personnel who in one way or the other supported DE activities in the universities reveals their commitment towards DE. Other indicators of commitment of the universities towards DE included constant monitoring of face- to -face sessions, provision of adequate range of support services at the disposal of all DE learners with the view to creating an enabling learning environment for the DE learners.

Specifically, for the University of Cape Coast institutional commitment of the university is shown by the unique ways in which the central administration supports DE activities. These includes collaborating, liaising and working in tandem with all stakeholders, making sure that the right things were done in the DE environment to ensure learner success. Everyone from the Vice-Chancellor right down to the cleaners supports the work of DE. It is no wonder that at the University of Cape Coast, the DE unit is placed directly under the office of the Vice –chancellor. This is to avoid any bureaucracy and

to avoid challenges that were likely to hinder the smooth running of DE activities. Comparatively this kind of commitment does not exist at the University of Science of Technology. There appears to be some form of apathy in the DE environment of KNUST due to the frequent changes in the DE unit thus rendering the organizational structure highly unstable and making the DE management difficult. This situation does not augur well for institutional harmony and it has the tendency to undermine the effectiveness of programme delivery and learners' success. Institutional goals, vision aspirations and the continuity as well as accountability of IDL may negatively be affected. This may lead to negative perceptions of stakeholders, thereby jeopardizing the use of DE a viable alternate mode of delivery in the public universities.

The appears to be the lack of institutional commitments in such areas of the DE environments of the public universities such as orientations for newly admitted learners, counselling services, improper monitoring of face to face sessions, lack of facilitation skills, among others. The findings of the study also indicated that both universities use facilitators to represent faculty, but facilitators lack the skills of facilitation. Both institutions do orient facilitators when they employ their services but refuse to orient them with facilitation skills. Facilitators were sometimes confused about how to use the modules written by experts as shown in the findings from the study. Another finding from the study has to do with monitoring of face- to- face sessions and the provision of feedback.

The essence of monitoring of the monitoring is for monitors to collect feedback for management to improve the DE system. In absence of such feedbacks there is the danger that DE learning experience becomes disappointing. Management becomes overwhelmed and learners are unhappy because their expectations are not realized to the detriment of learners' success. It was reported in the findings that there appeared to be the problem of monitors not reporting to management of their findings from the field. Monitors just go and return without reports for both institutions without being sanctioned. Management see this as a lack of commitment on the part of monitors and programme administrators. There appears to a lack of commitment on legal issues in the environments of both institutions. There were no clear institutional policies covering legal issues. Barring these challenges, the DE environment of the institutions, appeared to be partially committed towards DE delivery and subsequent success of their DE learners. DE learners summarized the universities formal commitment to mean the adequate provision of an enabling environment for learning and quality delivery of the modules. Most of the learners (78%) at the university of Science and Technology indicated that the institution is committed to DE. DE learners' (86%) at the University of Cape Coast however opined that the university is not fully committed to DE.

6.6 DE learners' satisfaction with Range of Support Services Provided by the universities

This section of the study answers research question four which focuses on DE learners' satisfaction with the array of support services provided by the universities. Distance education differ from conventional campus-based education in its mode of delivery and how learners learn. A policy friendly

environment to DE delivery and practice must contain values among which is guaranteed access for DE learners to a range of support services comparable to those for conventional campus students (Bottomley & Calvert, 2003).

The area of student support services is central to the success of any distance education programme. Policy issues emanating from support services are often overlooked. Unfortunately, support services policy issues directly impact on prospective and current learners in the DE environment. Regardless of the delivery method employed for distance education, the learner's needs must be kept in focus. Strong student support service policies can greatly increase the probability that this will continue to be the case.

The best practices document for Distance and Online Education by the Regional Accrediting Commissions (CRAC) of the United States of America, clearly states that DE learners should be made aware of programme requirements, and how students support service are provided. CRAC believes that student support is of outmost concern and the focus is on the array of services provided and how these services are accessed. Most literature on distance education delivery such as that of Gyimah- Mireku (1998), Moore and Thompson (1999) Simpson, (2000), Tait, (2000), Rumble,(2000), Bate,(2007), Badu Nyarko (2010) and Sakyi (2012) recommend the provision of support services to learners in order to remove the distance "deficit" in the DE environments. Student support services are therefore very critical to learners in the DE environments of dual mode universities. Therefore, at each point in the learners' academic journey, universities should have a range of student support services they can employ to increase retention and

achievement of the DE learners who enroll to pursue various programmes in the universities.

Participants in this study thoroughly discussed the array of support services available in the DE environments of the public universities, how those services were provided and accessed by the DE learners. The components and nature of the array of support services across the universities were generally similar but vary in the way in which they were provided and accessed by the DE learners. The support services provided were also found to be centered predominately on academic issues and other related activities operational in the routine activities of the DE units of the universities. These were sometimes spelt out as rules and regulations in the Students' handbook. Support services available to learners include pre- admission, admission, help desk, orientation, students' handbook, registration, identity cards, face- to- face sessions and monitoring, academic advising, guidance and counseling, technical support among others. All these support services focused primarily on reducing the distance "deficit" and other forms of barriers that may affect the success of the learners in the DE environments of the universities.

This then suggest that the public universities were making conscious efforts to creating an enabling learning environment for the success of the DE learners though the available support services appear to be inadequate. The inadequacy of the support services were evident areas such as orientation, academic guidance and counseling/advising and other forms of counseling, face- to- face monitoring, study center related issues.

Specifically, for the university of Cape Coast, technical strategy to support DE learners were gradually evolving, and the challenge affects learners' progress. There were no physical libraries at the study centers. At the University of Science and Technology, to argument the challenge of the absence of physical libraries at the study centers, E- libraries were uniquely provided for DE learners. Learners could access this facility anywhere they have access to the internet. This form of library facility does not exist at the university of Cape Coast where learners solely depend on printed modules as study materials.

The absence libraries present another physical institutional barrier which might negatively affect the DE learners' success. The duration of orientation sessions held for newly admitted DE learners in all the universities were also found to be inadequate. This revelation from the present study contradicts the assertion made by Offerman 2007 that "Beyond the academic and pedagogical issues, however , there must be a plan to thoroughly orient distance learners to the new delivery approach, clearly outlining for them the discipline they will need to exhibit in order to succeed, the program expectations, and how support services will be made available to them"pp303 Offerman 2007 clearly believes that DE learners benefit from formal orientation to the new way of learning. He further argued that this orientation should be specific in defining expectations, navigation within the course/programme, how to seek assistance with instructional staff, providing frequent feedback to learners. Furthermore, Offerman, 2007 mentioned that if DE learners are to make a commitment towards the programme, they must understand the intended outcomes, the support that is available, the impact on their experiences, and what is expected

of them and what they must actually experience is achievable, engaging, and rewarding.

From the findings of the study it came out that orientation sessions were held for a day in the universities and sometimes it was held for a few hours' preceding matriculation ceremonies thus making this important support service inadequate and unbeneficial to support the newly admitted DE learners. The kind of orientations held in the universities studied vis- a-vis Offerman's assertion on orientations for DE learners pre-supposes that the organization of orientation sessions for DE learners was critical and involving. The universities, therefore, requires a great deal of planning and time to provide the opportunity for the learners to be actively engaged during the orientation sessions for maximum benefit. Therefore, considering the duration and how orientations are held in the universities, there is the tendency to "pile" up a lot of information for the newly admitted DE learners, cramming too much content during orientation sessions and allowing the learners' too little time for reflection in order to ask questions for clarification. There are the likelihood learners might not benefit fully from the orientation sessions.

Face- to- face monitoring in the universities also poses a bit of challenge in the DE environments of the public universities. The findings of the study indicated that personnel from the universities who monitor Face- to- Face sessions, do not bring any feedback to management. In some other instances, the right caliber of personnel was not used. Such personnel only go to check on the attendance of learners and course facilitators. However, management expect the monitors to access the facilitators work, access the physical

facilities and respond to both facilitators and learners' queries and report for further actions so that sanity would prevail in the DE learning environments of the universities.

It therefore becomes a bit of a problem if the personnel who go for Face- to-Face monitoring fail to provide reasonable levels of feedback to management. There is the danger that DE learners' expectations may reach a level assuming that their queries and complaints are not given immediate and detailed feedback. When this happens learners will be unhappy because their expectations will not be realized. This could affect their emotional stability and eventually their success on the programme.

These are institutionally based -related issues which could have direct impact on the learners, negatively influencing learners' motivation and satisfaction and their success. The resultant development would be that at the end of the day, the programme experience becomes disappointing for both learners and the universities. Learners were likely to drop out of the various programmes of study resulting in learner attrition that characterizes most DE programmes. Offerman (2007) maintains that "Beyond the student support available, there is a critical need for staff on the DE programme to provide frequent, critical feedback to learners" pp.229. This is not happening in the DE environments of the two public universities in Ghana. Efforts to address these concerns will pay off in the form of institutional commitment to, and even championing of, DE delivery and learners' success.

Academic counseling and other forms of counseling services provided by the public universities were inadequate. The findings from the study suggest these support services are sometimes provided by the wrong caliber of personnel without the requisite expertise. For instance, counseling services at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, examination officers provide counseling to DE learners at the study centers. DE learners could also access the counseling services from the main university counseling service unit. Counseling services at the University of Cape Coast, course tutors and center coordinators provide unofficial counselling services to DE learners at the study centers.

The importance of counseling in the DE environment for the learners were re-echoed by most of the Principal Officers during the interviews. Despite the importance they appeared to be attaching these services in the DE environments, counseling services for DE learners appeared to be inadequate in both universities. This situation at the public universities, constitutes an institutional barrier that does not promote learner success. This is because if there are any group of learners on any mode of instructional delivery should benefit from counseling services then is the distance education learners. They have myriad challenges that are likely to distract their academic work. As Walter Perry, the founding Vice-Chancellor of the OUUK, said

“... studying at a distance was the most difficult way to study yet invented” (Personal Communication 1971)

He advised that there is the need for distance education universities to take concern of learner support seriously.

Academic counseling and advising and other forms of counseling are therefore, very important services in the DE environments of the dual mode universities. This is to augment the challenges learners and the lack and/or inadequacy of the services become problematic in the DE environments of the universities. This could mar the progress of the DE learners.

DE learners were also dissatisfied with technical support strategies which were evolving at the University of Cape Coast. Technical strategy at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology has been fully developed. It is therefore not surprising that most learners were satisfied with the technical strategy of the university. Almost all the support services which were inadequate in the DE environments of the public universities were all institutional based for which amendments could be made to resolve the challenges.

It has been mentioned in literature that among the various sources of learner support services, institutional support service is very crucial, representing the basic condition for learners' overall satisfaction with distance education. It, therefore, follows that DE learners in the public universities are not fully supported and hence their dissatisfaction with a greater portion of the range of support services provided by the public universities. The situation does not promote learner success to the fullest.

The findings from the study depict generally that DE learners at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology show some level of satisfaction of the services provided by their university. The IDL learners were satisfied with the number of quizzes and examinations conducted every

semester, flow of information from management to the learners, learning environments as well as the course facilitation/ delivery.

The revelation from the DE learners of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science Technology aligns with claims by interview participants that management take all forms of examinations conducted in the university seriously including DE, and for that matter, DE learners are guided to understand the all examinations rules and regulations in the Students Handbook. Information from management are also frequently sent to DE learners on the V-Class, thus making the information flow within the DE environment effective. It is, therefore, not surprising that the IDL learners were satisfied with the array of support services provided in their DE environments.

Notwithstanding learners' satisfaction with quizzes, examinations, information flow, study centre related issues, Learners were however dissatisfied with course modules, fees charged and mode of payment. This revelation corroborates the responses of the Principal Officers interview responses on those support services as evidenced in this statement:

“When it comes to setting of fees and even collecting them, We have learnt from other universities especially University of Cape Coast and in terms of how much to charge because these days we are all competing for the very few students who want to top whatever knowledge they want to acquire. So yes, we have been monitoring what other institutions also charge”

It, therefore, follows that because the university learn from other similar universities, there is the likelihood that DE learners' fee fixing and mode of payment will be inconsistent and out- priced and this may become a source of

worry to the DE learners. A principal officer further shared his views on the issue:

“I remember some years ago, the rule for fee payment was that you pay before you are admitted but now because of the economic situation in the country, most people are asking to be allowed to pay about sixty percent (60%). And now when it comes to collecting the rest of the fees, it’s been problematic. But for what is important, is for each institution to come out with some tolerable package and how the fees will even be spread out so that it becomes a win-win situation for the institution and then the students. That is the challenge now”

To further corroborate the DE learners’ dissatisfaction on fees fixing and mode of payment another also shared insights to confirm the DE learners’ dissatisfaction thus:

“For the regular mode if you are fee –paying student you pay everything before you can register. But for us, at the beginning of the year, we give you the bill for the whole year, but we allow you to pay at least half or sixty percent of the whole amount and pay the rest at the beginning of the second semester. This is done just to give the DE learners’ some form of flexibility in terms of payment of fees, but the learners don’t find this arrangement flexible at all”

Most of the DE learners at the University of Cape Coast (CODE) were also dissatisfied with the range of support services provided to support them. The majority of the learners at CoDE were dissatisfaction with course modules and delivery, the fee charged and the mode of payment, number of quizzes and examinations, information flow and the learning environments.

The findings of the study therefore suggest that the DE learners at CoDE appeared to be dissatisfied with almost all the support services provided by the university as form of support in their learning environments. This revelation from the DE learners is a bit worrying and should be an area for future

investigation. It could be possible that DE learners of CoDE were not even aware of the availability of those services and therefore could not access them to their benefit. However, the findings from the interviews attest to the fact the provision of some of the support services were not available, inadequate, needs improvement and carried out by unqualified personnel due to the large numbers of DE learners that needed to be serviced over the weekends. For instance, findings of the interviews indicated that Pre- admission, Orientation, academic guidance and counseling and other forms of counseling in the DE environment of CoDE were inadequate.

It also came out of the findings that some of the study centers were not conducive for academic work. Technology strategy at CoDE was still evolving and as such DE learners depend solely on the modules as the learning material. These modules were yet to be reviewed and placed online for learners as done at IDL. If this is happening in the DE environment of CoDE, then obviously the learners will surely be dissatisfied with the support services.

6.7 Effective use of Institutional Policies in promoting DE learners' Success

This research question aimed at investigating from the DE learners how effective the institutional policies were used in promoting their success on the DE programmes. The findings in Table 5 present the descriptive statistics of the effectiveness of institutional policies to promote learner success in the universities. Per the means comparison, it could be established that the DE learners confirmed that policies on technical support were the most effective in promoting learners' success, giving evidence to the effect that policies on

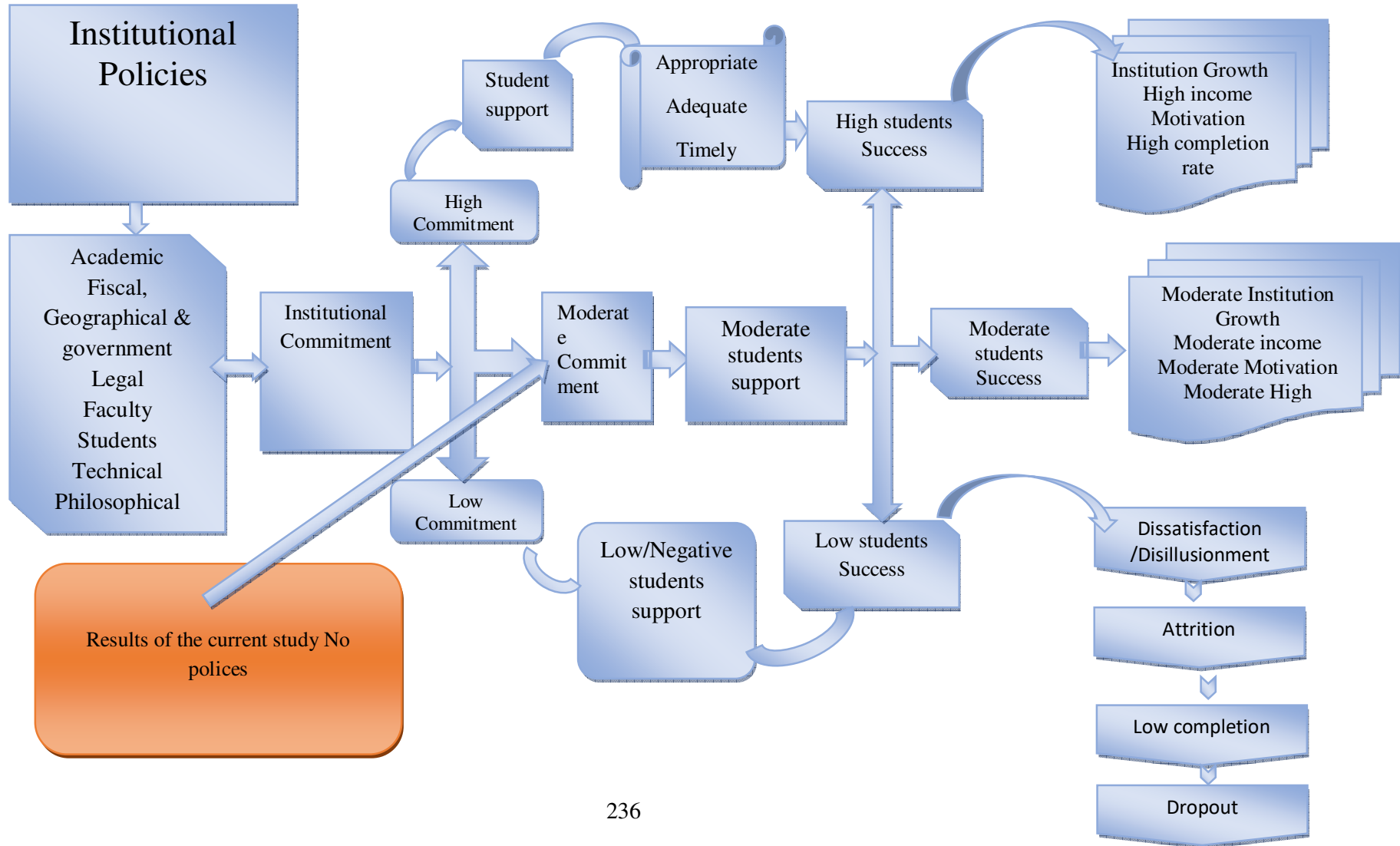
technical support were the most effective in supporting and promoting learner success in the universities since it recorded the highest mean. The findings consistent with the findings from the principal officers of IDL who indicated that their technical strategy is full use to support their DE learners and that if anything at all it will just be additions to make the technical support services effective for the benefit of the DE learners. The findings however contradict that of the principal officers of CoDE who indicated in the findings that technical strategy in the DE environment was still evolving and therefore contradicts the claim by the learners that policies on technical strategy was the most effective policies. There is need for further enquiry into these findings in CoDE. Further evidence shows that policies on registration rated second, followed by course materials. Policies on the admissions were identified to be the least effective policies in supporting DE learners.

The findings from the DE learners' survey that indicated policies on admission as the least effective again corroborates the findings from the interviews when the principal officers of the universities indicated that DE units do not stray away from the main universities policies when they are admitting the DE learners. They mentioned that sometimes the policies for the traditional regular students do not really fit entirely in the DE environment and that is problematic. This may explain why the DE learners found the policies on admission as the least effective policies. However, it is worthy to note that the universities were coming out soon with DE specific institutional policies as a way of creating learning environments for DE learners' success.

The findings of study have provided important information about the availability of institutional policies and the level of commitment that guide DE

delivery and support provided to DE learners in promoting their success and institutional growth. The study found that there were no officially written documented policies for DE delivery public universities in Ghana but utilizes existing on-campus policies to manage the programme with few modifications

Institutional Policy and Commitment Framework for Effective DE Delivery



6.8 Interpretation of the Framework

Evidence in the literature suggest that where there are institutional policies are available for DE delivery, institutional commitment is likely to be observed by stakeholders, leading to students support which brings about high level of students' success. To leverage these assertions, I was interested in finding out whether the ideal case is real for DE delivery in public universities in Ghana. The results from the study (as depicted in the framework) give ample evidence to settle that, there are no clear-cut institutional policies for DE delivery in public universities in Ghana however, to keep the DE system running, there appears to be institutional commitment but very low. This low institutional commitment alludes to moderate or little student support which has led to dissatisfaction, disillusionment, attrition, low completion and dropout in the institutional

Therefore, for quality DE delivery there should be institutional policies and high commitment which will lead to high, adequate, appropriate and timely institutional support to the advantage of DE learners. Where there no institutional policies in place there will low commitment leading to low student support services, low motivation, student's dissatisfaction, low completion rate and attrition as well as low institutional growth. In between is where there is moderate commitment that leads to moderate students support services, moderate motivation, moderate student success and moderate institutional growth. For quality DE there should be specific institutional policies put in place for DE delivery and a high-level institutional commitment to support DE learners fully.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Overview

The Ghana Government policy on tertiary education provides the policy framework for public universities in Ghana to increase access to tertiary education. Public universities in Ghana embraced this alternate mode of delivery to meeting the needs of their changing demographics, as well as increasing access to tertiary education. However, the appropriate institutional policies and formal commitment associated with Distance Education delivery to promote learner success in the public universities raised concerns. Hence the need to examine the institutional policies environments of the public universities and the degree of commitment in supporting distance learners' success on their various programmes of studies.

The education landscape in Ghana is undergoing vast transformation, and distance education is a major contributor to that change. Nevertheless, many basic questions to distance education delivery in public universities in Ghana remained unanswered. This is especially true in the institutional policies arena and commitment of most public dual mode universities in Ghana. With some exceptions, institutional policy-oriented frameworks that guide distance education delivery in most countries are now emerging.

Public universities embraced distance education in 1996 to respond to economic shortfalls, budget cuts and to increase access to tertiary education without the burden of increasing physical space. Distance education though perceived as a low-cost alternate, the cost of quantity over quality became a

high-stake question. The lack of institutional policy frameworks that might exist in public universities to serve as a guide for operations of the dual mode universities do not ensure that institutional policies consistently support the visions, missions objectives and goals public dual mode universities in Ghana. Clearly, it is important to recognize and address the need for institutional policies and commitment for supporting distance learners in public universities before the institutions can fully and completely address distance education as a viable alternate mode to the campus- mode of delivery in public universities in Ghana. This is a research gap that needs bridging.

It is in this vein that this study sought to investigate: the institutional policies environments of the Distance Education units of the public universities in Ghana and to ascertain their commitment in using the available institutional policies if any, in ensuring that distance learners are fully supported to ensure parity of esteem, devoid of learner attrition.

The following research objectives were formulated to drive the study.

1. To explore the institutional policies that exist in public universities in Ghana for Distance Education delivery.
2. To find out the institutional policies areas currently being addressed by public universities in Ghana for Distance Education delivery.
3. To examine how the public universities are committed in supporting Distance Education learners.
4. To assess how satisfied the Distance Education learners with the support services provided by the universities in Ghana.

5. To investigate how the institutional policies are effectively being used to promote DE learners' success.

The conceptual framework for the study as shown in table 2 was used to guide the study with respect to the formulation of the research objectives, research questions, design, methodology and data analysis and reporting. Gellman-Danley, Fetzner 1998; Berge, 1998 have developed models to help decision makers look at the policy environments of distance education delivery in dual mode universities.

Policy areas such as Mission statements, Vision, Academic, Fiscal Geographic Governance, Faculty, Student Support, Legal, Technical and Philosophical policy issues in the DE environments of the public universities in Ghana.

According to the framework institutional policies provide the guidelines for all operational activities and define a standard method of operation in the DE environments of dual mode universities. The institutionalization of distance education therefore must include the development of institutional policies for the use of the innovation. King et al, (2000) mention that one key indicator that distance education is moving into the mainstream is the increased emphasis on the need for institutional policies to guide its effective growth.

Institutional commitment is essential to development and the sustainability of all forms of DE programmes. Offerman (2007) notes that whenever a university becomes dual mode, and embarks on a DE programme, there must be enough institutional commitment such that any learner who enroll on the programme is given a reasonable opportunity to complete the programme successfully. This becomes critical since DE delivery mechanisms allows

learners to participate without being on campus. Therefore, the study also explored the levels of commitment of the public universities in using the appropriate policies to support and promote learners' success and possibly institutional growth.

The study followed a mixed method approach using qualitative and quantitative techniques to examine the views of principal officers and DE learners of the two universities studied. The first stage involved interviewing principal officers of the universities to get firsthand information about the availability of institutional policies and the degree of commitment in using the policies to support learners. The second stage involved the use a distance learners' survey to provide "on the spot" evidence from the learners to substantiate the findings from the first stage.

7.2 Key Findings

The key findings of the study are as follows:

1. One significant finding of the study was that there are no discrete codified official institutional policies for distance education delivery in two public dual mode universities studied. Distance education delivery in public dual mode universities is carried out using unofficial modified institutional policies carved out of the main universities policies for the conventional students.
2. The study established that the key policy areas currently being addressed revolve around Academic, Governance, Fiscal and support issues. For instance, academic areas include admissions, orientate graduation, registration, of technological policies such as V-Class (KNUST) and V-CODE (UCC).

3. Barring a few challenges in the distance education environments of public dual universities, the institutions appeared to be committed to providing quality distance education to their numerous clients. For instance, the establishment of the College of Distance Education at UCC and its study across the country while KNUST is providing well equipped regional centres to administer DE.
4. DE learners at the University of Cape Coast were not satisfied with almost all the range of support services provided by the University.

Distance Education learners in the public universities were not fully supported with adequate range of services to fully support DE learners.
5. Challenges associated with the provision of support services the DE environments of the public universities were identified by the study participants as:
 - a) Inadequate pre-admission support.
 - b) Inadequate orientation for newly admitted distance education learners.
 - c) Improper face- to- face monitoring and failure of monitors to submit reports or feedback to management.
 - d) Lack of academic counseling and other forms of counseling services.
 - e) Non availability of fees fixing plans and inconsistent mode of payment.
 - f) Non availability of physical library facilities at the study centres.
 - g) Technology usage not fully developed to support DE learners (UCC).

- h) For faculty development, UCC facilitators lack facilitation skills due to inadequate training in tutoring DE learners.

Institutional level policies adapted for distance education delivery in public universities focused on academic policy issues in the form of support services with the view to creating an enabling learning environment for the distance learners. These policies were mostly spelt out as rules and regulations the students' Handbooks for all categories of students in the universities.

The adapted institutional policies for distance education delivery in the public universities were based on the needs of the traditional conventional campus-based students and faculty with little or no review of existing institutional policies to find out about any redundancies that may affect the needs of the distant learner. This indicates short falls in distance education policy development and strong commitment to DE.

Learners were not fully supported by the range of support services provided by the universities. Distance learners were not satisfied with support services that were available in their distance education environments indicating that the universities were not fully commitment in supporting the distance education learners to be successful.

The lack of effective use of the adapted institutional policies to the advantage of the distance learners was evident that some academic activities and some policy issues such as orientation of newly enrolled learners, academic counseling and other forms of counseling, library facilities, technical strategies and legal issues were inadequate to fully support the distance learners' success.

7.3 Conclusions

Institutional policies are the guiding principles through which effective organization and administration of DE delivery may be provided. In the two public universities studied, there existed no institutional policy frameworks clearly identified exclusively to direct DE operations. Yet, policies emanating from the campus-based mode are being used tailored towards DE. This has its own implications for ensuring successful operation of DE in the public dual mode universities in Ghana.

The two universities studied exemplified the fact that the low of institutional commitment towards establishing fully fledged DE policies have led to the use of conventions which not making things work effectively for DE learner's success. For instance, facilitators from UCC are oriented towards conventional teaching and bring same to DE.

The two universities studied admitted that DE learners have peculiar challenges that need to be addressed. As a result, they are committed in providing study centres, governance structures, fiscal guidelines and technological policies to drive the operationalization of DE and student support. It must be noted that despite written institutional policies, if there is lack of commitment, then there will be learners' dissatisfaction, high attrition rates and faculty resentment, low level of motivation, and disillusionment.

7.4 Implications for Distance Education Delivery

Institutional policies serve as the framework for providing guidelines for quality DE delivery. For successful DE provision, policy guidelines provide the needed governance structures, integration of existing with emerging DE issues for effective utilization of programmes. This study has also shown that

where there is high commitment to existing policies, institutions can benefit from the policies and modified them as the years go by. It is also making both the people working in the organization and their clients observe the policies and work assiduously towards the success of the organization. This may also bring the avoidance of unnecessary confrontation and agitations in the operations of the institution

7.5 Implications for Institutional Growth

The issue of commitment towards institutional commitment may lead to satisfying stakeholders. Knowledge of such policies built around institutional mission and vision enjoins them to participate fully to support institutional growth.

7.6 Implication for Adult Education

This study lies in the area of organization and administration of Adult Education organizations particularly the operationalization and management of DE outfits. The policies when fully established provides the needed professional bureaucracy that makes the staff able to handle institutional matters and direct the organization to achieve expected objectives and goals of the institution

7.7 Recommendations

From the findings of the study the following recommendations are suggested to strengthen distance education delivery in public universities in Ghana and could be used as a model for other similar universities if possible.

1. The Ministry of Education, and the National Accreditation Board, should encourage stakeholder discussions on the development of a national distance education policy, from which the universities could

- use as a spring board to conduct policies audit/reviews and needs assessment of existing institutional policies for the conventional students; identify areas of weakness that do not ensure institutional support and commitment for DE learners' success, institutional goals and objectives, in order to modify those policies to suit the DE environment.
2. Improve integration of distance education into the universities culture by aligning institutional policies, rules, regulations, decision making processes, procedures and practices with the needs of distances learners.
 3. There is the need for the public dual mode universities in Ghana to demonstrate full institutional level commitment by developing appropriate institutional policies to strengthen the use of distance education as a viable alternative mode of delivery to the conventional mode of tertiary education delivery in Ghana.
 4. The public Universities should develop legal frameworks or guidelines to regulate legal issues of the public universities in areas such as copy rights and royalties.
 5. Proper orientation for newly admitted DE learners for proper integration into the university community.
 6. Proper training of facilitators especially at UCC to provide effective student support.

7.8 Suggestion for Further Research

Based on the findings from the study, the following suggestions are provided for further studies

1. There should be a study on the effectiveness of institutional policies in private dual mode universities in Ghana.

2. A study in the area of academic policies and how it promotes student retention.
3. A study in DE learners' perception of support services and their academic performance in dual mode universities.

REFERENCES

- Akuamoah-Boateng, C., Sam-Tagoe, J., & Brown, P. (2012). A content analysis of the effect of outsourcing on cost control in distance education. *International Journal of Arts and Commerce Vol. 1 No. 6 pp. 9, 20.*
- Amason, R. F. (2007a). *Normative analysis of Internet-mediated distance education policies in selected large community colleges and their related state systems.* Unpublished dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.
- Badu-Nyarko, S. K. (2010). Isolation and control in distance education: The case of the Ghanaian student. *Instructional Technology*, 13.
- Barasa, S. N. (2010). *Language, mobile phones and internet: a study of SMS texting, email, IM and SNS chats in computer mediated communication (CMC) in Kenya.*
- Bates, A.W. (2000). *Managing technological change.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bennis, W. G. (1990). Managing the dream: Leadership in the 21st century. *Training: The Magazine of Human Resource Development* 27 (5): 44-46.
- Berge, Z. L. (1998). Barriers to online teaching in post-secondary Institutions: Can Policy Changes Fix It? Retrieved on 24th February 1999 from *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*.1 (2).
- Best, J., & Kahn, J. (2005). *Research in education* (10th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Black, L. M. (2007). A history of scholarship. *Handbook of distance education*, 3-14.
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and practice* (5thed). New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Brey, R. (1991). *U.S. Postsecondary Distance Learning Programs in the 1990's: A Decade of Growth.* (Report No. JC 920 023). Washington, D.C.: Instructional Telecommunications Consortium, American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, (ED 340 418).
- Brindley, J. (1995). Learners and learner services: The key to the future in open distance learning. *Why the information highway*, 102-125.

- Burgess, R. G. (1984). *In the field: An introduction to field research*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Butcher, N., Latchem, C., Mawoyo, M., & Levey, L. (2011). Distance education for empowerment and development in Africa.
- Cavanaugh, C., Gillan, K. J., Kromrey, J., Hess, M., & Blomeyer, R. (2004). The effects of distance education on K-12 student outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Learning Point Associates/North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL)*.
- Cole, P., Hermon, G., & Sung, L. M. (1990). Principles and parameters of long-distance reflexives. *Linguistic inquiry*, 1-22.
- Collini, S. (2011). *The very idea of the university*. Retrieved October 23, 2011, from <http://www.crash.cam.ac.uk/events/1804>.
- Collins, B., & Moonen, J. (2001). *Flexible learning in a digital world*. London, UK: Kegan Page Ltd.
- Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions. (CRAC). (2001). Statement of commitment by the Regional Accreditation commission for the evaluation of Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs, 2001<<http://www.wcet.info/services/publication/accreditation-Bestpractices.pdf>>. Accessed 04/04/07. CRAC, 2001
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, C
- Croft, M. (1992). 'Single or Dual Mode: Challenges and Choices for Future of Education', in Mugridge Ian. (ed) *Distance Education in Single and Dual Mode Institutions, Vancouver, The Commonwealth of Learning*.
- Cross, K. P. (1981). Adults as learners. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Silvestro, F., & Markowitz, H. (1982). Contracts and Completion rates in correspondence study. *Journal of Educational Research*, 75, (4), 218 - 221

- D., and Benke, M. (1998). Supporting learners at a distance from inquiry through completion. In C.C. Gibson (Ed.), *Distance learners in higher education*.
- Daniel, J., Mackintosh, W. & Diehl, W. C. (2007). The mega-university response to the moral challenge of our age. In Moore, M. G. (Ed.) *Handbook of Distance Education*, (2nd Ed.). (pp. 609-620). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dhanarajan, G. (1997). 'Dual mode institutions: the off campus centre of Universiti Sains Malaysia'. In Mugridge (ed.), *Distance education in single and dual mode universities. Perspectives on distance education series*, Vancouver, BC: Commonwealth of Learning.
- Dirr, P. J. (2003). Distance education policy issues: Towards 2010. *Handbook of distance education*, 461-479
- Dodds, T. (1996). The use of distance education in non-formal education. *Vancouver, Commonwealth of Learning*.
- Duderstadt, J. J. (1997). The future of the university in an age of knowledge. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks* [Online serial], 1(2). Available: <http://www.aln.org/alnweb/journal/jaln.htm>.
- Edwards, J. (1999). *Western Governors University Begins Pilot Phase*. Press release, Salt Lake City, Utah, Retrieved on 17th February, 1998 from <http://www.westgov.org/smart/vu/pilotrelease.html>.
- Edwards, N., Hugo, K., Cragg, B., & Peterson, J. (1999). The integration of problem-based learning strategies in distance education. *Nurse Educator*, 24(1), 36-41.
- Ellis, A & Phelps, R. (1999). Staff development for online delivery: A collaborative team-based action learning. *Australian Journal of Educational Technology*. Retrieved from <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane99/papers/ellisphelps.pdf>
- Epper, R. M. (1999). Excerpts from *state policies for distance education; A Survey of the States*. State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO). Retrieved on 31st March, 1999 from [http://www.sheeo.org/sheeo/pubs-excerpts-fromtechnology survey.html](http://www.sheeo.org/sheeo/pubs-excerpts-fromtechnology%20survey.html).
- Evans, T. D., Haughey, M., & Murphy, D. (2008). *International handbook of distance education*. Emerald Group Publishing.

- Feisel, L. (1998) *Draft Report of the University Distance Learning Panel*, Albany, New York: SUNY, February 2,.
- Fraenkael, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2012). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (8th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill. 26.
- Frantz. G., & King, J. W. (2000). The Distance Education Learning systems Model (DEL). *Educational Technology*, 40(3), 33-40.
- Galusha, J. M. (2012). *Barriers to learning in Distance Education*. Retrieved March, 12, 2016, from <http://www.infrustruction.com/barrier.htm>.
- Gaskell, A., & Simpson, O. (2000). Student Support in Distance Education—What do students want from their tutor. In *Research and Innovation in Open Distance Learning: First EDEN Conference, Prague, Czech Republic* (pp. 120-122).
- Gellman-Danley, B. (1995). *A workbook on policy development for distance learning*. Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications.
- Gellman-Danley, B., & Fetzner, M. J. (1998). 'Asking the really tough questions: Policy issues for distance learning'. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 1 (1), 12-33
- Gerson, S. M. (2000). E- CLASS: Creating a guide to online course development for distance learning faculty. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 3(4), 1-11. State University of West Georgia, Distance & Distributed Education Center. Retrieved July 16, 2016, from [http://www .elml.ch/website/an/download/publication](http://www.elml.ch/website/an/download/publication)
- Graff, R. (2008). *Faculty perceptions of readiness to teach online*. Unpublished dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.
- Gray, D. E. (2009). *Doing research in the real world* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Gualtieri, L. N. (2009). *Predictions for 2009*." eLearning Magazine.
- Guri-Rosenblit, S. (1999). Virtual universities: Current models and future trends. *Higher Education in Europe*, XXVI (4), 28-38.
- Guri-Rosenblit, S. (1999). *Distance and Campus Universities: Tensions and Interactions. A Comparative Study of Five Countries. Issues in Higher Education Series*. Elsevier Science, Ltd., the Boulevard, Langford Lane, Kidlington, Oxford OX5 1GB, UK

- Hackling, M. W., Good rum, D., & Rennie, L. (2001). The state of science in Australian secondary schools. *Australian Science Teachers' Journal*, 47(4),
- Heller, D. E. (Ed.). (2001). *The states and public higher education policy: Affordability, access, and accountability*. JHU Press. <http://www.chea.org/degreemills/default.htm>
- Henderson, D. G., Fisher, D.L., & Fraser, B.J. (1998). *Learning environment and student attitudes in environmental science classrooms. Proceedings Western Australian Institute for Educational Research Forum 1998* Retrieved August 20, 2013, from <http://www.waiver.org.au/forums/1998/henderson.html>.
- Higher Education Statistics Agency. (2000), *Higher Education Statistics for united kingdom, 1998/1999*, Cheltenham; HESA, Table 1,8
- Hodge, E. M. (2000). *A study of the development of community college distance education policies*. Unpublished dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.
- Hodge, E. M. (2000). *A study of the development of community college distance education policies*. Unpublished dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.
- Holmberg, B. (1995). *Theory and practice of distance education* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Holmberg, B. (2005). *Theory and practice of distance education*. Routledge. 3-36.
- Howell, S. L., Williams, P. B., & Lindsay, N. K. (2003). Thirty-two trends affecting distance education: An informed foundation for strategic planning. *Online journal of distance learning administration*, 6(3). <http://www.westga.edu~distance/kings32.html>.
- IDL Strategic plan, (2008). Strategic plan (IDLPLAN2K12) for institute of distance learning of the Kwame Nkrumah university of science and technology Kumasi, Ghana. *The Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*. Search JOLT MERLOT *Journal of Online (Instructional Technology Council, 2007 & 2008)*
- International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century, & Delors, J. (1996). *Learning, the Treasure Within: Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first century*

- Keegan, D. (1986). *The foundations of distance education*. London: Croon Helm..
- Keegan, D. (1995). *Distance Education Technology for the New Millennium Compressed Video Teaching*. ZIFF Papier 101.
- Keegan, D. (Ed.) (1993 a). *Theoretical principles of distance education*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Keegan, D. J. (1980). On defining distance education. *Distance Education*, 1(1), 13-36.
- Kelly, M., & Kimber, D. (1992). Government policy and institutional practice in tertiary distance education: a Hong Kong case study. *International Journal of E-Learning & Distance Education*, 7(1), 83-103
- Keser, O. F., Akdeniz. A. R., Yyu, V.-T. (2010). *Assessment of constructivist physics learning environments*. Paper presented at the Asia- Pacific Forum on Science Learning and Teaching.
- King J.N., Eich, J., Mlinek, D., & Russell, E. (2000). *A policy frame work for distance education: A case study and model*. DEOS- NEWS, 10(10). Retrieved from <http://www.edu/ascde/deos/deosarchives/aspe volume% 2010>[Accessed July 30th, 2017
- King, J. W., Nugent, G. C., Russell, E. B., & Lacy, D. (1999). Distance Education Policy in Post-Secondary Education: Nebraska as a Case Study. In *Proceedings: 15th Annual Conference on Distance Teaching and Learning*. University of Wisconsin, Madison.275-281.
- King, J. W., Nugent, G. C., Russell, E. B., Eich, J., & Lacy, D. (2000a). Policy frameworks for distance education: Implications for decision makers [Electronic version]. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 3(2).Retrieved May 13, 20017, from <http://www.westga.edu~distance/ kings32.html>.
- King, Nugent, G., Russell, E., Eich, J.& Lacy. D.(2000b). Policy framework for distance education: Implications for decision makers. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration* 3(2).
- Kinyanjui, P. E. (1998). *Distance education and higher learning in Africa: What works or does not work*. Paper presented at the EDI/World Bank Workshop on Teacher Education through Distance Learning. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Vancouver: Commonwealth of Learning. http://www.col.org.speeches/edi_africa98.htm.
- Knowles, M. (1980).*The modern practice of adult education from pedagogy to andragogy*. Chicago: Fillet Publishers.

- Koehler, M. J., Mishra, P., Hershey, K., & Peruski, L. (2004). With a little help from your students: A new model for faculty development and online course design. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 12(1), 25.
- Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and psychological measurement*, 30(3), 607-610.
- Lehman, D. (1998). *Barriers to Distance Education*, National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). 1997. Statistical analysis report: distance education in higher education. Retrieved March 12, 2015, from <http://nces.ed.gov/survey/peqis/publications/9806>.
- Lenning, O., Beal, P. and Sauer, K. 1980. *Retention and attrition: Evidence for action and research*, Colorado: NCHEMS.
- Lezberg, A. K. (2007). Accreditation: Quality control in higher distance education. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook of distance education* (2nd Ed.). (pp. 403-418). Mahwah, N.J. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Maguire, L. L. (2005). Literature Review: Faculty participation in online distance education: Barriers and motivators [Electronic version]. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 8(1). Retrieved June 26, 2017, from <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/spring81/maguire81.tml>.
- May, T. (2001). *Social research: Issues, methods and process*. Buckingham: Open University.
- McGreal, R., Kinuthia, W., Marshall, S., & McNamara, T. (2013). *Open Educational Resources: Innovation, Research and Practice*. Commonwealth of Learning (COL).
- Mensah, S. K. E., & Owusu-Mensah, F. (2002). *Priorities and Strategies for Capacity Building in Tertiary Distance Education for Human Resource Development in Ghana*. A final report prepared for the World Bank.
- Moodley, S. (2000). Pathways 6 Conference 2002 Inclusive Education; Challenges for Distance Learning, *Policy and Practice, Academic Development Centre*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Technikon.
- Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. (2011). *Distance education: A systems view of online learning*. Cengage Learning.

- Moore, M., & Kearsley, G. (2005). *Distance education: A systems view*. (2nd ed.). Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Mugridge, I. (1992). Contemporary Issues in American Distance Education- MG Moore (Ed.). *International Journal of E-Learning & Distance Education*, 7(1), 115-117.
- Mullins, C. (2007). Community colleges, In M. G. Moore (Ed.), M. G. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook in Distance Education* (2nd ed.). (pp. 491-500). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Murphy, P. and E. Whitelegg (2006a). Girls in the Physics Classroom: continuing barrier to 'belonging.' *A Review of Research on the Participation of Girls in Physics. The Curriculum Journal*, 17(3), 281-305. (London: Institute of Physics.
- Nvivo qualitative data analysis software; QSR International Pty Ltd. Version 10, 2013.
- Nworgu, B. (2006). *Educational Research: Basic Issues and methodology*. Ibadan: Wisdom Publishers.
- O'Donnell, P. and Daniel, J. 1979. Student development in distance education or packages, people, plans, placement: pointers to progress. *Open University*, 1979 Paper No. 5 as below. [jvme. utpjournals. press/doi/pdf/10.3138/jvme.34.3.226](http://jvme.utpjournals.press/doi/pdf/10.3138/jvme.34.3.226).
- Offerman, M. J. (2007). Institutional commitment: what it is and how to get it. *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education*, 34(3), 226-231.
- Ohene, J. B. and Essuman. S. O (2014) Challenges faced by distance education students of the University of Education: Implications for Strategic Planning. *Journal of Education and Training* ISSN 2330-9709 2014, Vol. 1, No. 2(www.macrothink.org/jet)
- Osei, C. K., Dontwi, I. K., & Mensah, J. A. (2013). Examining Policy Guidelines for Distance Education in Dual Mode Public Universities in Ghana. *Journal of Science and Technology (Ghana)*, 33(1), 84-91. *st Century: Highlights*. UNESCO, Publishing.
- Pacey, L., & Keough, E. (2003). Public Policy, Institutional Structures, and Strategic Implementation. In M.G. Moore & W.G. Anderson (Eds.), *Handbook of Distance Education* (pp. 461-48). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Pallant, J. (2007). *SPSS Survival Manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS* (3rd Ed.). Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

- Perraton, H. (1991). *Administrative structures for distance education*. Vancouver, BC: Commonwealth Secretariat/the Commonwealth of Learning, Canada.
- Perraton, H. (2000). *Open and distance learning in the developing world*. London: Routledge
- Perraton, H. D., & Lentell, H. (Eds.). (2004). *Policy for open and distance learning* (Vol. 4). Psychology Press.
- Perry, W. (1977). *The Open University*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. Peters, O. (1994) Distance education and industrial production: *A comparative interpretation in outline*. In M. Keegan (Ed.), *Otto Peters on distance education* (pp. 107-127). London: Routledge.
- Peters, O. (1994) *Distance education and industrial production: A comparative interpretation in outline*. In M. Keegan (Ed.), *Otto Peters on distance education* (pp. 107-127). London: Routledge.
- Peters, O. (2001). *Learning and teaching in distance education*. London: Kegan page.
- Peterson, P. W., & Scavage, W. (2001). Letter from the guest editors: distance education: promises and perils of teaching and learning online.
- Phipps, R. & Merisotis, J. (1999). What's the difference? A review of contemporary research on the effectiveness of distance learning in higher education.
- Pinto-Plata, V. M., C. Cote, H. Cabral, J. Taylor, & B. R. Celli. "The 6-min walk distance: change over time and value as a predictor of survival in severe COPD." *European Respiratory Journal* 23, no. 1 (2004): 28-33
www.nab.gov.gh
- Rahman, M. (2001). Faculty recruitment strategies for online programs. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, Vol. 4 (4). Retrieved on November 9th 2016 from <https://www.wml>
- Robinson, B. (2004): Governance, Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Open and Distance Education. In Perraton and H. Lentell (eds). *Policy for open and distance learning World review of distance education and open learning*, vol. 4. Routledge Falmer, London (PP181-206)
- Robinson, B., & Latchem, C. (Eds.). (2003). *Teacher Education through Open and Distance Learning* (Vol. 3). Psychology Press.
- Rogers, E. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations* (5th ed.). New York: The Free Press

- Rumble, G. & Latchem, C. (2004). Organizational Models for Open and Distance Learning. In H. Perraton & H. Lentell (Eds.). *Policy for open and distance learning World review of distance education and open learning*: Volume 4.
- Rumble, G. (2000). *The Management of Distance Learning Systems*. Paris: UNESCO, International Institute for Educational Planning.
- Russell, T.L. (1999): The No Significant Difference Phenomenon. Chapel Hill, NC, *Office of Instructional Telecommunications*, North Carolina State University.
- Sampong, K. A. (2009). An Evaluative Study of a Distance Teacher Education Program in a University in Ghana. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 10(4).
- Sarantakos, S. (2005). *Social Research*. (3ed.). New York: Palgrave.
- Sarid, A. (2003). *Students' Attitudes towards the Implementation of New Technologies in Course Teaching*. Tel Aviv: Open University Press (in Hebrew).
- Shale, D. 1988. Toward a reconceptualization of distance education. *The American Journal of Distance Education* 2 (3): 25-35.
- Sheton, A.K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2), 63-75.
- Siaciwena, R.M.C (1989): *Staff attitudes towards distance education at the University of Zambia*, http://cade.athabasca.ca/vol4.2/10_siaciwen.html.
- Simonson, M. & Schlosser, C., & Hanson, D. (1999). Theory and Distance Education: A new Discussion. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 13(1), 60-75.
- Simonson, M. & Schlosser, C. (2000). Beginning. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*. 1 (1). 1-2.
- Simonson, M. (2004). Distance learning leaders: Who are they? *Distance Learning*. 1 (3), 48.
- Simonson, M. (2007). Institutional Policy Issues for Distance Education. In M. G. Moore, (Ed.), *Handbook in distance education*. (pp.355-363). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Simonson, M., Smaldino S., Albright, M., & Zevack, S. (2006). Teaching and learning at a distance: *Foundations of distance education*, 3rd Ed... Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Situma, D. B. (2015). Open and Distance Learning and Information and Communication Technologies-Implications on Formal and Non formal Education. *Journal of Learning for Development-JLAD*, 2(1).
- Stewart, D. (1993) *Student support systems in distance education*, Open Learning, 8(3), pp.3–12.
- Sweet, R. (1993) Perspectives on Distance education: Student Support Services: Towards more responsive systems. The Commonwealth of Learning Vancouver, British Columbia.
- Tait, A. (1995). *Student Support in Open and Distance Education*. London: Routledge.
- The Commonwealth of Learning (2003). Open and distance learning policy development (particular reference to dual mode institutions). Knowledge series. *A Tropical start-up Guide to Distance Education*, Practice and Delivery.
- UNESCO (2000), *Open and Distance Learning- Trends*. Policy and Strategy Considerations, Paris: United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization.
- University Diaries and Calendars of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).
- Vulliamy, G., Lewin, K., & Stephens, D. (1990). Doing Educational Research in Developing Countries: *Qualitative strategies*. London: Falmer Press.
- Watkins, R. & Schlosser, C. (2000). Capabilities-based educational equivalency units: Beginning a professional dialogue. *American Journal of Distance Education*, 14(3), 34.
- Wedemeyer, C. A., & Najem, R. E. (1969). Aim: From Concept to Reality. The Articulated Instructional Media Program at Wisconsin. *Notes and Essays on Education for Adults*, No. 61.
- Wolcott, L. L., & Shattuck, K. (2007). Faculty participation: Motivations, incentives, and rewards. *Handbook of distance education*, 377-390.
- Wolcott, L.L and Betts, K.S. (1999): What's in it for me? Incentives for faculty participation in Distance Education, *Journal of distance Education*, pp 1-15.
- www.aacsb.edu/.../white-papers/wp-quality-issues-in-distance-edu.ashx
- www.ijede.ca/index.php/jde/article/view/414/304
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage Publications

Zakaria, Hisham. *“Models for Open and Distance Learning: Teacher Education and Training*, Hilary Perraton, IRFOL, Cambridge/ Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver, 2003, ISBN 09532446-1-X, 24 Pages;

**APPENDICES
APPENDIX A
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**



Ethics Committee for Humanities (ECH)

Official Use only Protocol number
--

PROTOCOL CONSENT FORM

Section A- BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Title of Study:	Comparative Study of Institutional Policies and Commitment for Supporting Distance Learners in Public Universities in Ghana
Principal Investigator:	Clara Akuamoah-Boateng (Mrs.)
Certified Protocol Number	

Section B- CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I am PhD student of the College of Education, Department of Adult Education and Human Resources Studies, University of Ghana. I am conducting a study into Institutional Policies and Commitment for Supporting Distance learners in Public Universities in Ghana.

The study follows a mixed method design and uses both quantitative and qualitative survey techniques to examine the views of staff and Distance Education Learners including Course Tutors who serve as facilitators to investigate the institutional policies arena of public universities in Ghana. It is hoped that the findings from the study may promote excellence in Distance Education delivery in Ghana and beyond.

Your experience and ideas would make an important contribution to this research work; I therefore invite you to participate in the study. If you agree to be part of this study, I will interview you or respond to a questionnaire about your experiences and ideas about your institution. The interview, which will be audio recorded and take about 20-30 minutes will focus on the following institutional policy issues on DE delivery in your institution: Academic, Fiscal Geography Governance, Faculty, Legal, Students, Technical and Philosophical.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study anytime if you choose to. I will remove any information relating to you from the study, including any final publications, provided that this remains practically achievable. All participants are assured of confidentiality of the data to be gathered. Names and identifying details in any verbal, written or published reports will be changed into pseudonyms. Any published or reported results from this study will not identify any participant and his/her institution.

A copy of the interview transcript will be made available to participants to check for accuracy. Also, a copy of the report on the findings of the study will be made available to participants. Audio- recordings will be kept in a locked cabinet and will be made accessible to me and my supervisors. These materials will be kept for 5 years and then destroyed.

If you would like to have more information or questions about the study, you may contact me or my supervisors, Associate Professor, George Kwaku Toku Oduro (gkt2@yahoo.com/gktoduro@yahoo.co.uk) and Dr. Samuel Kofi Badu Nyarko (sbnyarko57@yahoo.com). If you have any concerns or complaints about the research , please contact The Chair, Ethics Committee for Humanities, University of Ghana (ech@isser.edu.gh/ech@ug.gh) or(+233-3039 33866).

If you are happy and willing to participate in this study please sign the consent form and return to me in the envelope provided. Please retain this information sheet.

Thank you for considering this request.

(Cakuamoahboateng@yahoo.co.uk)

Section C- PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

"I have read or have had someone read all of the above, asked questions, received answers regarding participation in this study, and am willing to give consent for me, my child/ward to participate in this study. I will not have waived any of my rights by signing this consent form. Upon signing this consent form, I will receive a copy for my personal records."

Name of Participant

Signature or mark of Participant

Date

If participant cannot read and or understand the form themselves, a witness must sign here:

I was present while the benefits, risks and procedures were read to the volunteer. All questions were answered and the volunteer has agreed to take part in the research.

Name of witness

Signature of Witness/Mark

Date

I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research have been explained to the above individual.

Clara Akuamoah-

Name of Person who Obtained Consent

Signature of Person Who Obtained Consent

3rd April, 2017
Date

**APPENDIX B
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**



Official Use only
Protocol number

OFFICE OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Ethics Committee for Humanities (ECH)

NEW PROTOCOL SUBMISSION FORM

Requirements:

- i. A new protocol must be submitted to the ECH at least five weeks before the proposed commencement date of the research.
- ii. All sections of the form must be completed before protocol can be considered for review.
- iii. 11 hard copies of proposal must be submitted to the ECH in addition to other documentations as spelt out in the SOP. A soft copy of proposal and other documentations should also be emailed to ech@isser.edu.gh /ech@ug.edu.gh

Section A – Background Information

--

1. Project Title: Comparative Study of Institutional Policies for Supporting Distance Learners in Public Universities in Ghana.

2. Proposed Date of Commencement: 22 nd May, 2017
--

3. Principal Investigator (Name, Title, Qualifications, Postal Address, Institution/Department, Phone number. Email address)
--

4. Co-Investigator(s) (Name; Title; Qualifications; Postal Address; Institution/Department; Phone number; Email address)

5. Student Investigator(s) (Name: Clara Akuamoah - Boateng; Title; Mrs. Qualifications; B.Ed. (Home Science); Dip. Biology; M.Phil. (Basic Edu). Postal Address; Institution/ Department; Department of Adult Education and Human Resource Studies, College of Education, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra. Phone number; + 233 20 8176962 Email address Cakuamoahboateng@yahoo.co.uk; Supervisors Name. Samuel Kofi Badu Nyarko, Title (PhD) and Contact +233 20 685 7170; George Kwaku Toku Oduro (Associate Professor)

5a. Indicate status

Undergraduate Masters Level Doctoral Level

5b. Thesis Approval Letter and Introductory Letter from Head of Department (Attach Letter of approval)

1. Proposed Project Duration - From: (dd/mm/yy) _22nd_ May 2017 _____ To: (dd/mm/yy)_____

2. Collaborating Institution (if applicable)

3. Funding Status of Project?

Funding pending funded not funded other

4. Source of funding (Name and Address) University of Cape Coast, College of Distance Education, Cape Coast, Ghana.

5. Research Location(s) University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba.

6 Data Collection Instrument (ie. Interview, questionnaire, observation et cetera

7. Consent Process (Circle all that applies):

- (i) Written
- (ii) Oral
- (iii) English language
- (iv) Local language
- (v) Other

8. Work Plan (Attach Work Plan) See attached

1. Will the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent? (eg people under the age of 18, people with learning disabilities, students you teach or assess, etc.)

Yes No

If Yes, state the category of persons?

2. Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time?

Yes No

If Yes, state why?

3. Will the study involve any audio or visual recording of people in public places?

Yes No

If Yes, State which type? Respondents' Offices
4. Will the study involve the discussion of sensitive topics? (e.g. sexual activity, illegal drug use, illegal activities, death, whistleblowing) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> √ If Yes, state the topic type?
5. Will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> √ If Yes, State procedures?
6. Is physical pain or psychological stress from the proposed project likely to cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks in normal life? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> √ If Yes, State how?
7. Will financial inducements (other than expenses) be offered to any of the participants? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> √

Section D – Signature

Name of person completing the form: _____
Role on the study:

3rd April, 2017

Clara Akuamoah-Boateng (Mrs.)

For all student projects:			
_____	_____	_____	_____
Student Investigator	Date	Supervisors Signature	Date

Investigator

3rd April, 2017

3rd April, 2017

For Thesis Supervisor(s)

I the undersigned supervisor have read through the proposal thoroughly (Scientific Review of the proposal) and reviewed the research instrument(s).

3rd April, 2017

3rd April, 2017

Note:

As the **Principal Investigator/Student Investigator** on this project, my signature confirms that:

- (i) I will ensure that all procedures performed under the study will be conducted in accordance with UG –wide policy statement on ethical conduct of research involving human subjects as well as the Standard Operating Procedure of ECH.
- (ii) I understand that if there is any change from the project as originally approved, I must submit an amendment to the ECH for review and approval prior to its implementation. Where I fail to do so, the amended aspect of the study is invalid.
- (iii) I understand that I will report all serious adverse events associated with the study within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.
- (iv) I understand that I will submit progress reports each year for review and renewal. Where I fail to do so, the ECH is mandated to terminate the study upon expiry.
- (v) I agree that I will submit a final report to the ECH at the end of the study.

**APPENDIX C
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE
STUDIES**

**IN DEPTH-INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF
PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN GHANA.
(UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY (KNUST)
&UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST (UCC)).**

Dear Respondent,

This interview seeks your opinions and concerns about institutional policies available in your institution for Distance Education delivery and the institution's level of commitment in supporting DE learners to succeed. The interview is part of a PhD research study being completed at the University of Ghana. Your responses will be treated confidentially and will be used for research purposes only. No person or institution will be identified in any report.

Thank you for accepting to response to this interview. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Policy issues in DE delivery

The planning for a distance education programme should be part of the strategic planning process of the institution and it should be aligned with the mission and vision of the institution. The planning should show evidence that needs assessment study has been conducted. The commitment to this initiative requires the institution with the responsibility to ensure a good strategic plan is produced.

I. Planning for DE

What institutional policies are available for DE Delivery in your institution?

In what ways does your institution's distance education policy align with its

(i) Mission

(ii) Vision?

(Probe: what two practices would you say demonstrates your institution's commitment to DE?)

II. Academic policies

In what ways do the established institutional policies guide the admission process of DE programmes in your university? (Probe: why do you say so?)

How do the academic policies of the institution relate to the under-listed activities of DE?

- a. Admissions
- b. Academic calendar
- c. Attendance
- d. Registration
- f. Withdrawals
- g. Deferment
- i. Resumption
- j and Transits

(Probe): How are these policies different from the campus- based students?

- Facilitation delivery

What are the policy guidelines relating to instructional delivery of DE programmes in your institution?

How does the institution ensure that these guidelines are followed?

- Face-to-Face Monitoring

Which categories of personnel monitor the Face- to – Face sessions of the DE programme?

What do you do with the monitoring results?

- Course Evaluation

How are the following DE processes evaluated in your institutions?

(Admission, student orientation, facilitation, examination etc.)

How does your institution use the evaluation reports?

III. Student Support Services

The institution recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programmes consistent with its mission and vision. Student support services address the identified needs of students and enhance supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by the concern for student access, progress, learning and success.

- Pre-admission support

What policies demonstrates the commitment of the institution in ensuring that student support services offered to prospective DE learners are adequate, appropriate and timely?

- Learner support

What institutional policy exist in relation to academic counseling and advising programmes to support DE learners' development and success

- Library Services

1. What library facilities are available to support student learning

What challenges are associated with DE learners' access to existing library facilities? (Probe): How do you address such challenges?

- Completion Rate

What policy exists to ensure early learners' completion rate?

IV. Fiscal, Geography and Governance

The institution effectively uses its human, physical, technological and financial resources to achieve its broad educational purposes, including stated student learning outcomes, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Accredited public universities in Ghana may be organized in such a way that responsibilities for resources allocation and planning rest with the system.

- Geography

How accessible is/are your institution's learning support facilities to learners?

- Governance

What institutional policies allow faculty, administrators and DE learners to participate in the decision making procedures?

What governing systems exist in your institution for DE delivery?

- Fiscal

The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability.

How much financial resources are committed to the DE programme in your institution?

What institutional policies ensure efficient use of DE resources in your university?

What fees fixing and payment arrangements are available DE learners in your university?

IV. Faculty Development

Consistent with its mission and vision the institution demonstrates its commitment to the sufficient educational role played by faculty of diverse backgrounds, human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning process.

What institutional policies stipulate the criteria, qualifications and procedures for selecting Faculty members including Course Tutors?

V. Ownership and Intellectual Property Rights Policies (Legal).

Institutional policies should clearly state the relationship between employee compensation and institutional revenues generated from sales or use of employee developed intellectual contributions. All parties should be appraised of these policies before the start of a DE programme.

What are your institution's DE policies concerning issues of copyright, ownership of materials and faculty compensation in terms of material publication?

VI. Technical Strategy

Technical strategy should be governed not only by the availability of technological approaches chosen and desired learning outcomes. Consideration should be given to equipment compatibility with anticipated receiver sites to minimize cost and ensure successful connection?

What technical support resources are available (initial/ongoing) to DE delivery?

VII. Philosophical

What is the involvement of stakeholders in the development and implementation of the DE programme in your institution?

APPENDIX D
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE
STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENT
RESPONDENTS

This questionnaire is meant to solicit information from you about your institution's policies and staff commitment in supporting you as a DE learner.

Your response to the questions will help in no small way to assist Public Universities in Ghana to plan their DE programmes well to achieve the intended purposes for which DE was established as an alternate mode to conventional mode.

You are assured of confidentiality and anonymity as you fill this questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation.

SECTION A

Personal Background Information

Please respond by ticking the appropriate box.

1. Institution: KNUST UCC
2. Study centre
3. Sex :
Male Female
4. Age range: 20yrs and Below
21-30yrs
31-40yrs

41 yrs and above

5. Marital Status:

Single

Married

6. Programme Level: Diploma First Degree Masters

SECTION B

With a tick (✓), indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Academic Issues

	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Admission Process (I)					
1.	The admission policies, procedures were clearly spelt out in the admission manual.					
2.	Fees are increased yearly in my institution					
3.	I am comfortable with the yearly increase of fees.					
	Orientation and Registration (II)					
4	My institution has clear					

	cut policies on registration					
5	In my institution registration every semester is very cumbersome.					
6	Registration Assistants are very helpful to all learners during the process.					
7	The student hand book stipulates regulations on admission, withdrawals, transfers, transits and resumption.					
8	The rules and regulations regarding examinations were well explained to me during the orientation session					
9	I am aware of all examination malpractices and its associated sanctions of my institution					

	Course Materials (III)					
10	All course materials for every semester are provided me on time					
11	All course materials provided by my institution were suitable and aided my learning.					
12	The course modules are easy to understand					
13	The course modules encourage collaborative work.					
14	The academic calendars are always favourable to me and suited my work schedule.					
15	The teaching time most often meet my preference					
16	The examination time for every semester is flexible and allow me enough time for revision.					

	Quizzes and Examinations Proctoring (IV)					
17	The institution always provides a conducive environment for examination proctoring.					
18	Invigilators are always up to their task and do not threaten me unnecessarily.					
19	Examination questions are clear and easy to comprehend and meet the expectations of me.					
20	The institution always releases examination results on time with very little complains from me.					
21	I am comfortable with the length of time slated for examinations.					

	Study Centre Related Issues (V)					
22	My institution always creates a conducive learning environment for my academic work					
23	My study centre is adequately resourced with social services and amenities that enhances my academic work					
24	My study center is adequately resourced for academic work.					
25	I have access to a library at my study centre for my academic work.					
26	I have access to a computer and other laboratories.					
	Course Facilitation (VI)					
27	I am comfortable with the facilitation of the					

	number of units per tutorials					
28	The course tutor returned graded assignments to me in a reasonable length of time					
29	The course tutors provide me with positive feedback during the course					
30	I feel comfortable relating with course tutors and other staff in discussing issues relating to my studies.					
31	I feel comfortable communicating with course tutors and other staff on my social problems					
Face-to-Face Interaction (VII)						
32	The study centre coordinator ,course tutors					

	and other staff attend to all my questions adequately					
33	How would you describe the centre coordinator?					
Face –to – Face Monitoring (VIII)						
34	Staff from head office regularly monitor the programme to ensure quality standards.					
35	The monitoring team interact and give me advice on my academic work.					
36	The monitoring team attend to learner's complaints counsel and give guidance.					
37	The monitoring team monitor other social services in my study centre apart from academic work.					

	Technical Support (IX)					
38	The institution ensures that the technology used is appropriate to the nature of DE learning environment.					
39	My institution provides assistance to Faculty and learners experiencing difficulty in using technology					
	Learner Assessment (X)					
40	I am aware of all issues pertaining to assessment and grading systems					
41	I am comfortable with the mode of assessment in my institution					
42	There are specific institutional policies to determine students' progression and success in my institution					

43	Assessment results are mostly released on time and without many complaints from learners.					
44	The Study Centre Coordinator and the Course Tutors are highly committed.					
45	The Coordinator and all Course Tutors adhere strictly to their professional ethics					
46	I personally like their attitude to work					
47	The Course Tutors motivate me to complete the programme					
Learners Satisfaction with DE Programme (XI)						
48	I am satisfied the with the structure of the DE programme of my institution					

49	I am satisfied with the structure of the course modules					
50	I am satisfied with the fees charged					
51	I am satisfied with the mode of payment.					
52	I am satisfied with the number of quizzes. I am satisfied with the examinations conducted each semester by my institution.					
53	I am satisfied the information flow from management to learners.					
54	I am satisfied with the learning environment and course delivery					

SECTION C

59. Feel free to write below any information you would like to add to enhance the researcher understanding of how you feel about institutional policies available in your institution that support DE learners

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX E
TRANSCRIPTION OF QUALITATIVE DATA

Prof. NB 1. UCC Top Management Staff. Immediate Past Pro V C, Board Chair and Provost of CODE

Date: May 2017

Location: UCC, CODE

A. Good morning Prof.

B. Good morning my sister.

A. Thank you for accepting to respond to this interview. As you are aware, I am a PhD student at the University of Ghana and my thesis bothers on the Institutional Policies that are available in Public Universities. I mean dual mode public universities for the delivery of distance education and the institution's commitment in using those policies to make sure that the students that are enrolled graduate on scheduled in order to prevent attrition. So I am considering you as one of the top management staff who is an "information-rich" respondent. That is what I have to say because in the first place, you've been the Board Chair for the then Centre for Continuing Education, the Pro Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast and the Provost of the College of Distance Education. So I am sure that our discussion will be fruitful. Prof. In the first place you will agree with me that in distance education delivery, we need to plan. We don't just have to say that we are going dual mode and we want to start and then we just start. I want to ask you whether there are institutional policies. When I mean institutional policies, the policies by the universities that have been set aside for distance education delivery. Are there such policies?(IP)

B .Thank you very much.

A. For which the university was going to follow for the DE program

B. Sure! They did not have it and as we speak they still don't have it. (IP)

A. Why?

B. They are now trying to put some policies together. So the university initially didn't have it but now the university is trying to transport some of the policies they had for the regular on-campus programs into

the distance education program (IP). Because they say that it is dual mode and so what you are running out should be the same thing that is being run on-campus. Therefore the policies that affect the on-campus programs must affect the distance education program.

A. For parity of esteem.

B. Yes! But what all of us should know is that in formulating such policies we also should know that we are dealing with distance education and not on-campus.

A. Exactly! I was going to ask you that question...

B. And therefore not all the policies suit the DE environment....

A. ...Will favor the distance education environment.

B. Exactly! So we need to actually come up with clear-cut policies from the university bothering distance education (IP)

A. Yeah

B. I believe as we discuss some issues will come up and we will talk about them.

A. Thank you Prof. I am happy for the way we have started. So can I say that before you started drafting the new policies which you are not using them now, the DE wing did not have specific institutional policies for their activities?(IP)

B. Yeah. You are right.

A. Before then can I say that the practices and the procedures that you that the DE was using to carry out their activities can I name them as conventions? You have conventions, practices and procedures that you have used over the years and they were working for you (IP).

B. I believe they were they were procedures initially which matured into conventions (IP).

A. Okay. That's right.

B. Even admissions, the way the students were admitted, largely it was separated from that the university.

A. Okay.

B. We knew that freshers were coming in but the university was not deeply involved in all this. We knew that there was some face-to-face going on. You see, initially as I said, the university allowed or gave the

freehand for the distance unit to operate, so long as there were no problems that dragged the image of the university into disrepute (IP).

- A. Without institutionally- based policies?
- B. Sure! They were given the free-hand to do everything. It is when the program started expanding and the fact that they are taking our certificate, then the university now sat up to really focus on the distance education and look at how best policies could be formulated to make it work better. But initially that was not there(IP)
- A. That's good. Prof. Thank you so much. The new policies that you started formulating, Prof. you agree with me that in the planning of anything, including distance education, the planning should be part of the institution's strategic plan, for which the mission and the vision are captured. I want to know whether the new policies are based on the university's strategic plan for which D E is part(IP).
- B. Sure. I will say that all those were considered(IP). Now, if you look at the mission and the vision of the university, of course as for the vision is concern, we all know that it is to have a university that is positioned by worldwide acclaim. But when you look at the mission, the mission says that the university of Cape Coast is an equal opportunity university providing education or providing liberal, professional and higher education to all people who qualify and who are in a position to benefit from higher education. Now, that is the mission. Now if you go into the strategic plan of the university, I've forgotten the particular key thrust. But in the strategic plan, it is also captured that the university of Cape Coast would look at expanding and improving on distance education. And so once it has gotten into the strategic plan as a major key thrust, then policies would then have to be formulated to be able to achieve what is in the strategic plan. You know, and so if you look at the strategic plan, the part that talks about distance education is looking at going online, using ICT to teach, among others, all towards improving on distance education. Now what is left is once it is in the strategic plan, policies must be formulated, conditions must be created to be able to achieve what is in the strategic plan concerning distance education (IP).

- A. Good.
- B. Do you get the point?
- A. Yes.
- B. So that is what the new policies or the steps that the university is taking in improving or in helping distance education revolve around what is in the strategic plan. And so I believe that eventually, whatever policies that would come up for D E will be policies that would reflect what is in the strategic plan and what is in the strategic plan is also going to feed into the mission of the university and then the vision of the University and then eventually into the act that established the university (IP).
- A. Wow that's good. I'm very happy that you said you have it in your strategic plan because even though we don't have a national policy for D E delivery, in 1996, literature has it that the Ghana Government mandated the then public universities to expand access through distance. So I am happy that that one is captured in your strategic plan for which you are going to formulate policies for distance learning (IP). Prof. I thank you very much up to this point. Erm you've been a Pro VC, you've been a Provost, of the College of Distance Education and at the same time a Board Chair for the then Center for Continuing Education Board, please can you mention two things that will demonstrate UCC's commitment towards distance education delivery, two things, two practices of the university that demonstrate the university's commitment towards distance education delivery (IP).
- B. Two practices, I will say, one, if you look at the university as a whole, Colleges, Schools and Faculties admit students and these students pay their fees into a central university account, and then the University itself would now apportion the funds to the various units. Okay? And so on...
- A. Do they share for their pockets?
- B. No! For running, running the Colleges, not for their pockets. (A and B laugh loud). Now when it comes to the distance education is about the only section of the university where the university has almost made it a policy to allow them manage their finances, even though under the

watch of the university (IP). Okay? So their students do not pay their fees into the university's account. They pay into the college's account. So the university has allowed the College to manage all the finances because the university knows that the College has its tentacles nationwide. The university knows that the College needs to establish satellite campuses nationwide; therefore in order for them to be able to do this, they need to manage their own finances. And of course the university auditors will come in to make sure that we do things right. And I think that is a very wonderful thing the university did for D E to make sure that it expands (IP).

- A. That's a good commitment.
- B. Now the next thing the university did, which is very recent, is the university trying to get all D E students on the university's platform, the one called UCOSIS, so that the university can hook the DE student also on the platform(CT).
- A. Is the UCOSIS a learning management system platform?
- B. The UCOSIS is the platform for admitting students, registering students, and also managing students' examination results(CT).
- A. So both the campus-based and the D E students can access their details on the platform now?
- B. DE can access, and when they are on the UCOSIS, DE students can look at their own results in the comfort of their home. Once you log in, you see your results.
- A. That's good.
- B. And so you are able to also follow your own performance, unlike when they were not on the UCOSIS. You will agree with me release of results sometimes was a problem. Some quizzes, results was a problem and it will come and there are all kind of problems... [And we have a lot of ICs], example. You know, so now the university is migrating them unto the UCOSIS [that's perfect]. Now, as they go unto the UCOSIS, then they will also be given their ID cards because the UCOSIS captures your biometric and then the UCOSIS itself will print out your ID card for you. You know, so it is a very neat way of integration and for me I think another way I see this as a very beautiful

commitment is that DE students and our own campus students will all be on the same platform [Yes] and so we are narrowing or gradually erasing [the distance factor] that concept of the distance students thinking that they are [exactly] not part of [the university]. Now all of you are on UCOSIS. You are all our students and I think that is a very beautiful commitment.(CT)

- A. That's perfect. Prof. I told you that you are an "information-rich" respondent [both A and B laugh aloud]. And to buttress what you said, I had the chance to do a focus group discussion for the course tutors. I asked them the same question that two practices and they said the most committed practice that they can talk about D E is their payment. They said that whenever they do any work, they are paid what they are supposed to be paid [sure] and promptly [sure]. So that goes to confirm the fact that the university has given them the leeway to manage their finances. And that is very good. Thank you Prof. Erm our next point has to do with academic policies [Alright]. Because we know all the things that you are doing, the UCOSIS, and all other things you do come down to the academic activities for which you want the students to be successful. Do I even have to ask this question? Because you have already stated that before then there were no institutional policies. I was going to ask if there were established institutional policies in relation to the academic activities of your DE wing of UCC. Because I know that for academic activities you will not leave the D E to do their own thing [Sure!]. So I want to ask if there are institutional policies guiding the admission processes of the DE students. Because that is the first step of the academic process.
- B. Sure! Even though I started by saying that when D E started [hmm], there were no institutional policies [hmmm] purposely for DE, [Yeah] but that notwithstanding, [hmm] in terms of admission, [yeah] the university superimposes its own policies [on DE] on these admission processes [hmm because it is a dual mode]. It is a dual mode [yeah]. And so they were guided by who you can pick to come in, who you cannot pick to come in [okay]. Even though there were no policies and because it is distance education again, the D E was given some room [

some form of flexibility], some form of flexibility, you know that is why D E is still doing matured entrance exams [okay] and the main university matured entrance exams has been stopped. [Really?]. Now there is nothing like matured entrance and remedial courses, those we were doing, [yeah] and admitting people have been made to stopped [oh okay] from NCTE. Why haven't they stopped this one? Because they recognize the fact that this is distance [okay] okay, and so there must be some flexibility. But then it is still guided by the university's academic policies (AC) [okay. for which the regular people also use]. Yes. For the regular applicants, you cannot come in with Maths D7, English D7 [the E M S]. In the same way, here, D E you can also not come in with such grades. You must have all the passes and then if your aggregate is so weak then or some of your electives is not too good then there is that window of matured entrance through which you can come in. [okay]. So yes, the admission policies of the university still apply to D E with a little bit of flexibility [okay(AC)]

- A. Thank you Prof. the admission processes are almost similar but with flexibility. Prof what about the academic calendar for D E and regular. Are they the same?
- B. They are not the same. That is why again the university as part of its commitment is pushing for D E to synchronize its calendar with the regular [okay]. I think this issue has been discussed at academic board several times. If you look at the gap between the two academic calendars was very wide(AC). [Was too wide students complete their program they have to wait for another year before they could graduate] Now it is being narrowed [exactly]. Even though we are still not there, but we are trying to narrow it. So that is why our first semester begins at a time when the university is almost in either a second semester or something. You know, so the two in terms of when to start and when to end are not the same (AC).
- A. So it appears that because the distance learners have limited time as against, the regular student who go for lectures five days in a week [yes] and the distance learner will comes S fortnightly [sure sure]. So obviously you will open early and close late.

B. Sure! Because we need more weeks [exactly] in order to get the required contact hours [exactly! That's right], unlike the regular ones who sit in the classroom everyday [yes]. Okay, some regular students attend lecture even Saturdays these days [A laughs]. So the calendars are not the same and I envisage that it will be a bit difficult to bring all of them at par [okay](AC).

A. Prof. Thank you very much. when you admit your students, do you orient them, as to how they should go about their academic and social life in the University because they are distance learners, might not be on campus, do you orient them about how the university system is, how they should study and things like that, where to find support services and things like that. Do they go through orientation?

A. We do orientation just as we do for the regular. Now the bit I have to say about the orientation is that it appears the orientation we give to the D E students is not adequate because for the regular students, they have about five days or so [only for orientation?] for orientation. [Oh that's wonderful]. And they bring in speakers, to speak on time management examination rules and regulations among others [exactly], and for me that is adequate. But the DE, orientation is done only on the day of matriculation. The morning of matriculation, then some orientation is done [they are rushed through the matriculation] then the matriculation follows. And I think that is not too adequate and if anybody needs orientation I will say the D E students need it more [than the regular students], one, because the D E students do not have clear cut academic counselors [yeah]. (AC) You know, [yes, I was going to touch on that] they may not have hall counselors. Now the regular students who are even here with the lecturers all around them [for them to contact] they have these two counselors system working, and if anybody needs any orientation on time management, and how to study, I would say it is the D E students, yet because we do it one hour and then matriculation follows most of these important things we don't touch on them [yes] and so I don't see that orientation as an adequate orientation for the D E students. We need to improve upon that one (AC).

- A. That's perfect. Thank you Prof. you are very frank. What about registration? I think you have touched briefly on that. You've mentioned the freshers being hooked on the UCOSIS. What about the continuing students? What do they do for registration?
- B. Continuing students were placed on a different platform [exactly] at the time they were coming in and I cannot recollect the names of those platforms but some three different platforms (AC) (T) [yes]. You know, which was not making the management of their database easy for the College because at the time you need to get into the database, the manager is not around [prescient too will not be around] you know and if you try to retrieve, it comes with all kinds of errors [yes] and that is what even prompted the university that bring the freshers, unto the UCOSIS. Now, what is happening is that we are also gradually, moving the continuing students unto the UCOSIS [okay]. We started with the freshers [okay]. Now it's all done [okay] so I have seen a letter where the continuing students are also being moved unto the UCOSIS. Some have actually been moved [okay] and they have written to the management of UCOSIS to now generate new registration numbers [for them] for them based on the UCOSIS format [exactly] so eventually all the students will be moved unto the UCOSIS (AC) (T).
- A. Thank you Prof. But before then how were you doing the registration? Was it that people go to the centers to register them or what do they do?(AC)(T)
- B. Before then, people were going to the centers [with laptops] with laptops when school reopens. They go to the centers with the laptops to register them [manually] manually [okay] and generate registration numbers for them [okay] (AC)(T). You know we did not have very serious issues with the registration process [okay]. It was tedious and laborious for the workers but they did well just that you could see some inherent errors. [Because it is done manually] so I believe that once they move unto the UCOSIS, this manual way of registering them will be replaced because the freshers who are on the UCOSIS now, this is their second semester registration, with the UCOSIS you could stay

at home and register. Just fill in your database, pay and then you come with your receipt and it is confirmed. You know, so I think again we cannot blame anybody for initially going manual [no] because for the beginning of every system you are likely to have some sort pitfalls. [Exactly]. And you know, the manual was not a big issue because we started with only a few students [I was going to say that] so it was not a problem [it was easy]. But as the numbers kept expanding that is where the problem started creeping in (AC)(T).

- A. Okay. Prof. This is perfect and wonderful but I am afraid, looking at the nature or the caliber of some of the distance students, would they have access to the internet to register on the UCOSIS? Do they have to come to campus or where? How is it done?
- B. You do not necessarily have to come to campus. If you do not have access to the internet, and rarely do you not have access because I know that some areas [there is even no electricity] you can't have access. If you are a DE student in my village, I don't know how you are going to have access but the thing is that you know WAEC results are checked online nationwide and so these WAEC students some of them are in the same areas where there are no internet access [so they come to the areas] yes in their eagerness to see their results, they come to the nearest city (AC). So we think that if you don't have it, you can move to the nearest city and then get on the net and fill in begin your registration access. If you don't complete, once you do and you save, it is in there [so you can always go and continue] you can always come back to campus and continue.
- A. Prof. what about your Regional, Centers? Can they go there to register on UCOSIS at the Regional Centers?
- B. At the regional centers, that would have been the ideal but I am not too sure whether all the Regional Centers are even connected to the internet. That is why if you want to put anything online for students, whether checking of results, registration, lectures, whatever, you must make sure you have an internet backbone [and that is the problem with the D E in most African countries] and if you don't have a very strong internet backbone, some of these processes will suffer. And so I think

that they should be able to go to the regional centers to register which means that we must begin to equip them, the regional centers, with effective reliable, internet connectivity [and a source of power] and then also a source of power and then personnel there so that when you go, it's like UCC, when you come, you know where to go and register. So when you walk into a regional center, or regional office for D E, you know that oh when I go to room two, there is somebody there who helps me to register online. If I cannot do it in my village ((AC) I have come to do it here and so we need to put all these things in place to make the online registration a success for all of us.

- A. That's very good. Thank you Prof you agree with me that one of the support services, that we give to the D E students for their learning process is face- to- face, how would you rate the attendance of face- to- face on the UCC DE program? Do the students like it? Do they attend? Do they participate? Are they benefitting from it?(AC)
- B. Well I would say that Yes they do. They do participate, just that sometimes most of the time, it is difficult to get the full house. You will go to some of the classes and you will see that about a quarter wouldn't be there(AC). If a class of eighty, you may find maybe sixty are there. You may not find the twenty not in the face- to- face sessions. Now, some attempts have been made to find out what is responsible [okay] for the irregular attendance [exactly] and some issues came up. The fact that most of them are workers, and so maybe sometimes duty calls on a Saturday and they cannot ignore that and come for the face- to- face because you know that most of our students, the DE students are workers [yes] and they are on our program not on study leave from where they work [yes] because it is a weekend they are doing it [and still working] and some they did not even inform their bosses because they think it is a weekend [yeah] and so in a particular weekend when your boss says because of this program we need to finish, you and this guy go to that place, they find it difficult to tell them [that I am going for face- to- face] I am going for face- to- face so that is one. The other thing that recently came up is that some of the students, because it is just face- to- face and not exams, some of the

students you do not find them in center A where they are supposed to be but the student, not that they didn't attend face to- face, he is in another center [okay] because he thinks and he has heard, you know they chat among themselves [yeah] that the facilitator there [the lecturer] is better [but not the facilitator hahaha that's good]. You know, so they do shift [okay]. I have heard that somebody travels from Tamale to Kumasi and he prefers it that way [because the good people are in Kumasi]. Exactly. You know, so I think that as an institution, if we really undertake the face- to- face with an objective, then it should not just be face- to- face, but it should be face- to- face with report [okay. I was going to touch on that] it should be face- to- face with report so that we know what is happening (AC). Oh why don't they come? Why? They say some of them don't come. They go to Kumasi. Why? [What is in Kumasi that...] Because they think the guy in Kumasi teaches better or can teach better. That will then tell you or give you the problems and then you can use that to formulate workshops, conferences, to also help those the students think are not facilitating well [okay]. So it shouldn't just be face- to- face where people go and then they go to the class "oh this Twi class, the facilitator was there, they take" no no no [A laughs] we need to go beyond that.

- A. Okay. That's wonderful Prof. but don't you think that apart from some people being workers, they attend to their social needs also?(AC)
- B. They do. They do attend to their social needs [yes]. That is why I said from the beginning that if there are any group of students who need effective orientation, [yeah you said it] it should be the DE students [exactly], because their circumstance is very different from [they have myriad of problems and destructions] sure! They have complaints in so many ways, especially the females [yeah]. You know, the females, they are constrained in the home [your husband is sick, you can't go]. Your husband is sick you can't go [your child is sick] some come with their children [they've called you that your mother in the village is sick] of course [your brother will call you as a female] your husband you should don't go, don't do this program. It's all kind of things(AC).

- A. Okay. Thank your Prof. Erm you know as distance students, like we are discussing, the have myriad of problems and they have to attend to all those, at the university of Cape Coast distance, do you allow your students to defer?
- B. Yeah we do
- A. They defer?
- B. Yeah we do allow them to defer (AC)
- A. On what grounds?(AC)
- B. Most of them have deferred based on financial difficulties
- A. Okay.
- B. A few have also deferred due to pregnancy related issues
- A. Okay.
- B. So there are all kind of reasons why they defer
- A. Oh okay
- B. But largely, it has been financial difficulties(AC)
- A. So for how long can a student defer on a program?
- B. On a program, in the regular program, I think you can defer once, the maximum is twice. But in the DE, so far we haven't placed a cap on how many times you can defer(AC)
- A. Okay
- B. Academic board has raised it before, wanting a cap to be placed and wanting it to be done like the regular but an argument was mounted that the DE students their situation is very different and so yes we agree that there must be a cap somewhere, but not two or one.
- A. Okay.
- B. Because for them they are in a very peculiar situation. They must be allowed. And in fact, if you look at some distance education programs outside Ghana, there is no cap on the deferment(AC).
- A. Yeah
- B. A student can decide to go off the program and come in anytime he wishes to come in and come and continue from where he stopped [elsewhere even the program have they have registered for, they would decide that 'maybe I have twenty credits. This semester I am doing

four, next semester four. That is where the flexibility is] so it's very flexible. Yes, very flexible.

A. I think as Ghanaians we haven't gotten to that point yet because [right] if you do that it becomes an open university [sure]. But we are doing the dual mode so as much as possible [it should be as close as...] exactly.

A. Prof. I think when they defer so I assume they will resume. What is the resumption process like? (AC)

B. Oh the resumption process, I will say, is the reverse of the deferment

A. Okay. Okay [A and B laugh]

B. Because for you to defer, you need to write to the registrar, the registrar will then take it to the provost, the provost in conjunction with the head of academics will then approve your deferment [okay] or otherwise [okay]. In the same way, and I think they will also send it to the students support service [exactly] so that people know that in examination [exactly. They know that they are out for now] they know that these people, they are out [okay]. So that nobody gives you IC and all that [Ahaa]. And so when you are coming, you will just write as I said the reverse. You just write that you are coming through the same process.

A. So the deferment is the opposite of resumption [sure sure]. That's good. Prof. I think you've mentioned the fact that people dodge to other places where they think that the facilitation is good and we can label that as transit [sure]. They are transiting for a very short time [exactly] is that also permissible in UCC?(AC)

B. Yeah that is permissible.

A. Like I am a worker - - am a police man - - I have duty call in Kumasi [sure], am writing exam, can I write my exam in Kumasi? That is the transit am talking about. That is permissible.

B. It's permitted. Yes.

A. Okay, thank you Prof. All the things we have discussed, the admissions, orientation, calendar, attendance, registration, withdrawal, deferment, resumption and transit. I think you mentioned alongside - -

I was going to ask whether the policies guiding those activities are different from the campus-based students. You mentioned some.

B. Yes

A. You mentioned some.

B. The policies guiding as I have said, the policies guiding deferment, for instance, is a bit different.

A. Different. You said it.

B. Yes.

A. And then admission is as close but not the same

B. Withdrawal again is a bit different

A. Did I ask you about withdrawal?

B. No.

A. I skipped it.

B. Yes

A. I was going to ask do you even withdraw the distance students(AC)

B. The distance students hardly do we withdraw. Erm but as I said, very soon policies will be put in place(AC)

A. But for now what do you do?

B. So for now we...

A. Let's say someone who is doing DBE [yes] he has cohorts of subjects, maybe four subjects in a semester. He fails all the four subjects, nothing is done to the person, the person goes to second year, he fails all the four and the final year, he fails all the four, and how is that person going to redeem his or himself? A distance student writing twelve re sits. Prof. How can that be possible?(AC)

B. So that is why we do not put any time frame so that erm when you should have graduated but you are not graduating because you have twelve papers to write, the system allow you to keep on writing them(AC).

A. So if it is ten years, your classmates would have completed.

B. Definitely as we speak, somebody came here yesterday he finished at 2008 and he still has paper to write and so he was coming to find out when next that paper will be written in an examination or in a re-sit so he would come and write(AC).

- A. Okay
- B. So we have not actually restricted the in that sense. But I think as I said a time will come where there would be some restrictions.
- A. Okay.
- B. So that if you fail for papers in a particular semester, and then the other semester you fail another four, maybe the system may advise you to either withdraw or [to repeat] to repeat[yes]. Ahaa you know, to repeat, you know all these policies are a bit tricky because of the fact that they are distance education students. You know, so when you are bringing in some policies, you need to look at who the person is [and the environment in which the person is located] A distance education student. Exactly. But then that notwithstanding, the point you made is valid [yes]. We cannot just open it up [exactly. To bring sanity in the system] that if you have twenty five Es [then you still] you insist to clear them. You know, sometimes, you see that this student clearly cannot [they cannot and they are paying fees]. Exactly. So if you have very effective monitoring system, [yeah] you can easily see that no matter what you do, this student can't go through this program [exactly, they form part of the attrition process and then it will make your program unpopular. That when you enroll on UCC, you will never graduate] sure. [And that is not too good] (AC). So you advise the person. Sometimes when you talk to them, they understand. Then they will just move into other things. [Yes] you know, because I don't want to say that it is not everybody that is meant to come to university. I don't want to say that but we have our different capabilities. [Exactly. Maybe somebody can function as a trader and be successful]. Sometimes you clearly see that this person, like the UTBD thing. You know, as we speak, some people have twelve Es [so how are they going to redeem themselves?] and they have given them so many opportunities: re sit, final resit, final final resit. [A laughs] and of all the eight resists, somebody has been able to reduce his Es from twelve to 11 [look at that. So for how many years Already you are working] so this person clearly, especially when they pay, you must also be sensitive to the person so that it doesn't appear as if you are interested

in his money or her money. That's why you don't want to advise him to go. Sometime we must be able to do that.

A. Thank you. Prof. Can I sum up by saying that for all the things that we have said, erm apart from the admission processes, all other things are different?

B. Yes

A. Academic calendar is different, registration, admission and registration for now are almost the same but all other things are different.

B. Sure

A. And as I speak with you now, there are no clear institutional policies but we have conventions covering these activities(IP)

B. Sure

A. Okay thank you Prof. You know, we have the course tutors who facilitate the modules that have been written by experts who are representing faculty on the field. Do we have any - won't call it institutional policies again because policies you are now formulating them. Do you have any conventions or whatever that guide the facilitation delivery, process, that you are supposed to do that. (FT) Am asking this because when I met them, they were telling me that sometimes they get confused because when they are given the opportunity, they orient them that they are facilitators and that they are only helping the students to understand what the experts have written in the modules. So when they are facilitating, they have to move with the learners but when monitors come, monitors who lecture on the regular come for monitoring and then they complain that they are reading to the students. So sometimes they get confused. They don't know whether they are facilitators or teachers. At the same time they claim some of the students are not very good to understand the content of the module by means of facilitation. So sometimes they have to switch from facilitation to teach them like they are teaching basic school students so they have problems with monitors. What they were even suggesting was the writers who write the modules, should also come with a facilitator's manual so that clearly they will know what they are doing so that no monitor - - no person will come on

monitoring and harass them. So I want to know whether you have laid down procedures, because now that there are no policies or guidelines.(FT)

B. The only laid down guideline or procedure is that once they are appointed as course tutors, they are told that it is not lecturing but it is facilitation, and facilitation means helping the students to understand issues that they do not understand [in the module] in the module and so when you are with them, you let them come up with their problems and then together with them, you discuss and help them to understand (FT).

A. Okay.

B. Now that is the facilitation. But you see, two things, one facilitation is a skill [is a skill. Yeah], lecturing is a skill, so I am looking at a day where we would say that all those who have been appointed as tutors and you are going to facilitate, come for a two week refresher course [okay]. How do you facilitate?(FT) You see, and take them through the facilitation because otherwise because some of them are teaching in Senior High Schools [yes majority of them] and Senior High Schools, they do not facilitate [they teach] so the person has not facilitated before [yeah] and you are saying go and facilitate. What is the facilitation? So when you go and meet them and they are handling the students, the DE students like their own SHS students, you cannot blame them [that is it] you need to give them some refresher course and equip them on how to facilitate. I mean let's be very honest. Call some lecturers here to go and facilitate. Most of us will lecture (FT).

A. Those who even go for monitoring hahaha

B. Most of us will lecture. You know so facilitation is a very different ball game and people need to be trained and helped to do it and do it well. Now, two, I am looking at facilitation and intermittently lecturing or teaching [okay] because their background [exactly. That is exactly what they said] some cannot even read the module and understand, let alone tell you that this is where I didn't understand (FT).

A. That is it.

B. Hahaha you see? They cannot. And so if you are standing in front of them, and you are asking them, leading them to come out with

problems and they are not coming out with anything [so what do we do] and as a teacher you have realized that look [nothing is coming] they don't understand anything in the module, how do you facilitate? So that's why they teach them. You see, so I think intermixture of the two would be helpful [yeah] and again that takes us back to that all important point of orientation(FT)

- A. Yeah
- B. You see when we orient the students very well, there could be a whole day dedicated to how to use the module [exactly] (FT)
- A. Because I don't think the orientation will involve that- - you will take a module there to tell them how they should use it, [yes] we don't do that (FT).
- B. Yes. How to use the module (FT). So that when you pick a module as a student, look this is a module. It is not a text book so this is how you should use it. As you read along, where you don't understand, make your own notes. We teach them so that when they come face to face with the tutor, the work will be a bit easy but as it is, I mean I cannot go and stand in the class and I am seeing clearly that nobody understood anything in unit one [it doesn't even make you confident] and you say because you didn't read or because you are not talking I am going. I would have to teach something.
- A. So that is the problem. I think what we are saying is good because elsewhere that I've interviewed people, apart from the module I am told after the writer has written, the expert himself will do the facilitating at a studio and then they will put that on slides and the students download but we haven't gotten there(FT).
- B. Don't even go far. When we were young, in school, me my father was a head teacher so I saw those things [oh I see. That's why you are very intelligent]. I saw those things. Sometimes you would see English text book and then there is a small book coming with it [teacher's manual] yeah. [We have a teacher's manual. We have a head teacher's manual] sure. You see I think we need to help our facilitators [we are not helping the facilitators] we need to get back and help them (FT).

- A. And apart from the fact that we have to teach them the facilitation, Prof. don't you agree with me that we have to let them know or teach them that our DE learners are adult and they cannot use pedagogy but andragogy in facilitating(FT) . You see, we have two ways of teaching. When you are teaching young people, that one is pedagogy, and that is all that we all use from class one to the university but elsewhere, they use andragogy where they think that the adult learner has something already, experience from where he or she is coming from to bear on the teaching so it is not like you will stand there and be telling them that this that that that that. You open up and then they themselves will come out with their experience but this is one we already have the prepared module so the pedagogy will still have to be there.
- B. Even with the prepared module, even with the prepared module, the we can still equip the tutors to do facilitation(FT)
- A. Yes
- B. You see the prepared module is a material
- A. And that one will even call for the use of andragogy.
- B. And if you are well equipped, it is even sweeter to use andragogy. You see, but if you are not well equipped, that is what they do and some of the DE students think that this particular facilitator is not good [not that he is not good], not that he is not good, because [by his method] that student is sitting in your class with rich practical experience.
- A. Exactly.
- B. You see so everything you are teaching practically is there [is there and some of the DE students might even be older than the facilitator and that he might have a rich and wide knowledge and experiences] so we need we need to [so facilitation, Prof. you agree with me that there is a problem there] oh there is. We need to improve upon it.
- A. Thank you so much Prof. We've touched on face- to- face [yes] but who monitors the face- to- face? Prof. I was asking about the personnel who monitor the face- to- face session. What category of personnel monitor the face to face?(AC)

B. if you remember in the earlier discussion I said that if you do the face- to- face itself will give us a very clear picture of the problems that are there [okay] for us to draw up programs to resolve them. Now, for our face- to- face, I know that some senior members participate. But you also know that if you go to some centers, it is a senior staff who has been sent there from here to go and monitor face- to- face. Now, what that person is there to do is not to see [the teaching, the facilitation and other things] the teaching but to report that oh he was there eleven to nine, he came, so he signed so they bring it back for payment purposes(AC)

A. And is that monitoring, Prof.?

B. I went there, DBE year two, they said first period the man didn't come so payment oh to him, is this monitoring? but it is not monitoring that has direct bearing on improving on the facilitation [exactly]. It is not monitoring. I will call it checking of attendance. People go there to check attendance [attendance. Yes, you are right]. Okay? But if you say you are going to monitor, then those who go to the centers must be senior members who are not knowledgeable in the subject areas, because if you take me to Odorgornor [French, yeah] and you think because I am the expert I will run into a French class I will have problems [yes], okay? But at least when I am going I know what facilitation is and so when somebody is facilitating properly, [you will know] whether I am in the area or not, I should know [yea]. You know, those are the categories that should go out to monitor face- to -face [yeah], not senior staff, not national service personnel going to monitor face- to- face to do what? (AC) [To do what?]. You know, to do what? And so somebody will come and say that oh the man in the room two, he is not teaching anything [meanwhile, you are not an expert in his area]. You are not! You are a national service personnel. And I have heard that some senior staff have confronted these some of these facilitators and in the final analysis you see that the confrontation was unnecessary [yeah]. So I think we need to improve upon this program and help the students to pass their exams and understand what they study [exactly] so they will come out as well baked prepared graduates,

[who be useful to the society], it starts with the monitoring [exactly]. You see it starts with the monitoring because I see that as somebody doing teaching practice and me going to look whether he is doing things right (AC) [exactly]. You know, so if they like they should let somebody else go and check attendance but for monitoring what is happening in the room, I don't think that should be left in the hands of any senior or junior staff.

A. Prof. you are perfectly right, because I've done this interview in other institutions and elsewhere, I was told that apart from the senior members, nobody goes out on monitoring [No]. When they are going, it's a professor who is the team leader and all other senior members are part of the team. They don't send senior staff let alone national service people(AC). They do not even go to their study centers for any reason. [Because I remember...] Because you can go and look at the facilitator if a senior member goes, you even look at the host institution, the facilities there [sure] and then you look at the coordinator and his duty and everything. But if a junior staff, a senior staff is going there then that becomes a problem.

B. I remember when I was the provost I made a suggestion, apart from the fact that I preferred that senior members should do the monitoring, we should also try to rope in either the chief examiners or the module writers, occasionally, [occasionally] so pick a center and go, especially center that examination results tells us that people fail [there are problems, yeah]. Pick, you the module writer and the chief pick and go and monitor one weekend and see how the thing you have written, how it is being facilitated [yeah] and then you can come back with some suggestions to help the young man to facilitate well, because you have written your module, maybe he doesn't understand the module properly(AC).

A. Because the course tutors were telling me that sometimes the modules are not good so if it's a bad module, you also do a bad facilitation. [We need to] we need to sit down and see. Elsewhere, even amongst the module writers, they have a lead facilitator a module writer so they are in lead with the distance education unit. If there is any problem, they

call on the lead module writer that why do the students fail in your subject and this that that but we have - - ah well I don't have to say we but for now am not part of the system hahahaha [A and B laugh out loud]. So Prof. did you say that they go and collect data to write reports. The monitoring, you said they only go for attendance [yes]. They don't go and write any report (AC).

B. No I haven't seen any [report] report.

A. Okay. Alright. What about the evaluation of the courses that you run? Do you really sit down to evaluate the courses that you run and all other processes, the orientation, the facilitation, the examinations, the programs that you are doing, the courses that you are doing, your activities, do you sit down to evaluate?(AC) Because elsewhere, people go on retreats to do a self-assessment of their activities. How many people have graduated, do they pass well, is the facilitation going on well, the examination that we conducted for a four weeks span, was the time, adequate for students and things that - - have you ever had the chance to do that?

B. I think we have done it before.

A. With all stakeholders involved?

B. Not all stakeholders.

A. Okay.

B. I remember in 2016, a committee was put together to look at one, our examinations and two, look at the questions we set, and then three, on the terms of reference was to come out with the way we mark our scripts, leading to release of results. Whether they could narrow the time between end of exam and release of results.(AC)

A. And graduation.

B. Oh yes. That we have done. But I do not think that from time to time, we evaluate programs. I haven't seen that [Okay] and I think it is something we need to do [yeah] because if we do that it may even tell us that certain programs either need to be modified, certain programs [need to be scrapped] certain programs need to be replaced, this and that. We need to do that. I have not seen it(AC). I have not seen that one. I have also not seen us evaluating any orientation program.

- A. Hmm like you were saying that they needed a longer period.
- B. This is the program. Oh Mr. A will come and speak. Somebody [whether the students like or understand them they have to be there or hahaha].
- A. You are very frank. Prof. that's very good. Erm all the things that we are discussing bothers on the students' success. The entire students' pathway in the university is through access then the student progresses, he learns and becomes successful. Do you have a range of support services at UCC to support your students? The first one has to do with pre-admission support before they are admitted. Do you have some support services that will aid them to select the most suitable program, advertising and all those kind of things? Do you have pre-support services for the DE learners (AC)?

I will say we don't have. Because you see we advertise, we advertise [so the advertisement is one of the pre-admission supports] we advertise our programs. [Okay] and then we tell you that program A, these are the requirements, [okay] program B these are the requirements [okay]. And then closing date for submission of forms [okay], once we put it out, what we do is to be waiting for people buying forms, filling and bringing [and you will be collecting your money] and then we will sit down, yes, and then we sit down and look at program A thousand people applied [have applied], by our criteria and six hundred qualify, we issue letters to them, they come. You know, fine, that could be a pre-admission process. But I think that we need proper pre-admission process. Maybe people will think it is expensive but I think that the university or the DE [unit] unit must be able to go out there, [yes] set up centers somewhere, [go on radio to talk about your program, its prospects and things like that] (AC). Exactly. Somebody came to sit here yesterday with erm clinical micro-biology, that Prof. what are the processes. I have been given a scholarship to go and do clinical but what is it? What are the prospects? I myself didn't know so we all went into the internet and I had something printed and I gave it to him, 'go and read. [A and B laugh].

- A. We need to improve

B. So we need to [so everyone is coming to you for help] and so we need to, we need to put certain things in place. You see [so that it becomes conventional]. It all goes to enhancing the image [exactly! Of the university]. Yeah, you know, as for the main university, my friend, they will even come and tell you this this [yeah, before you are even admitted] so that when the person is admitted, looking at your programs, he understands exactly, [and when he enters he has a clear idea of what he has chosen to do]. Sure! So pre-admission - - apart from the advert, I don't think we have any (AC).

A. Can we consider the entrance examination as a pre-admission support?

B. The MEE to me is even better than those who come in direct because as for the MEE, the two weeks the person is teaching you, you know, there could be some interactions. We have gotten you closer to somebody, [yes and it is removing the distance factor] so you can even go and talk to the person, 'oh sir if I should pass which course [exactly exactly] so they even have some opportunity there.

A. Prof Can the MEE be classified as a pre-admission support [sure! Sure! Sure!] That is very good (AC). Erm prof. do you think that the MEE and the advert and the little things you do for them before they come, - - is it adequate? And is the MEE appropriate and timely for the students, those who go through the MEE entrance?

A. Erm I will say that [like you said you went round and] it is good for them because we know without the MEE, some of them [would not get admission at all] and if I should use what happened in the university as an example, [you mean the main university?] the main university, when we started the remedial class [for the sciences] for the sciences, people frowned on it, you know, and then we said the fact that somebody has a D7 somewhere does not mean the person is a dummy [Exactly]. Maybe this is an examination, anything [at all could have happened] and true as long as the remedial class went on, and some were admitted, every year group graduation, a remedial person will be among the first class [that's wonderful] and that is what made them even to continue.

A. But why have they stopped?

- B. Oh national accreditation board
- A. They also worry us.
- B. So yes me, it is good. Erm if you ask [and it's the time is adequate] and if you ask me about the time? Erm the time may not be adequate. The time may not be adequate, because again some of them are not straight from the classroom [they've stayed in the house for a very long time so they need about a half year or a whole year...] so I think if we could advertise theirs early, [yeah, so that they start their classes early] so that they will start their classes early [okay] and then by the time they end, it will meet with our admission month and then we admit. But the two weeks [I like your suggestion. Maybe you have to be a Provost again or hahahaha A and B laugh a Board Chairman again or a Pro VC again or the VC. I like the way you give suggestions to improve your DE unit. - - you seem to have erm solutions to the problem of the DE]
- A. Thank you Prof. Now we have finished with pre-admission. Let's assume that they've been admitted. What learner support services do you have for them? Am talking about counseling services, [learner support], academic , academic - - uh how do you call it - -[academic counseling] academic counselors, library services(AC)
- B. Learner support services again we need to improve upon that.
- A. But do you have a range of support services?
- B. Some we do and others we don't have. You know, sometimes I hear of students support services (AC).
- A. What do they do there?
- B. The students support services, honestly speaking, [you don't know their role] I don't know what they do there. [I think they respond to students' enquiries] ICs, when students have problems [aha that is not the only support service- - that support is not enough, adequate] I don't see, I am talking about support service that will let the students find their study environment comfortable [Exactly], that will make things easy, for the learners [in creating and enabling the environment for their success]. That is what I see. [You are right]. You know, and so this one I see SSS that office as complaints office. That is what I see [yea, instead of a support office. It's a complaint office, I like

that](AC). If it is a complete support service, you even get to the students before they even know that they had [Exactly. Literature has it that kind of support is known as proactive support] Sure! [proactive support, because that one is coming from the end of the institution]You get to them. And sometimes when you get to them out of a research you have done without their knowledge and you get to them and propose something you want to take them through, they see you as [they say man has us at heart]. You know, but you don't wait for me to bring my IC and then come here five times [the support unit should have the list of all students who have the IC] Sure! [And then invite them even for counseling]. So for me, I think that we need to look at one, our library facility, [do you have any library facility?] I have not seen any library facility in any of the regional centers I have visited (AC). [Elsewhere they have e- libraries] the headquarters itself [doesn't have a library]. Some company, techno or so donated e-library equipment for us [where is it?] it is sitting down there. We were trying to activate it. I think it is still not activated.

A. Why? who should activate it?

B. Erh all of us.

A. Why are we not activating it?

B. I think they said some component are not there or so.

A. So where are we going to get those components to activate it.

B. No! They are not components that cannot be bought. We can buy them.

A. Let's buy them.

B. I think we have just gone slow on it

A. Exactly!

B. You know, so we need to look at that not only here, but even the regional centers [centers. Yeah] and put some books there which if not the modules, books, because the [references], there are other books that can help them

A. Exactly!

B. Let's put them there so that a student you can walk into the library and sit down there, because some of them, in their homes, they hardly read.

- A. You see, we blame the students for not studying. But we are not helping them to study.
- B. Some of them, when they leave the face to face [that is all], the condition at home is such that studying becomes a problem [a problem]. He has one bedroom, five children, with his husband, his in-law is there [yes], where is he going to sit to study?(AC) [Even when they are asleep you cannot put on the light] to have that peace of mind to read. But if these students know that there is a library at the office, which can sit forty minutes, after he has cooked for them and they are - - the food is here am coming, he goes to sit there and read
- A. [Exactly!]
- B. You see the need for that facility is very important.
- A. The e- library?
- B. Yes. It is very important. Two, I don't know how it can be done but we need to think about it. We need to segment these students and give them counseling.
- A. Yes
- B. Not this counseling office sitting there
- A. What do they do there? I don't understand, because if there is a counseling unit here, do they expect the students to travel to come and see them or?
- B. Well, they have spoken a lot about creating regional counselors.
- A. So that they will liaise with the Head office counselors.
- B. That they have done, just that the system has not [absorbed them] Yes.
- A. So for now, you don't have counselors [No no no] for the students [we don't] like the regular people have academic counselors. They have a counseling unit [and they have hall counselors]. They have hall counselors.
- B. You see, we don't have any for our students and I think that is a bigger problem.
- A. But prof. don't you think that as, you know counselors are experts,
- B. Yes (AC)
- A. The numerical strength of UCC DE learners, we can't have one- to - one counselors. But at least we can use some of the senior members as

academic counselors to help them. Like you are saying we need to segregate them from the regular students due to the peculiar nature of the environment in which they study.

B. On campus here, if – academic counselors, how many of them are professional counselors?

A. They are so many we can have the senior members serving as study center counselors, study center counselors for now.

B. They can do so that some weekend, you go to your center [yes], you see, and go there purposely to listen [to the complaints of] and advise them

A. Exactly! Because most of the senior members are experienced and professional teachers and they can give readily answers to many of the DE learners' complaints. So I don't know why most senior members on the DE programme are not engaged during the week ends to do that(AC). So maybe they can take some time, prepare, and then as they go for monitoring they do counselling at the same time as learners bring their complaints.

B. The can. They can do selective monitoring.

A. Okay

B. And then you can dedicate the whole of Sunday for counseling. Then you come back.

A. So Prof. I think that the UCC DE learners' lack the counselling aspect of your support services. You need to change certain things, because counseling and advising is very important for DE learners.

B. Sure!

A. Ahaa so as the regular people have hall counselors, academic counselors, and then they even have a whole counseling unit for which they can run to when they run into problems. Let us create something of that nature for distance learners also. Prof. you said for now you don't have libraries at your host institutions, because it is a weekend, our students cannot access the libraries of the host institutions (AC) [and even their libraries the books there] are archaic [SHS books]. Oh okay you are right. You are right. So that's a big challenge. That's a big challenge and so I think the e-libraries will be good and I think as

college of distance education, you should have your own library within the college of distance and regional offices with DE books and other materials.

B. Good. And then go e-library [Go e-library. Okay]. Give them pin codes [Okay. Yeah. Username...] so that as long as you are on the internet, wherever you are [and these days' people can even access the internet on their phone]. Wherever you are, log onto the e-library, look at the resources there and pick something and read [okay]. You don't need to go and sit in what you call a library. Once you have internet connectivity(AC),

A. Perfect! You are really a Professor. You have answered the questions so well I am highly impressed. I was going to ask how we are going to address that challenge. But you have said it all. Prof. what is your completion rate? You know distance education is characterized by attrition. Do you have policies/conventions covering your completion and graduation?(AC)

B. Convention like what?

A. Like guidelines.

B. Oh we have it like just the regular system (AC).

A. Okay

B. You know, for you to graduate, you need to get a certain CGPA.

A. Okay.

B. If you don't get that CGPA,

A. Is the same for distance and the same for regular?

B. Yeah it's the same. If you don't have it you are not graduating.

A. Okay.

B. Now, that is there. But if you look at the system, the regular system, and then the DE, and the completion rate, that is where you see the gap. Because our completion rate here I think is about 53% (AC)

A .Oh wow! And the regular? DE is 53% and your numerical strength is about erm three times the regular [it's about three times, yes] the regular and your completion rate is only about 53%.

B .The regular they are looking at 78% and 81%.

A. Then the DE unit has to sit up.

B. So we need to sit up. We have a lot of gap to close.

A. Yeah.

B. You know, and I am saying that these things, some can be attributed to the students themselves but those that can be attributed to us [let us resolve them], let us resolve [exactly] so that when we are talking about completion rate, then the ball is in the court of [of the students, but not the institution]. Exactly.

A. Because if you show commitment, high degree of commitment, it will be open to everybody, if the student is not performing. Thank you Prof. we almost finishing and...

B. So we continue...

A. We continue at another time. Oh that's good.

B. There is site meeting

A. Ah you are going for a site meeting.

A. Oh okay prof. Thank you so much. I've really enjoyed your interview. I wish I can continue at another time. Thank you very much. I'm very grateful.

B. Am also grateful

A: Good morning Prof.

B: Good morning

A: Thank you for agreeing to continue with this interview. I am highly impressed about your effort to help me. The other time we got to physical geography and governance as a policy issue in your university. When I talk about physical, I'm talking about finance in general. What is the payment policy that you have for your students in terms of the payment of their fees and other fee that you charge them?(FGG)

B: Let me say that we have different components of the fees. We have what we call the university fees. They have their association DESAG; they also have certain charges which is added to the fees. So it comes in two components but in terms of payment, when students are coming in as fresh students, as much as possible, we encourage them to make full payment before they are registered. The continuing students we give them some leeway sometimes if you make 75% of the payment you can be registered and you will receive your modules. But we have relaxed it honestly,

sometimes even 50% you can have your modules. In certain cases some even get registered and get their modules without paying anything so as we speak we have some students who are still owing from the beginning of the academic year yet they have their modules they have registered sometimes we are mindful of the fact that most of them are working some of them are also not working we are mindful of the fact that even those who are working some of them are parents some are single parents and they are taking care of their children so we have relaxed it a bit we do not stick strictly to the 50 or the 75% hoping that by the time the academic year ends they would have finished paying(FGG)

A: Before then you said their association I know it's a students' association you said DESAG I want to have...what is the full

B: Distance Education Students Association of Ghana

A: the other question is how do they manage to register and collect their modules and go for face-to-face without paying anything for fees are there...don't you have policies in place to check these things?(FGG)

B: We have policies but as I have said because it is a human institution and for the fact that it is distance we try to be flexible some time ago this policy had some effects because you know we are not the only institution running distance so whilst we were sticking to the policy that until you pay this you cannot register other institutions had made it very flexible and they were registering people giving the end of the academic year to finish paying and the students were using that to compare where to go so it became necessary that we make it a bit flexible for them so that policy is there just that we do not follow it to the latter(FGG) I remember about two years or a year ago we took a decision it was an examination end of semester exam that all those owing must not be allowed to write the exam the first paper we followed this through some were not allowed to write the exam by the time the second paper was on a decision had been taken that we should allow all of them to write we shouldn't sack anybody so there is there is a human face attached to some of these policies

A: I like the way you're using the word human face so Prof can I say that this one in terms of fee payment that also I can say that that shows your commitment to your students' success because you don't prevent them

from writing exams because they have not paid their fees so you relax (FGG) (CT) the policies a bit. Do you have policies that are written for the payment of fees or they are procedures or conventions that you have tried over the years? (FGG)

B: We do not have policies that have been gazette just that these are let me call them decisions management decisions which is communicated to the students so if you want a policy print-out policy honestly I don't think we have that policy so these are decisions we take(FGG).

A: what you're telling me do the regular people also enjoy that flexibility in terms of fee payment? (FGG)

B: the regular students do because the regular students we picked this actually from the regular the regular student when you are coming in as a fresher you pay full and then the continuing students can pay in installments so this our decision was picked from the regular so in the regular they also have that flexibility in actual fact even when you have your last trench to pay and examination is approaching the regular student has that flexibility of you writing through either the Dean of students to the Vice-Chancellor explaining yourself so when that happens they give you the concession to write the exam(FGG)

A: Thank you Prof. so in your estimation do you think that the students like this flexibility or do they like and appreciate it or they tend to abuse it (FGG)

B: like any other human system they appreciate it and alongside their appreciation is the abuse some will definitely abuse it I am fully aware when I was the pro-vice chancellor I heard some of them will write pleading for some extension or some relaxation only for you to realize that their parents even gave them the full fees...so the abuse is there but sometimes if you use the abuse to tighten the nut then you'll also be hurting the genuine ones who are actually in need so if the abuse is not too much you tend to manage it and move along with it(FGG)

A: that's very good. Prof. the next one has to do with the accessibility of your host institutions to the DE students regular people are in residence but the DE people they come for face-to-face in host institutions I know that you use other institutions apart from Accra and maybe Cape Coast here

you don't have buildings of your own how accessible are those institutions to the DE students who go there for face-to-face (FGG)

B: well in terms of accessibility I will say the institutions are accessible

A: so the students don't have any geographical barrier.

B: for now I don't think they have it is for this reason of carrying the service as close as possible to them that is why we keep opening centers I don't know the number of study centers distance education started with but as we speak we have across 84 centers and we are still opening and so when we realize that a particular center some of them come from very far and remote places we try to look at that catchment area and then plant one there for them so in terms of accessibility I think so far we have tried to send it as close as possible to them(FGG)

A: so the students choose their centers based on proximity

B: yeah sure not only that you know some of our centers are dedicated to certain programmes so if the student is in Kwakukrom and the center nearest is business and science and maths and that student is doing psychology he cannot go to that center he has to go to the next nearest center where the psychology is run

A: you said you have how many learning centers

B: now we have about 83 study centers

A: Oh that is wonderful. You are topping all the dual mode public universities running distance learning. I think UCC is on top in terms of study centers. KNUST, they have only 12 study centers and I don't know of UG but I think you are topping (FGG). That is very good. Prof, you are a top management staff and I am going to ask about governance (FGG). I know somewhere along the like, I don't know whether it is by your interview but we mentioned along that you have a governing board for which you have been a chairman before. So apart from the governing board, how is the governance system and the leadership liken at CoDE? (FGG)

B: Well, before it became a College, it used to be a Center and we had a Board and the Board was chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor. And then you have the Director. And then working with the Director, at that time we had two Deputy Directors; Deputy Director for Academics, Deputy

Director for Operations. They didn't have clear-cut departments so it was the Board, the Director and the Units so that was how the structure was. Now when it became a College, the Board was not dissolved but the chairmanship of the Board was changed. When it became a College, the chairmanship of the board was given to the Provost. Now the Provost is the chairman of the Board, not the Pro Vice Chancellor. And then alongside the Board is also what we term the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee takes the day- to- day decisions of the College and then reports to the Board. So when there is examination issues, student fees issues, and all other administrative matters where decisions need to be taken, it is not the Board that does it. It is the Advisory Committee that does it. The Board meets quarterly so when the Board meets, which is also chaired by the Provost, so the Provost is chairing the three. He is the chair for the Board, the Advisory Committee, and Middle Management committee. So that is how it goes. Then with this Middle Management I have spoken about, you know, the Advisory Committee is Professors and Heads of Departments. They form the Advisory Committee. It is only the Board that is where we have all these Advisory Committee members plus representations from the other Colleges on campus other than our College and then reps from GES, reps from teacher education. They are all on the Board. So the Board is both external and internal composition while the advisory committee is only internal. The membership is from CoDE (FGG).

A: So from what I am gathering from you, the other senior members who are not of Professorial rank, some of them are not represented on the Board.

B: Not all of them

A: The middle management group, who represents them.

B: The middle management; that is where every senior member is a member and they have their reps on the Board.

A: What about senior member administrators? Are they part of the Board?

B: They are all part of the Board. They have their reps. The Registrar is there; even the students are represented on the board by their President. They sit with us and discuss delicate issues (FGG).

A: Is that ethical for the students to be part of the Board where sensitive issues of the College are discussed?(FGG)

B: It is, because they are major stakeholders. Now, when it comes to decisions that have to do with senior members, then we can excuse the students, just like the university council does. The students are on the university council but when a senior member promotion is being discussed, senior member disciplinary matter is being discussed, we excuse them (FGG).

A: Then that is perfect and that shows your commitment to them, because they are all the final beneficiary of all the things that you are doing so if they are there and they are part of the decision making, that is perfect(FGG). What about finances? How do you manage your financial resources? (FGG)

B: Well the financial resources; let me say that the major source of income for the College is from student's fees and then these monies are paid into CoDE's account (FGG). As I said in the first part of the interview that is the university's commitment to make sure that the college expands and so these fees are not paid into the university's central coffers. They are paid into CoDE's account. Of course, spending it will have to be done with the permission of the vice chancellor because CoDE is part of the university. So that is the major source. And then, out of these monies, the finance officer also invests some of them into bonds, into treasury bills (FGG). We do not have enough money but we prioritize. We have prioritized it so that even though we don't have enough money, some can be put aside as contingencies and those ones, instead of lying down, is invested.

A: I like the idea because imagine you have employed people to supervise your exam, mark your exam and there is no money, without these contingency monies, I think there will be chaos. So that shows the level of commitment of the university. I was going to show you how much financial resources are committed to DE programs. But you have already stated that the money comes to you so you decide what to do with the money with the supervision of the main university. Are there clear-cut institutional policies that guide the use of your resources? (FGG)

A: Yes, there is and that is not a policy that this College has drawn but a university-wide policy. The financial administration regulations and the financial and stores regulations cover us all (FGG). That is what gives seal to how much a Provost can approve from his desk, beyond which he cannot approve but would have to go to the Vice Chancellor for approval. You know, so these are checks and balances. And the procurement system also guides us so that it will not be like “the money is in our account so please can you bring in thousand desks for our students? What we have is old; we need to replace”. We can’t do that. It will have to go through the procurement system; the vice chancellor will have to satisfy himself and if even the vice chancellor approves, then this will go to procurement for people to look at it and ask questions as to whether you really need it. If you convince them that you really need it, then the entity will approve it and then you tender it so the systems are there in using these monies.

A: Okay that is good. Prof, it looks like because you’ve been a Provost, you have been a pro Vice Chancellor; you’ve been a Board Chairman, you know all the processes. That is very good. Prof, you will agree with me that every institution based on its mission and vision demonstrates its commitment to employ people. They don’t just employ anybody anyhow. Do you hire people at the level of the College or the University hires the people for you? (FGG)

B: Two things. When it comes to employment, the statute of the university does not give that power to any Provost. That statute says that all appointments are done by the Vice Chancellor in consultation with Provosts, Deans, and HODs. (FGG) Now, let us take the junior staff and the senior staff, when a department is in need of a junior staff of a senior staff, all the department can do is to notify the registrar of the university that “we are in need of this and that and that.” The registrar will then set the processes in motion to recruit some people and post some to you, according to your need. On the other hand, departments can also send applications they have received to the registrar. The Registrar would then go through it and call the people, interview them and then, they will post some to you. Now, specific to this College is the issue of Course Tutors or Facilitators. Tutors or facilitators, for now, it is the College that receives

all applications through HODs to the Provost's office and then the college will set a date to interview all applicants. Those who qualify are shortlisted and then the list, remember that we are now going back to the statute, once you have interviewed them and shortlisted them, the provost cannot issue appointment letters, be they full-time or part-time. So the list is then sent to the vice chancellor for the vice chancellor to issue appointment letters to the people you have interviewed and found qualified (FT).

A: That is perfect. So it means that because they are not permanent staff, they don't go through the same criteria (FT).

B: No, they don't go to the university, Departmental interactions and things like that (FT).

A: I think that before it even comes to the HOD, it will start from the regions, because the Regional Resident Tutor will have to declare a vacancy (FT).

B: Exactly!

A: That is very good. So Prof, once they don't go through the criteria for permanent staff, when they falter and you have to discipline them, which criteria of discipline? Do they fall into the university? (FT)

B: When they falter and you have to discipline them, I think it is done at the College level. That is why every face-to-face, we have College staff going round to see and sometimes we also receive reports from the regions concerning particular facilitators. Misconduct, misbehavior, absenteeism: that one is dealt with at the College level. And then if the College thinks that they should dispense of your services, the College will do that and notify the Vice Chancellor. But strictly speaking, where you have to deal with somebody because of something and the nature is a disciplinary nature, it should be done by the Vice Chancellor because the Vice Chancellor is the chief disciplinarian of the entire university. And so whether part time or otherwise, if you have to discipline somebody, the Vice Chancellor has to be notified (FT).

A: But I am sure there aren't many reports.

B: No, we have not encountered that much disciplinary issues.

A: That's very good. Prof, the next issue has to do with ownership and intellectual property rights of the people that write your modules (LG).

Elsewhere, they write the modules and then they pay them off and then the university or the college will put them in interactive mode for the students to use and that one doesn't become the person's property again. I don't know how you people go about it.

B: Ours, I must say that we have to work at it so far as intellectual property right is concerned, because yes, we contract people to write it, but when they write the module, they are paid for writing the modules (LG).

A: How much do you pay them? And at what level of the work do you pay them? When they have finished and submitted? (LG)

B: Before they finish; some before they even start, I think some percentage is paid to them and then when they have submitted the final, the remaining is then paid to them (LG).

A: And what happens if someone collects and is not able to deliver the final product? (LG)

B: We then ask you to refund the money but I haven't encountered that. It is not that much. You know, so in certain schools of thought, once you are paid for the work you have done, the final product does not become your own. It is then for the college; the college owns it; so you cannot claim intellectual property rights, because you have been paid for what you did. So even though those who write it have the liberty of using those modules for their promotion that is where the whole thing comes. Because if you say that it is not mine because you have paid me, yet I can use it as mine for promotion, then it is mine. There is something there which we need to resolve and we need to look at it very carefully and resolve it, because I also know that there is something called royalties (LG).

A: Yes, I was going to touch on that. So the person writes the module; you pay the person. Does the person have to collect money, royalty every year, and for how long? (LG)

B: That is the issue I am discussing. You see, it is a much diffused system and we need to discuss the whole thing very and make it very clear. Because if I am collecting royalties, the implication is different. You cannot say it is not mine. Why then are you giving me royalties? So it is still mine. So we need to really sit down and come out with a clear-cut policy that if we don't want you to own it, then this is the amount we will

pay you. If you have to own it, this is the amount we will pay you and then you still own it so that nobody can reproduce it without your permission. So we need to actually look at this whole thing more especially now that we want to put it online, because once you put it online, it has open access. So intellectual property right with respect to the module, I think we have still not settled it yet. We need to formulate clear-cut policies (LG).

A: Prof, have you ever had any problem of maybe a module writer taking somebody's work and people coming to worry the college and things like that(LG).

B: I have heard about one.

A: So who was held responsible: the writer or the institution?

B: The writer. The institution cannot be held responsible, because we have contracted you to write (LG).

A: Okay, that is very good. I was going to ask you about publication but along the line, you have said it, that they can use it to publish for their own. Prof, this is the last but one question and I will leave you in peace. You know it is only in Africa that because of power problems and things like that. We tend to go the blended mode where we have face- to- face and little online. But elsewhere, everything is online. At CoDE, do you have learning management systems or do you have other systems that students use, the internet (T). Elsewhere, they said they have e-libraries online and when the writers write the modules, the experts will teach in the studios and then they will have slides, then they will put the slides online for the students. What happens at CoDE? And even your registration and things like that: do you have technical strategies in place?

B: I will say that these are on the drawing board and as for registration, we have made some progress and now, they can register online; they can view their results online. So that one, we have made some progress. The e-library and putting the modules online is where we have not made a lot of progress (T) E-library; I remember, some company, is it Techno or so, donated e-library equipment and it was even installed but the bandwidth, the internet connectivity, was not reliable. That is why the college decided to increase the bandwidth, which we have done, so I believe very soon we would deploy the e-library. And then the module is also something the

college has decided to put online. We have not put it online because; one, we realized that some of the modules, in terms of grammar and content, have some problems. And once it goes online, it is worldwide and so we need to refine these documents before we put them online. I know that as part of this, the writers were asked to review the module. It has been a very slow process but I believe when it has been reviewed fully, we may put the thing online. It is not only putting it online; the college even has plans, as you said, to teach from a studio so that when we go fully online, it would be a virtual classroom for you wherever you are.

A: I was going to ask whether you've thought of removing the face-to-face factor and go online (T).

B: Yes sure. It will be a virtual classroom. The lecturer is broadcasting from the University of Cape Coast and then you are all listening. Wherever you are, you can ask questions. Everybody sees you; the lecturer sees you; so it is a virtual classroom. That is where we want to go (T).

A: Prof, I don't want to put you to test. I was going to ask you whether you have name, you know the name of the very learning management system, or now, you don't have anything? Because elsewhere, they have V-class model; UG has SAKAI learning management system (T).

B: That one, I may not know, because most ones I know, I don't think they are learning management systems. They are just people who manage our data for us. I am not too sure whether these are learning management systems (T).

A: So you don't have any leaning management system. Prof, you've done really well and I am really impressed and grateful. This is the very last question. How do people see your DE program and its products as a whole? I am talking about the philosophical issues of your DE programs (PH). How do people see it?

B: Everything I will tell you; one will be from my perspective, from my interaction with people, because this question, to answer it means that we should have done some assessment out there and then we would know that this is how people view our programs, but we have not done that. So, generally speaking, from what we hear and especially about our programs, I think that generally the public hold our programs in high esteem, because

wherever you go and there is a CoDE product, the report about the person is encouraging and so I think we have very good public image so far as our programs are concerned(PH).

A: So based on this, do you get other stakeholders, you have mentioned that GES and other people are on your board, but I am talking about people coming freely because they have good perception about what you are doing and things like that to help you run the program, maybe donating buses(PH).

B: So far, no.

A: Okay, because people think you are self-sufficient or?

B: Maybe. Apart from some of the IT companies, like the one which donated the e-learning (PH).

A: So at least, there is a stakeholder involvement, because GES, some people are on your Board; people have donated, just that it doesn't very often. But the idea is there (PH). Oh okay prof, I think this is the very last question and I want to thank you very much for your patience, your knowledge. You are very knowledgeable at the activities of DE in UCC, because you have been a Provost; you have been a Pro-VC a Board chairman and by your very nature too, I think that you are committed to the success of the students and the college. I am very grateful to you for your time and the knowledge that you have given me. I think the findings of this research will go a long way to help CoDE in doing a lot of things. Thank you very much and have a great day.

A: Good morning Prof.

B: Good morning

A: Thank you for agreeing to continue with this interview. I am highly impressed about your effort to help me. The other time we got to physical geography and governance as a policy issue in your university. When I talk about physical, I'm talking about finance in general. What is the payment policy that you have for your students in terms of the payment of their fees and other fee that you charge them?(FGG)

B: Let me say that we have different components of the fees. We have what we call the university fees. They have their association DESAG; they also have certain charges which is added to the fees. So it comes in two components but in terms of payment, when students are coming in as fresh

students, as much as possible, we encourage them to make full payment before they are registered. The continuing students we give them some leeway sometimes if you make 75% of the payment you can be registered and you will receive your modules. But we have relaxed it honestly, sometimes even 50% you can have your modules. In certain cases some even get registered and get their modules without paying anything so as we speak we have some students who are still owing from the beginning of the academic year yet they have their modules they have registered sometimes we are mindful of the fact that most of them are working some of them are also not working we are mindful of the fact that even those who are working some of them are parents some are single parents and they are taking care of their children so we have relaxed it a bit we do not stick strictly to the 50 or the 75% hoping that by the time the academic year ends they would have finished paying(FGG)

A: Before then you said their association I know it's a students' association you said DESAG I want to have...what is the full

B: Distance Education Students Association of Ghana

A: the other question is how do they manage to register and collect their modules and go for face-to-face without paying anything for fees are there...don't you have policies in place to check these things?(FGG)

B: We have policies but as I have said because it is a human institution and for the fact that it is distance we try to be flexible some time ago this policy had some effects because you know we are not the only institution running distance so whilst we were sticking to the policy that until you pay this you cannot register other institutions had made it very flexible and they were registering people giving the end of the academic year to finish paying and the students were using that to compare where to go so it became necessary that we make it a bit flexible for them so that policy is there just that we do not follow it to the latter(FGG) I remember about two years or a year ago we took a decision it was an examination end of semester exam that all those owing must not be allowed to write the exam the first paper we followed this through some were not allowed to write the exam by the time the second paper was on a decision had been taken that we should allow all of them to write we shouldn't sack anybody so there is there is a human face attached to some of these policies

A: I like the way you're using the word human face so Prof can I say that this one in terms of fee payment that also I can say that that shows your commitment to your students' success because you don't prevent them from writing exams because they have not paid their fees so you relax (FGG) (CT) the policies a bit. Do you have policies that are written for the payment of fees or they are procedures or conventions that you have tried over the years? (FGG)

B: We do not have policies that have been gazette just that these are let me call them decisions management decisions which is communicated to the students so if you want a policy print-out policy honestly I don't think we have that policy so these are decisions we take(FGG).

A: what you're telling me do the regular people also enjoy that flexibility in terms of fee payment? (FGG)

B: the regular students do because the regular students we picked this actually from the regular the regular student when you are coming in as a fresher you pay full and then the continuing students can pay in installments so this our decision was picked from the regular so in the regular they also have that flexibility in actual fact even when you have your last trench to pay and examination is approaching the regular student has that flexibility of you writing through either the Dean of students to the Vice-Chancellor explaining yourself so when that happens they give you the concession to write the exam(FGG)

A: Thank you Prof. so in your estimation do you think that the students like this flexibility or do they like and appreciate it or they tend to abuse it (FGG)

B: like any other human system they appreciate it and alongside their appreciation is the abuse some will definitely abuse it I am fully aware when I was the pro-vice chancellor I heard some of them will write pleading for some extension or some relaxation only for you to realize that their parents even gave them the full fees...so the abuse is there but sometimes if you use the abuse to tighten the nut then you'll also be hurting the genuine ones who are actually in need so if the abuse is not too much you tend to manage it and move along with it(FGG)

A: that's very good. Prof. the next one has to do with the accessibility of your host institutions to the DE students regular people are in residence but the DE

people they come for face-to-face in host institutions I know that you use other institutions apart from Accra and maybe Cape Coast here you don't have buildings of your own how accessible are those institutions to the DE students who go there for face-to-face (FGG)

B: well in terms of accessibility I will say the institutions are accessible

A: so the students don't have any geographical barrier.

B: for now I don't think they have it is for this reason of carrying the service as close as possible to them that is why we keep opening centers I don't know the number of study centers distance education started with but as we speak we have across 84 centers and we are still opening and so when we realize that a particular center some of them come from very far and remote places we try to look at that catchment area and then plant one there for them so in terms of accessibility I think so far we have tried to send it as close as possible to them(FGG)

A: so the students choose their centers based on proximity

B: yeah sure not only that you know some of our centers are dedicated to certain programmes so if the student is in Kwakukrom and the center nearest is business and science and maths and that student is doing psychology he cannot go to that center he has to go to the next nearest center where the psychology is run

A: you said you have how many learning centers

B: now we have about 83 study centers

A: Oh that is wonderful. You are topping all the dual mode public universities running distance learning. I think UCC is on top in terms of study centers. KNUST, they have only 12 study centers and I don't know of UG but I think you are topping (FGG). That is very good. Prof, you are a top management staff and I am going to ask about governance (FGG). I know somewhere along the like, I don't know whether it is by your interview but we mentioned along that you have a governing board for which you have been a chairman before. So apart from the governing board, how is the governance system and the leadership liken at CoDE? (FGG)

B: Well, before it became a College, it used to be a Center and we had a Board and the Board was chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor. And then you have the Director. And then working with the Director, at that time we had two Deputy

Directors; Deputy Director for Academics, Deputy Director for Operations. They didn't have clear-cut departments so it was the Board, the Director and the Units so that was how the structure was. Now when it became a College, the Board was not dissolved but the chairmanship of the Board was changed. When it became a College, the chairmanship of the board was given to the Provost. Now the Provost is the chairman of the Board, not the Pro Vice Chancellor. And then alongside the Board is also what we term the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee takes the day- to- day decisions of the College and then reports to the Board. So when there is examination issues, student fees issues, and all other administrative matters where decisions need to be taken, it is not the Board that does it. It is the Advisory Committee that does it. The Board meets quarterly so when the Board meets, which is also chaired by the Provost, so the Provost is chairing the three. He is the chair for the Board, the Advisory Committee, and Middle Management committee. So that is how it goes. Then with this Middle Management I have spoken about, you know, the Advisory Committee is Professors and Heads of Departments. They form the Advisory Committee. It is only the Board that is where we have all these Advisory Committee members plus representations from the other Colleges on campus other than our College and then reps from GES, reps from teacher education. They are all on the Board. So the Board is both external and internal composition while the advisory committee is only internal. The membership is from CoDE (FGG).

A: So from what I am gathering from you, the other senior members who are not of Professorial rank, some of them are not represented on the Board.

B: Not all of them

A: The middle management group, who represents them.

B: The middle management; that is where every senior member is a member and they have their reps on the Board.

A: What about senior member administrators? Are they part of the Board?

B: They are all part of the Board. They have their reps. The Registrar is there; even the students are represented on the board by their President. They sit with us and discuss delicate issues (FGG).

A: Is that ethical for the students to be part of the Board where sensitive issues of the College are discussed?(FGG)

B: It is, because they are major stakeholders. Now, when it comes to decisions that have to do with senior members, then we can excuse the students, just like the university council does. The students are on the university council but when a senior member promotion is being discussed, senior member disciplinary matter is being discussed, we excuse them (FGG).

A: Then that is perfect and that shows your commitment to them, because they all the final beneficiary of all the things that you are doing so if they are there and they are part of the decision making, that is perfect(FGG). What about finances? How do you manage your financial resources? (FGG)

B: Well the financial resources; let me say that the major source of income for the College is from student's fees and then these monies are paid into CoDE's account (FGG). As I said in the first part of the interview that is the university's commitment to make sure that the college expands and so these fees are not paid into the university's central coffers. They are paid into CoDE's account. Of course, spending it will have to done with the permission of the vice chancellor because CoDE is part of the university. So that is the major source. And then, out of these monies, the finance officer also invests some of them into bonds, into treasury bills (FGG). We do not have enough money but we prioritize. We have prioritized t so that even though we don't have enough money, some can be put aside as contingencies and those ones, instead of lying down, is invested.

A: I like the idea because imagine you have employed people to supervise your exam, mark your exam and there is no money, without these contingency monies, I think there will be chaos. So that shows the level of commitment of the university. I was going to show you how much financial resources are committed to DE programs. But you have already stated that the money comes to you so you decide what to do with the money with the supervision of the main university. Are there clear-cut institutional policies that guide the use of your resources? (FGG)

A: Yes, there is and that is not a policy that this College has drawn but a university-wide policy. The financial administration regulations and the financial and stores regulations cover us all (FGG). That is what gives seal to how much a Provost can approve from his desk, beyond which he cannot approve but would have to go to the Vice Chancellor for approval. You know,

so these are checks and balances. And the procurement system also guides us so that it will not be like “the money is in our account so please can you bring in thousand desks for our students? What we have is old; we need to replace”. We can’t do that. It will have to go through the procurement system; the vice chancellor will have to satisfy himself and if even the vice chancellor approves, then this will go to procurement for people to look at it and ask questions as to whether you really need it. If you convince them that you really need it, then the entity will approve it and then you tender it so the systems are there in using these monies.

A: Okay that is good. Prof, it looks like because you’ve been a Provost, you have been a pro Vice Chancellor; you’ve been a Board Chairman, you know all the processes. That is very good. Prof, you will agree with me that every institution based on its mission and vision demonstrates its commitment to employ people. They don’t just employ anybody anyhow. Do you hire people at the level of the College or the University hires the people for you? (FGG)

B: Two things. When it comes to employment, the statute of the university does not give that power to any Provost. That statute says that all appointments are done by the Vice Chancellor in consultation with Provosts, Deans, and HODs. (FGG) Now, let us take the junior staff and the senior staff, when a department is in need of a junior staff or a senior staff, all the department can do is to notify the registrar of the university that “we are in need of this and that and that.” The registrar will then set the processes in motion to recruit some people and post some to you, according to your need. On the other hand, departments can also send applications they have received to the registrar. The Registrar would then go through it and call the people, interview them and then, they will post some to you. Now, specific to this College is the issue of Course Tutors or Facilitators. Tutors or facilitators, for now, it is the College that receives all applications through HODs to the Provost’s office and then the college will set a date to interview all applicants. Those who qualify are shortlisted and then the list, remember that we are now going back to the statute, once you have interviewed them and shortlisted them, the provost cannot issue appointment letters, be they full-time or part-time. So the list is then sent to the vice chancellor for the vice chancellor to

issue appointment letters to the people you have interviewed and found qualified (FT).

A: That is perfect. So it means that because they are not permanent staff, they don't go through the same criteria (FT).

B: No, they don't go to the university, Departmental interactions and things like that (FT).

A: I think that before it even comes to the HOD, it will start from the regions, because the Regional Resident Tutor will have to declare a vacancy (FT).

B: Exactly!

A: That is very good. So Prof, once they don't go through the criteria for permanent staff, when they falter and you have to discipline them, which criteria of discipline? Do they fall into the university? (FT)

B: When they falter and you have to discipline them, I think it is done at the College level. That is why every face-to-face, we have College staff going round to see and sometimes we also receive reports from the regions concerning particular facilitators. Misconduct, misbehavior, absenteeism: that one is dealt with at the College level. And then if the College thinks that they should dispense of your services, the College will do that and notify the Vice Chancellor. But strictly speaking, where you have to deal with somebody because of something and the nature is a disciplinary nature, it should be done by the Vice Chancellor because the Vice Chancellor is the chief disciplinarian of the entire university. And so whether part time or otherwise, if you have to discipline somebody, the Vice Chancellor has to be notified (FT).

A: But I am sure there aren't many reports.

B: No, we have not encountered that much disciplinary issues.

A: That's very good. Prof, the next issue has to do with ownership and intellectual property rights of the people that write your modules (LG). Elsewhere, they write the modules and then they pay them off and then the university or the college will put them in interactive mode for the students to use and that one doesn't become the person's property again. I don't know how you people go about it.

B: Ours, I must say that we have to work at it so far as intellectual property right is concerned, because yes, we contract people to write it, but when they write the module, they are paid for writing the modules (LG).

A: How much do you pay them? And at what level of the work do you pay them? When they have finished and submitted? (LG)

B: Before they finish; some before they even start, I think some percentage is paid to them and then when they have submitted the final, the remaining is then paid to them (LG).

A: And what happens if someone collects and is not able to deliver the final product? (LG)

B: We then ask you to refund the money but I haven't encountered that. It is not that much. You know, so in certain schools of thought, once you are paid for the work you have done, the final product does not become your own. It is then for the college; the college owns it; so you cannot claim intellectual property rights, because you have been paid for what you did. So even though those who write it have the liberty of using those modules for their promotion that is where the whole thing comes. Because if you say that it is not mine because you have paid me, yet I can use it as mine for promotion, then it is mine. There is something there which we need to resolve and we need to look at it very carefully and resolve it, because I also know that there is something called royalties (LG).

A: Yes, I was going to touch on that. So the person writes the module; you pay the person. Does the person have to collect money, royalty every year, and for how long? (LG)

B: That is the issue I am discussing. You see, it is a much diffused system and we need to discuss the whole thing very and make it very clear. Because if I am collecting royalties, the implication is different. You cannot say it is not mine. Why then are you giving me royalties? So it is still mine. So we need to really sit down and come out with a clear-cut policy that if we don't want you to own it, then this is the amount we will pay you. If you have to own it, this is the amount we will pay you and then you still own it so that nobody can reproduce it without your permission. So we need to actually look at this whole thing more especially now that we want to put it online, because once you put it online, it has open access. So intellectual property right with respect to the module, I think we have still not settled it yet. We need to formulate clear-cut policies (LG).

A: Prof, have you ever had any problem of maybe a module writer taking somebody's work and people coming to worry the college and things like that(LG).

B: I have heard about one.

A: So who was held responsible: the writer or the institution?

B: The writer. The institution cannot be held responsible, because we have contracted you to write (LG).

A: Okay, that is very good. I was going to ask you about publication but along the line, you have said it, that they can use it to publish for their own. Prof, this is the last but one question and I will leave you in peace. You know it is only in Africa that because of power problems and things like that. We tend to go the blended mode where we have face- to- face and little online. But elsewhere, everything is online. At CoDE, do you have learning management systems or do you have other systems that students use, the internet (T). Elsewhere, they said they have e-libraries online and when the writers write the modules, the experts will teach in the studios and then they will have slides, then they will put the slides online for the students. What happens at CoDE? And even your registration and things like that: do you have technical strategies in place?

B: I will say that these are on the drawing board and as for registration, we have made some progress and now, they can register online; they can view their results online. So that one, we have made some progress. The e-library and putting the modules online is where we have not made a lot of progress (T) E-library; I remember, some company, is it Techno or so, donated e-library equipment and it was even installed but the bandwidth, the internet connectivity, was not reliable. That is why the college decided to increase the bandwidth, which we have done, so I believe very soon we would deploy the e-library. And then the module is also something the college has decided to put online. We have not put it online because; one, we realized that some of the modules, in terms of grammar and content, have some problems. And once it goes online, it is worldwide and so we need to refine these documents before we put them online. I know that as part of this, the writers were asked to review the module. It has been a very slow process but I believe when it has been reviewed fully, we may put the thing online. It is not only putting it

online; the college even has plans, as you said, to teach from a studio so that when we go fully online, it would be a virtual classroom for you wherever you are.

A: I was going to ask whether you've thought of removing the face- to- face factor and go online (T).

B: Yes sure. It will be a virtual classroom. The lecturer is broadcasting from the University of Cape Coast and then you are all listening. Wherever you are, you can ask questions. Everybody sees you; the lecturer sees you; so it is a virtual classroom. That is where we want to go (T).

A: Prof, I don't want to put you to test. I was going to ask you whether you have name, you know the name of the very learning management system, or now, you don't have anything? Because elsewhere, they have V-class model; UG has SAKAI learning management system (T).

B: That one, I may not know, because most ones I know, I don't think they are learning management systems. They are just people who manage our data for us. I am not too sure whether these are learning management systems (T).

A: So you don't have any leaning management system. Prof, you've done really well and I am really impressed and grateful. This is the very last question. How do people see your DE program and its products as a whole? I am talking about the philosophical issues of your DE programs (PH). How do people see it?

B: Everything I will tell you; one will be from my perspective, from my interaction with people, because this question, to answer it means that we should have done some assessment out there and then we would know that this is how people view our programs, but we have not done that. So, generally speaking, from what we hear and especially about our programs, I think that generally the public hold our programs in high esteem, because wherever you go and there is a CoDE product, the report about the person is encouraging and so I think we have very good public image so far as our programs are concerned(PH).

A: So based on this, do you get other stakeholders, you have mentioned that GES and other people are on your board, but I am talking about people coming freely because they have good perception about what you are doing and things like that to help you run the program, maybe donating buses(PH).

B: So far, no.

A: Okay, because people think you are self-sufficient or?

B: Maybe. Apart from some of the IT companies, like the one which donated the e-learning (PH).

A: So at least, there is a stakeholder involvement, because GES, some people are on your Board; people have donated, just that it doesn't very often. But the idea is there (PH). Oh okay prof, I think this is the very last question and I want to thank you very much for your patience, your knowledge. You are very knowledgeable at the activities of DE in UCC, because you have been a Provost; you have been a Pro-VC a Board chairman and by your very nature too, I think that you are committed to the success of the students and the college. I am very grateful to you for your time and the knowledge that you have given me. I think the findings of this research will go a long way to help CoDE in doing a lot of things. Thank you very much and have a great day.