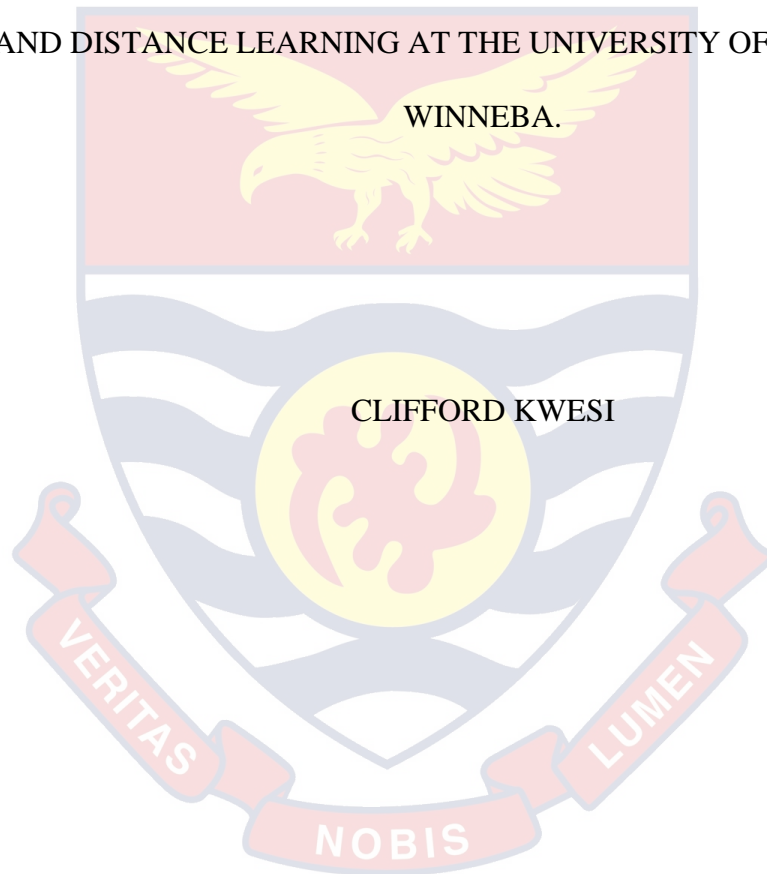


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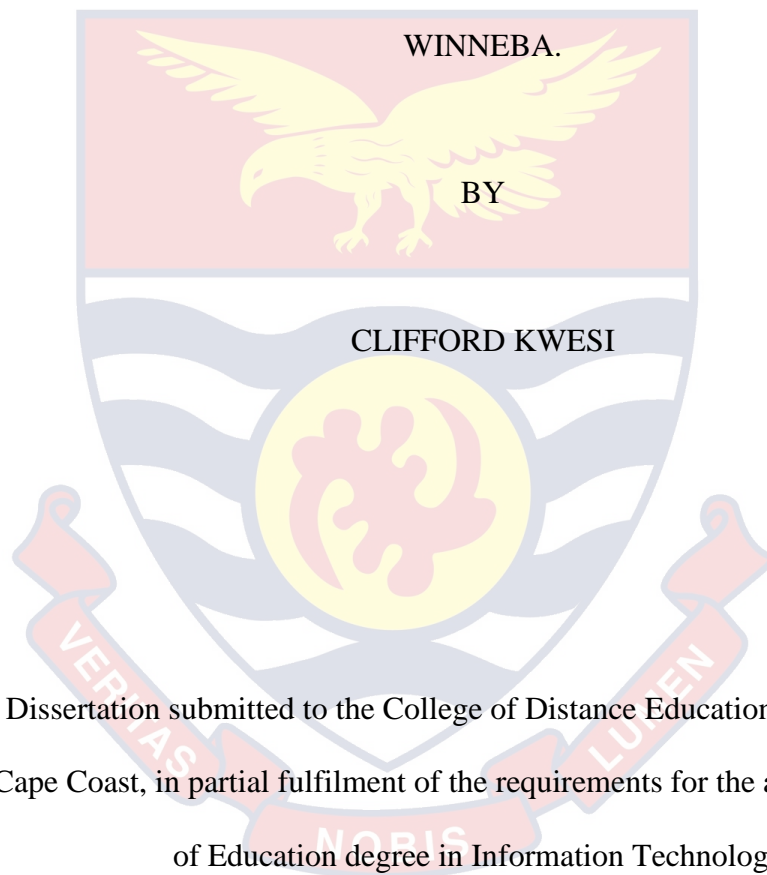
INCREASING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH OPEN
AND DISTANCE LEARNING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION,



2021

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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AND DISTANCE LEARNING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION,



FEBRUARY 2021

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation 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:.....

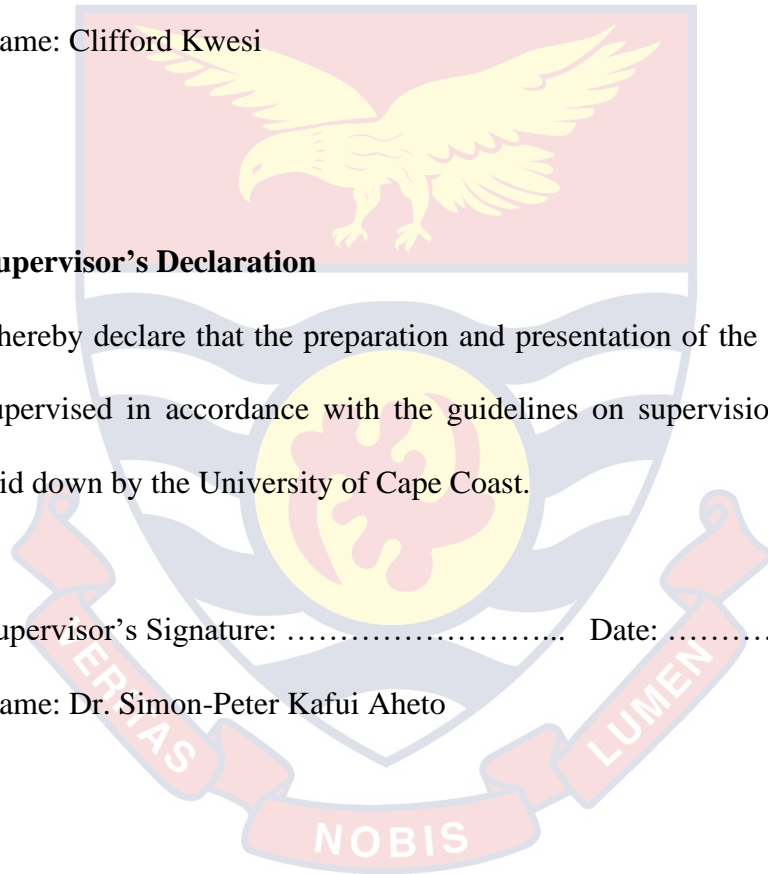
Name: Clifford Kwesi

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature: Date:.....

Name: Dr. Simon-Peter Kafui Aheto



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the increasing access to higher education through open and distance learning at the University of Education, Winneba. The research was conducted using descriptive research design. The target population was drawn from students of the University of Education, Winneba. The population was drawn from all the distance learning campuses of the University of Education, Winneba in the Central Region. The sample size for the study was 225. The study used a non-probability sampling to select the participants. A questionnaire was the main research instrument for the study. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study revealed that modules were the major mode of instruction used for delivery in open and distance learning at the University of Education, Winneba. It was found that the online mode of instruction was preferred to the traditional mode of instruction in the open and distance learning programme. The challenges associated with the delivery of open and distance learning programme were reported as inadequate feedback from tutors/lecturers, inadequate student-support system, inadequate tutorial sessions (face-to-face meetings), and inadequate use of multimedia. Management of the university of education Winneba were advised to replace old computers with new ones to promote efficiency in teaching and learning activities. It was recommended that since students prefer technology for instructional delivery, the university should make available fast internet service for students and lecturers. There should also be online learning management system for both lecturers and students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my utmost appreciation to Dr. Simon-Peter Kafui Aheto, who as my supervisor made contributions to the work, and offered professional guidance, advice, and encouragement towards the success of this research report. I am really grateful. I also acknowledge the lecturers, administrators and students of the University of Education, Winneba who permitted me to conduct this study in their institutions. I also acknowledge all the sources I cited in the work.



DEDICATION

To my beloved mother, Madam Agatha Tandoh.

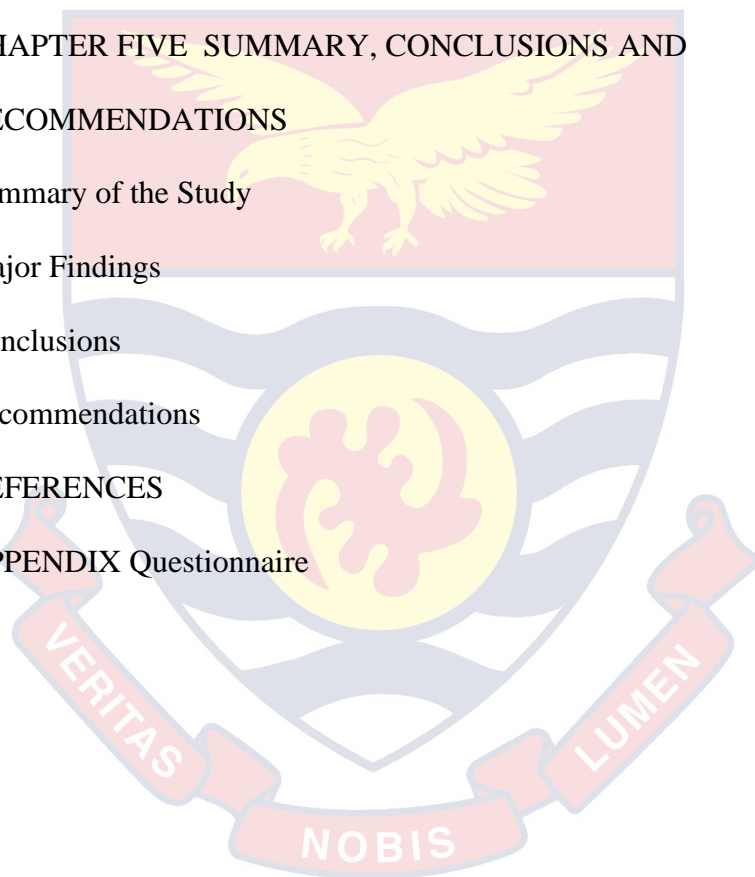


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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Distance learning has grown in previous years due to computers and the Internet. Many universities have expanded their infrastructure and have acquired study centres to attract more students by providing distance learning courses (Itegi, 2015). The challenges of recent education have become enormous and the traditional ways of teaching nowadays are not enough to address the problems. To solve the problems of the masses in the cities and rural areas who want to attain educational excellence, technology must be used in learning and instruction. The use of technology in instruction has been accepted as a viable instrument for teaching and learning activities (Daniel & Mallet, 2008).

Distance learning (DL) is the utilisation of electronic or print communications media to convey educational lessons when learners and teachers are detached in a particular place and/or time period (Ohene & Essuman, 2014). Filipczak (1995), conversely, highlights distance learning rather than education, describing it as “getting people - and often video images of people - into the same electronic space so they can help one another learn or a system and process that connects learners with distributed resources” (p. 111).

Distance learning is the “condition where students are detached, physically, from the entity providing the education, interacting through writing, (by the use of email, letter, computer or fax conferencing, mail; verbally (using video conferencing, audio conferencing, telephone); or in face-

to-face lecture periods” Commonwealth of Learning [COL] (2004, p. 13). It can, therefore, be inferred from the various descriptions that DL is a method employed by educational providers for learners who have the desire to study where and when it is appropriate for them. Thus, students constantly learn in using this educational approach and as such, generally, assist learners who need to accomplish other obligations such as family, community, and work (Ohene & Essuman, 2014). In several years back, audiences who were engaged in distance learning were normally adults pursuing progressive training and education on the job, at home, or in the military. These people, thus, had several tasks and were in physical situations which prevented them from attending a regular educational institution.

Precisely, from the year 2000 till date, universities in Ghana have a challenge of not having the capacity to admit a good percentage of students who apply for placement (Babah, 2011). In the view of Braun and Naami (2019), the universities had constantly turned away students who have good passes due to limited structures to accommodate most of them, turning away students who have good passes due to limited structures to accommodate the huge number of students. Aside from the structures, the cost of training students at the tertiary level has become expensive (Braun & Naami, 2019; Atuahene, 2013). As a solution, the government of Ghana introduced distance learning which has reduced drastically the chunk of monies that the government pushes into tertiary education (Kwapong, 2007).

According to Mensah (2011), the introduction of distance learning in Ghana is also in line with government policy of accessible education to all regardless of where they live. At the onset of distance learning education,

there were a lot of challenges some of which were materials to use and the mode of delivery.

In 1991, Ghanaians saw the new face of distance learning (Kwapong, 2007). The University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba admitted their first batch of students. Because of the limited accommodation on campuses students opt to enroll in DL programmes (Braun & Naami, 2019). According to Kwapong (2007), due to the less rigid form of the DL programme, learners have the liberty to learn at the comfort of their homes.

Technology has made open distance learning possible (Islam & Hassan, 2016). According to Tackie and Larkai (2014) technology in open distance learning has enhanced accessibility. It has led to the creation of forums and learning management systems which offer students the opportunity to ask questions and also download study materials. Despite, the benefits that come with open DL, some students have different preferences for the mode of instruction which serve as a barrier for their acceptance. It is in light of this that this study seeks to examine the ways of increasing accessibility to tertiary education via open and distance learning at the University of Education, Winneba.

Statement of the Problem

Academic institutions offering distance learning programmes in Ghana are engulfed with numerous challenges in the quest of serving students (Mensah, 2011). According to Ohene and Essuman (2014), distance learning are the wildest growing sector of higher education in Ghana. In the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba, distance learning

programmes have the largest student-applicant population (Akrofi, 2010). Distance learning learners who are primarily adults are limited by time owing to work schedules, or even limited by location owing to family or geographic duties (Galusha, 2012).

An exceptional instance in the country is the policy transformation or pressure on civil servants to improving their qualification. It is essential for Distance learning institutions in Ghana to embrace strategies in assisting people to access education in an innovative way. Several authors have suggested the utilisation of technological platforms in promoting effective distance learning (Lim & Hang, 2003; Paloff & Pratt, 2001; Romeao, 2006). It must be emphasized that the utilisation of technology in learning and instruction improves higher-order thinking abilities like cooperating across place and time and disentangling multifaceted problems in real-world (Bottino, 2003; Lim & Hang, 2003; Mason, 2000).

According to Kozma (2005), the technological method of instruction increases the learners' understanding and perception of the universe. Consequently, the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) can prepare the labour force for the information world and the new international economy. ICT is very important when it comes to teaching and learning since it empowers learners and teachers, making momentous contributions to learning and achievement (Willis & Mehlinger, 1996). The technological change process has serious implications for the kind of human resource that are produced. It is therefore important for institutions of today especially those institutions who offer DL programmes to adopt these technologies.

It has been earlier indicated that universities in Ghana offering DL are infringed with numerous challenges of serving the students who have been admitted to such universities (Mensah, 2011). It appears that these universities do not have clear policy directions for the delivery of the distance education programmes (Ohene & Essuman, 2014). The researcher's interaction with some staff and students at the distance education department disclosed that some students and lecturers lacked adequate skills to deliver lessons despite the initial training they had from the distance education department of the university. Another interview with the students revealed that the department lacks permanent information technology (IT) staff to support students and lecturers. Thus, lecturers are not able to develop online courses on time and late submission of assignments by students and learning materials to students among others were enumerated by the students as some of the hindrances militating against the open and DL programmes. ICT which is the backbone of open DL has challenges in almost all the universities that run DL institutions in Ghana encounter these issues. With all these challenges, this research, therefore, seeks to investigate the access to higher education through open and DL at the University of Education, Winneba.

Assumptions

The study was directed by the assumptions below:

1. The mode of delivery of open distance learning programmes in any institution determines the level of access to people.
2. Learners of open distance learning programmes would prefer the mode of instruction which best suits their learning.

3. The universities in Ghana would have the ability to provide open distance learning programmes to the majority who do not get access to residential programmes thus increase access if there are few challenges to deal with.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the access to higher education through open and distance learning at the University of Education, Winneba.

Objectives of the Study

1. Identify the modes of delivering open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.
2. Find out the students' preferences of the mode of instruction on the open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.
3. Find out the challenges associated with the delivery of open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.
4. Identify possible solutions to address the challenges confronting open distance learning students of the University of Education, Winneba.

Research Questions

This study was carried out to offer information on the questions below:

1. What are the modes of delivering open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba?
2. What are students' preferences of the mode of instruction on the open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba?

3. What are the challenges associated with the delivery of open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba?
4. What solutions can address challenges confronting ODL students of the University of Education, Winneba?

Significance of the Study

This research will inform policy directions of the University Of Education, Winneba and other universities offering distance education in Ghana. The result of this study will inform the formulation of suitable policies concerning the implementation of distance learning. Assessing the challenges encountered by DL learners will help stakeholders like lecturers and management to adopt novel strategies for improving and making open and distance learning more efficient and effective.

The outcome of this study would result in an indepth understanding of the state of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Ghana. It would also enhance the evaluation of the nation's higher education systems and the economic realities related to ODL. The results of the study would serve students and lecturers as a motivational tool on the use of technology on ODL programme and also add literature to the body of learning. Finally, the findings of the study would enable the possibilities of collaboration across universities throughout the country.

Delimitations of the Study

The study was restricted to a public university with major components of open and distance learning in Ghana. Particularly, the study was carried out at the University of Education, Winneba. The Central Regional centres were used. The participants were limited to students, lecturers, centre coordinators

and administrators. Although the issue under investigation is multifaceted, the scope focused on: (a) the modes of delivering open distance learning programme, (b) students' preferences of the method of instruction on the open distance learning programme, (c) the challenges associated with delivery of open distance learning programme and (d) the likely resolutions to address the hindrances threatening ODL learners.

Limitations of the Study

The study solicited for the views of students, lecturers, centre coordinators and administrators. This view can be erroneous and this can affect the validity of the findings. This can stem from the self-reported nature of the questionnaire and interview schedules used. Thus, respondents who provide false information cannot be easily traced and removed from the analysis. However, respondents were assured of confidentiality and informed consent was taken to ensure that respondents provided accurate and objective data.

Again, several tertiary institutions run DL programmes, however, this study was carried out at the University of Education, Winneba. Only one institution may not be a representative sample of all the institutions running the distance learning programme.

Definition of Terms

1. **Open Learning** It is used to depict learning conditions in which students have the tractability to select from a diversity of opportunities associated with place, time, access modes, instructional methods, and other issues associated with the learning processes. In this study, open

learning refers to how distance education students select their place and time for learning.

2. **Distance learning:** This is a manner in which the delivery of instruction and education, frequently on a one-to-one basis, to learners who are physically absent from campus. In this study, distance learning occurs when students learn on their own without their presence of a tutor.
3. **Open and distance learning:** This involves acquiring university education via intermediated instruction and information, incorporating all technologies and other forms of distance learning. In this study, open and distance learning means learning occurring at different places disconnected by space and time.
4. **Face to Face Interaction :** When university instruction is delivered with the tutor present in a classroom setting. In this study, the face to face interaction means students meet lecturers on campus to discuss their challenges with them on campus or at a destined centre.

Organisation of the Rest of the Study

The research report is organised into five chapters. Chapter one highlights the introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives of the study, scope/limitations of the study, theoretical framework, significance of the study and description of chapters. Chapter Two looked at the literature review (empirical and theoretical review). The third chapter highlighted the research methodology and procedures used for the research. It discusses the design, the sample and sampling procedures, data collection and analysis.

Chapter four discussed the findings or results of the study. This is done with reference to the research questions and the objectives of the study. The final chapter gives the summary of the findings of the study, conclusions and recommendations which are aimed at helping to address the ways to increase accessibility to tertiary education in Ghanaian universities.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the review of literature related to ODL. The literature review contains empirical and theoretical frameworks. The empirical review focused on the usefulness of open and distance learning, precisely works done by other scholars in this subject area. The theoretical review of the study will be on theories that help explain ways of why access to higher education is on the rise through ODL. Finally, this chapter will also capture the research gap. The literature review covers the following principal areas:

1. Modes of delivering open distance learning programmes
2. Students' preferred mode of instruction on open distance learning
3. Challenges associated with the delivery of open distance learning
4. Theories and philosophies of open and distance learning

Modes of Delivering Open Distance Learning

Distance learning is the provision of teaching and learning at a distance from a physical university. DL is often referred to as “e-learning, technology supported education, online education, virtual education, cyber education, hybrid education, distributed learning, Web/Internet education” (Belanger & Jordon, 2000, p. 6). DL is principally a kind of teaching and learning where the student and teacher are disconnected by space or time, or both (Poley, 2000).

Distance learning according to the US Department of Education is "the instruction delivery to people located at one or more places over a distance ". In support Biao (2012) define DL as “process whereby a person or

organisation send information in an educative manner with the aim of aiding a different person or group of people to learn at a distance” p.31.

In distance learning, lecturers, students, and resource are separated spatially and students have to make time to meet lecturers online or on desinated places. According to Eastmond (2010), open distance learning is the utilization of printing media to transmit instructions to learners. To support the definitions stated by other researchers, Mnyanyi and Mbvette (2009) opined that, “ODL is a process of learning in which the teacher and the learner are separated in time and space” (p2).

The story of open DL started way back in the 1800s’ where correspondence was the first way it was executed. According to Anderson and Simpson (2000) before 1800s first-generation distance learning had existed over a hundred years. They said a mixture of printing press technology and postal services made correspondence education widely available. Correspondence education was a one-way communication between students who work independently and the faculty they belong to. Ten years after, Germany, Australia, the Soviet Union, Japan and Canada followed suit in the correspondence education. A two way communication between students and their lecturers is needed to ensure successful open distance learning.

An early forerunner of DL within the United States became William Rainey Harper in the 1856’s to 1906’s. He helped set up the handiest university-degree correspondence guides via mail at the same time as he changed into serving as the first president of the University of Chicago. Rainey, instituted correspondence education at the University of Chicago growing the world's first university to put in force-distance learning

application. E-mail correspondence are also very important in open distance learning.

Rural areas students formed the core of people who enrolled in corresponding education. This form of education attained its popularity and highest level after the Second World War. Most of these corresponding educations were mounted as an extension of universities through their continuing education unit. First and second-generation computing was used in the delivery of open distance learning. Predominantly print, radio, audiocassettes, television, videocassettes, fax, and television were used for instructional delivery.

Mixed media approach to distance learning was a significant breakthrough in the quest to make education available at the doorsteps of rural folks and highly distance displaced people who not through this means cannot access quality education. With this mixed approach, students were mailed with text and audio-visual materials. They also received tutoring through radio and television broadcasting.

In the quest to make DL available Walden University instituted a fully distance learning which employed multiple technologies such as video conferencing, two-way interactive communication and web-based media introduction. Modification of DL technologies increases opportunities for students to communicate among themselves and also communicate to the faculties they belong (Sherron & Boettcher, 1997).

The advent has changed the face of distance learning, especially how universities deliver instructions. According to Bower and Hardy (2004), the internet enables asynchronous and synchronous ways of delivering

instructions to students. Kudryavtseva (2014) stated that the Internet is “one of the facilities necessary for the effective delivery of lessons in open distance learning programmes (p .1217).

Students Preferred Mode of Instruction on Open Distance Learning

A lot of research have revealed that reading on screen is growing in popularity, especially for specific studying purposes (Ackerman & Goldsmith, 2011; Baron, 2015; Hermena, Sheen, AlJassmi, AlFalasi, AlMatroushi & Jordan, 2017). Baron (2015) stated that a recent survey showed that a lot of students read news on electronic devices. He further revealed that students read on electronic screen before a next day examination. Factual reading seems to be an extra popular display screen-primarily based hobby than analysing for pride and as Liu (2005) indicates screen-based reading behaviour is characterised via browsing and scanning, keyword spotting and onetime/non-linear analysing.

Similarly, inside the context of university training, it is recognised that students use e-books more in their studies (Wexelbaum & Parault, 2004). Ownership and usage of e-books are high amongst college students (Van der Velde & Ernst, 2009). In a white paper published by Springer (2008), seventy-three percent of respondents pronounced having used e-books, and most of the people additionally said that they used them on a weekly basis. However, some research display that paper-primarily based analyzing and substances are nonetheless substantially valued with the aid of students. One current observes, finished by way of Davidovitch (2017), related to 252 student respondents from Ariel University in Russia, determined that scholars from each of the academic faculties examined favoured to examine revealed

substances in preference to study from a display screen. This support the findings of Liu and Stork (2000) who suggest that paper-based totally substances are nevertheless an important instructional useful resource.

It also seems that the sort of studying students engage in through a display screen medium differs from the type of analysing robotically engaged in at the same time as reading from paper resources. A study carried out by Nicholas et al. (2008) found out that respondents did now not spend a sustained amount of time on complete-text articles. Rather, students who read articles on screens lasted much less than three minutes, which cautioned very quick and cursory viewing of articles. Instead of using reading abilities wished for sustained, unique reading, Nicholas et al. (2008) suggested that respondents tended to skim and move from supply to source via implementing “horizontal information looking for” (p. 189) and “energy browsing” (p. 196) techniques. This conduct mirrors on-line analysing behaviour from inside the wider populace, wherein get entry to to the Internet and other programmes permit people the opportunity to do multitask at the same time and switch rapidly between screens and programmes (Levine, Waite & Bowman, 2012).

Prospects of Open Distance Learning

To the learner ODL means more open access and thereby a wider range of opportunities for learning and qualification. The barriers that may be overcome by DL include not only geographical distance, but also other confining circumstances, such as personal constraints, cultural and social barriers and lack of educational infrastructure (UNESCO, 1995e). It is often cheaper to the student as an alternative to pursuing a course through conventional methods (Ljosa, 1992). According to Yenbamrung (1993), it is

important that education and training may be combined with work, since many people cannot afford to leave their work. Open learning also means a more learner-centred approach, allowing greater flexibility and choice of content as well as organisation of the learning programme (UNESCO, 1995e).

For students, open and DL has several advantages. It offers the possibility of organising learning and professional development in the workplace, which is often more flexible and saves costs of travel, subsistence etc. The use of distance learning often puts both the firm and employees in a position of co-investment (of money and time) in order to pursue common goals, based on shared values and culture (Visser, 1994). It increases productivity and supports the development of communication and other work-related skills. With sufficient numbers of employees being trained, open and distance learning is usually cost effective. Other advantages for the employer include the increased availability of the employee during the course of the training programme and the portability of training programmes and processes (Ljosa, 1992).

Today there is an increasing recognition of the place and role of open and distance learning as an element in any national system of education and training. Some of the potential roles are seen as: balancing inequalities between age groups, extending geographical access to education, dealing with educational campaigns and regular education for large audiences, providing speedy and efficient training for key target groups, providing education for otherwise neglected populations, expanding the capacity for education in new and multidisciplinary subject areas, offering the combination of education with work and family life, developing multiple competencies through recurrent and

continuing education, enhancing the international dimension of educational experience, and improving the quality of existing education services (Ljosa, 1992).

Challenges associated with the delivery of Open Distance Learning

There are a number of limitations in teaching and studying the procedure of distance schooling. According to Galusha mentioned in Dabaj (2011) research has shown that the shortfalls of distance learning fall into such groups as cost, pupil aid and services, motivators, commentaries and trainer contact, inexperienced trainers, alienation and inadequate training. Again another key shortfall is the course content used. Consequently, in order to establish an effective DL, there is a need for diagnosing all boundaries and take care of them. Lehman (1998) revealed the limitations to DL by clarifying that teachers have associated obstacles as logistical, philosophical, administrative, technological [comprising of ergonomic issues, prevailing telecommunication systems and absence of funds for different devices]; and the pupil associated obstacles as absence of interaction (i.e. Feedback) with tutor and schoolmates, lack of support offerings and absence of training in technical matters. According to Lehman (1998), a number of students prefer conventional school room education since their life style on campus is assured.

Insufficient money to cowl the expenses of the DL constitutes yet different aspects of economic barrier and the situational barrier. The level of one's income, availability of online resources and the preference to enhance one's self for a better destiny may determine the urge to head for a mortgage to chase higher education (Baron, 2015). Institutional obstacles are those challenges that organisational set-up brings forth (Romeao, 2006). These

limitations may be non-physical and physical. Few of the physical challenges include nearness to study room, street net-work and different academic facilities like the library (Saba, 2005). According to Baron (2015), few of the non-physical barriers include severe admission necessities, high tuition and paying mode of these costs. Other limits, which come beneath this class, are publications that not interesting, negative library centres, lacking textual content-books and terrible organisation of classes and exam are also other challenges (Cross, 1981).

Feed back in learning is an important aspect of education. Keegan (1986) and Tinto (1975) trust that the lack of remarks on performance or exposure with instructors is also an obstacle to distance students. From the perspective of Keegan (1986), the hyperlink that exists between the instructor and the student shows an important relation in the transaction of teaching-learning and that the relationship that's damaged by distance, need to in one manner or the other be restored. This precise obstacle generates the hassle of assessment for the student. It is recommended that the challenge generated via the lack of a trainer will be lessened through technological strategies. Braimoh and Osiki (2008) however show concern regarding this technique of restoring the teaching-learning transaction owing to the little enhancement of the ICT section in Africa. It is likewise debated that ICT utilisation in distance schooling comes with several problems because of uneven accessibility to computers and the internet and most importantly the unstable power supply.

Students who sign up in DL programmes do that for convenience sake (Kwapong, 2007). They are both time bond attributable to work or tour schedules or place-bound due to geographical or family duties. Student

inspiration has an effect on attrition and completion rates, regardless of organisational setting. Those that motivate grown-up distance students frequently vary from the ordinary traditional students. Knowles (1980) in providing an explanation for the benefits of knowing the student, trusts that student's behaviour is predisposed by a mix of the needs of the student in addition to the student's personal and situational features. Discovering these features is a very important factor for planning distance learning courseware and techniques. More significantly, if the individuals are well understood, it may push programme planning and policy formation, factors which can be essential to participation and fulfilment in DL.

In the developmental-level orientation of grown-up life, Knox's (2012) highlighted the importance of understanding a person's contextual scenario, that is, has confidence in their own family, network roles and work; physical circumstance; persona; and interests on earning all influence the person's capability and readiness to take part in adult training. To complicate the problem more, discouragement to taking part is exasperated by way of a potential scholar's belief of the value of his issues. Put differently, "deterrents" is a multidimensional idea. Not a single element seems to be the source of non-participation; yet, individual characteristics of students and experiences in life seems to be the cause of enormous influence on participation (Kerka, 1986).

A 1984 survey of tele-route members discovered that approximately two-thirds were women, and roughly half of the scholars were around the ages of thirty. More than thirty students revealed that they have one dependent while almost two-third revealed that they are married. According to Sheets

(1986), eighty percentage have been hired, and over 50 percent of these had been running full-time while pursuing their studies. According to Wood (1996), records also appear to confirm those statistics. More than 70 percent of graduates who use the distance mode of education are employed full time. This reveals that most people that utilise the distance mode of education are employed while schooling.

Challenges met by the student are put into numerous specific groupings like expenses and motivation, comments and trainer contact, alienation, learners support and offerings and isolation, loss of know-how, and training. According to Knapper (1998), students that use the distance mode of education, just like conventional college students, are more prospective to have insecurities towards learning. The insecurities of distance students are from either the student's behaviour or issues from the school like monetary lifestyles, lack of assistance from employers and alleged insignificance in their research. Sweet (1986) stated that those troubles regularly leads to greater dropout rates among the distance students compared to regular college students.

Another major concern for the student using the distance mode of education is the alleged absence of contact or feedback from lecturer. The learners may hassle with self-assessment on account that there is no day-to-day or weekly direct contact with instructors. Keegan (1986) was of the view that the distance separating students from their tutors, gets rid of the vital link of communication that bond students to their instructors. The relation needs to be re-established through the obvious effort of organisational so that the transaction of teaching and learning can be reintegrated (Tinto as stated in

Keegan, 1986). Keegan argued that learners that fail to acquire satisfactory reintegration procedures, for example, digital or smartphone communication may be less probably to enjoy whole instructional and social integration into organisational lifestyles. Subsequently, students as such would have a high tendency of dropping out (Sheets, 1992).

It is possible to instigate such through technological strategies like conferencing, e-mails and can be incorporated into the conveyance of the direction to provide the interaction that is missed. Those technologies are basically asynchronous due to the fact they retain to put the student in place of establishing his or her personal work time, a vital achievement factor for the students using distance mode of education. Above all for distance mode of education, in which the learner is challenged with the dearth of informal contact with the trainer and their colleagues, it is crucial that the learners get a quick response in any organisational placing. For the students who stay outside urban places, they may have accessibility already to dependable computers, postal mail and telecommunications. The frustrations due to distress with a verbal exchange between learners and educational organisation are elements of which planners of distance schooling have to be nicely aware of (Wood, 1996).

Another challenge is the isolation and alienation feelings mentioned by distance learners. Every student wishes to be among the whole school community, as well, in reality, some of a correspondence programmes. For several regular students, this is a key factor in their social behaviour. That distance part of DL scraps off a lot of the socio-interactive learning settings. Institutions can lessen this hassle through the provision of personal association

between a learner and the organisation. Using instructors that engage in communication either through phones or mail is a key approach of solving this challenge. Students are of the belief that a crucial element to help them get the most out of a course and attain a credit score is having a good instructor (Meacham & Evans, 1989). Geographic isolation has been established as a key problem for students that use the distance mode of education (Meacham & Evans, 1989).

The challenges experienced by the faculty include staff with inadequate training in course development, technology and inadequate supporting systems for distance studying and insufficient faculty selection for distance learning programmes. Sometimes the course-work for distance education and regular students are similar but most often they vary. Regarding the design of educational materials for distance learners, there may be a number of straightforward approaches. This is likely to cause problems to tutors who have access already to study material for traditional classes. Computers, communications software, video facilities, and others, pose demanding situations and frustrations (Dabaj, 2011). It is crucial for faculty staff to know how to operate such technologies if they are to educate distance education students on how use technologies in learning. For successful education through distance mode, it is imperative for training students and personnel, in particular to know how to address technical issues in relation to their studies (Dabaj, 2011).

Tutors and learners issues constitute the human elements of distance learning. Institutional challenges specifically, technological and facility challenges, also pose problems. Instructors who teach courses at distance

schools need administrative and organisational help from the institutions to be able to resolve students problems. Organisational leaders ought to be dedicated to distance education courses or programmes. Marris (2000) support this when he said, “without this funding, DL is a danger of turning into a peripheral movement, without the dedication from or importance to the institutional agency.” (p. 12). Distance schooling or learning through immediate co-operative audio-visible interaction systems along with video communication comes with an extra couple of challenges to be taken into consideration by the instructor and efficient models for its transfer must be recognized (Sweet, 1986).

A number of students especially those with no access to computer systems and modems may have a problem to communicate with their instructors. Absence of suitable hardware and the following fee barrier of acquiring the computer system may pose undue complication on some distant students. Nevertheless, implementation of other infrastructures for communication (cellphone, mail, and so forth) may aid to solve this obstacle. Educational institutions ought to develop distance learning course material or make payment for a hefty charge to reserve materials from distributors for a few institutions, the funding in production technology can be well worth the fee. However, a widespread investment is essential for manufacturing centres, equipment and employees to produce videotapes (Sweet, 1986).

Utilising the internet instead can solve some of this problem but it shows extra challenges in making sure all students have enough access to the internet. The internet is demonstrating to be an efficient transfer medium that permits communication of knowledge at the convenience of the students. In

reality, it has the ability, to alter the character of DL, but it comes with its own challenges (Sweet, 1986). Some are with worry that the existing global telecommunications community is not well prepared to deal with the quick expansion of the internet. It is dangerous to rely completely on the net for communications transmission and teaching of coursework. Also, the usage of internet can reduce the quality of relations between and among learners and the staffs. Owing to the alleged unrecognizability created by the net, insulting activities can become a problem: but, those troubles may be intermediated with appropriate regulation and care.

The challenge facing most modern technology is complying with authorities' policies. The content of the courses is also possible to be limited due to the requirements inside the decency segment of the 1996 Telecommunications Act (Oaks, 1996). This phase pronounces materials deemed appropriate for the internet. Some programmes like human sexuality or anthropology, will not be appropriate for the internet. Institutions responsible for distance learning ought to be privy to, and plan for, regulatory problems if the net is utilised for presenting course context. Koomson (1988) observes that with additional staff and well-designed support service package for distance learner, the attrition rate can be minimized. Such support services for distance education students result in their drop out of the programmes. Paramount among the host of their dilemmas is how to combine their classroom work with their studies so that one is not sacrificed for the other (Koomson, 1988). He suggests a nationally-designed financial support package for teachers on distance learning programmes. Koomson (1988) argues that if students on conventional programmes in the universities in

Ghana are granted Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) loans to support their education, then it is only logical that distance learners are supported with similar schemes (Galusha, 1997).

Theory and Philosophies of Open and Distance Learning

To tie this study to its theoretical perspective, the theory of interaction and communication was looked at. It is a theory that explains a two-way interactive communication. According to Holmberg (1989), Simonson, Schlosser and Hanson (1999) theory of interaction and communication is related to the theory of independence and autonomy. Universities supporting students through communication is very good. According to Thorpe (1994) and Hope (2006) universities ensure communication between learners through learner support services. Knowles (1975) supported the theory of interactivity by saying that communication ensures collaboration, trust, mutual respect and openness.

In summary, the theories of autonomy and independence and the theory of interaction and communication are relevant to this study because they accentuate the need for learner support services.

The ODL has the main purpose of making quality education accessible to the masses. These universities have to promote policy, quality and research in distance learning to improve accessibility to training and education. A breakthrough in DL in Africa was initiated at the University of South Africa (UNISA), the pioneer of distance learning in the sub-region according to Biao (2012).

Today, UNISA enrolls over 300,000 students who can be found worldwide. Before the breakthrough, Africans enrolled in distance learning at

universities in Europe and North America. ODL was sought for in Nigerian universities because of the 1.5 million youths that frequently make the grade to benefit from education at the tertiary level, they could only take 15 percent (Ambe-Uva, 2007). As a result, the nation resorted to the establishment of more study areas in Lagos, Borno Adamawa, and Kano States to cater for the seeming huge population of youth who were tasty for learning. Zimbabwe was not left in the open distance insurgency. They drew funding from foreign donors to establish learning centres. These centres were mainly run by the University of Zimbabwe which enjoyed massive DL between 1993 and 1999.

Supporting DL in Africa is something the Europeans have been giving to the African continent as a sign of help (Poley, 2000). The commonwealth of learning has been helping institutions achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of DL in Africa. DL is sought after in Africa to help bridge the gap between rural and urban areas in terms of education. Despite the long start of distance learning in Africa, it is still correspondence, text and print material based. According to (Association for the Development of Education in Africa, 1999) some universities have now started to explore internet and video conferencing to deliver instruction.

Total review of literature on ODL unravel the following as gaps in distance learning: Lack of student training, especially regarding technical issues is a major problem to distance learners. Several grown up learners are very less competent in using computer systems and the net. Using digital medium in distance mode of education can unintentionally take out learners who lack computer skills or writing talents. This skill is a prerequisite if there is a need to use computer technology for teaching and learning. Using this

information is going to be problematic to few non-technical learners. They have to gain knowledge of the way to manage their study time as well as the materials provided. If distance students are taking subjects that needs knowledge about ICT, then those students need to be provided with at least, the basics of running the machine of preference of the distance-taught programme. If education by the distance mode will be fruitful, technical limitations must be addressed.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature review dealt with the following summarized points: the review examined the concept of DL with its characteristics where authorities such as commonwealth of learning (COL, 2004). Moore and Kearsly (1996) and Keegan (1990) provide a comprehensive description and characteristics of ODL.

The study also reviewed the prospects of distance learning, barriers to learning in DL, where the major problems addressed were: student related problems, faculty related problems and organisational related problems.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the increasing access to higher education through ODL at the University of Education, Winneba. This chapter outlines the methods used in the research to collect data for the study. Basically, it presents information on how the research was undertaken, which includes the research design and sources of data, sampling technique, data collection and management.

Research Design

The research was conducted using a descriptive research design which was quantitative in nature. The rationale for the research design was to try to describe, analyse and interpret strategies to increase accessibility to tertiary education through ODL and challenges learners encounter in the DL in Ghanaian Universities especially University of Education, Winneba. In practice, the descriptive design encompasses theoretical conventions guiding the trends in the collection as well as data analysis. Its fundamental foundation is that the utilisation of a quantitative procedures offers an enhanced appreciation of the research problem (Creswell & Plano, 2007).

Descriptive approach research offers strengths that counterbalance the feebleness of quantitative research. This controversy goes that quantitative studies alone are weak in understanding the setting or context in which people behave. Additionally, quantitative investigators are in the background, and their subjective personal biases and explanations are rarely discussed. The study makes up for these flaws. It is worthy to note that the research is

understood as limited due to personal subjective interpretations provided by the researcher, the resultant bias fashioned by this, and the trouble of generalising results to a large group due to the limited number of respondents studied (Jick & Benz, 2009).

In this study, descriptive research approach was used to assist the investigator to get information on ways to increase accessibility to tertiary education via ODL and to address the research questions in an in-depth manner. This was to help the researcher to achieve a deeper understanding of the respondent's world and present a more realistic view of the world of the ODL (Sarantakos, 2003). As a descriptive study, participants were provided with the chance of responding to questions more extravagantly. It also offered data associated with human experiences concerning the phenomenon under investigation.

Since the aim of the study was to examine the ways of increasing accessibility to tertiary education via ODL, doing descriptive research could give a more satisfying result. This was due to the fact that descriptive research deals with many people (respondents). Also, descriptive could help the researcher to find answers to the research questions and was appropriate for capturing the social context of people's ideas (Booth, Ainscow & Dyson, 1998).

Population of the Study

Population is defined as all members of a defined category of elements such as people, events or individuals' items of interest under consideration in a study (Given, 2008). Rubin and Babbie (2001) explained the population as the accumulation of elements from which the sample is essentially selected. From

the viewpoint of De’Vos (2002), the population for the study set certain boundaries on the elements that are considered. According to De’Vos (2002), the population includes persons in the universe who have explicit features. Therefore, the individual units of analysis that are selected signify the total study population towards which the findings will be generalised. The population for a study, therefore, is that group (usually of people) about whom we want to draw conclusions (Babbie, 2007).

The target population was drawn from students, lecturers, centre coordinators and administrators of the Central Region study centres of the University of Education, Winneba. The population was drawn from all the DL campuses of the University of Education, Winneba in the Central Region. The total population was 1887. The population of the students was 1800, 130 lecturers, 5 study centres coordinators and 9 administrators.

Table 1: Population Distribution

Study centre	No. of Coordinators	No. of students	No. of Administrators	No. of lecturers
Assin Fosu	1	359	1	30
Cape Coast	1	450	2	35
Kasoa	1	340	2	25
Winneba	2	700	4	40
Total	5	1800	9	130

Source: Students Record Section, 2020.

Sampling Procedures

The sample size for the study was 225. The decision to use a sample size of 225 is supported by Fentim (2014) who revealed that for a large

population and small a sample of 10% and 20% is enough for generalisation in a study. Hence 20% of lecturers and 10% of students were selected for the study.

Table 2 shows the distribution of the sample size selected for the study.

Table 2: Sample Size Distribution

Study Centre	No. of Coordinators	No. of students	No. of Administrators	No. of lecturers
Assin Fosu	1	36	1	6
Cape Coast	1	45	2	7
Kasoa	1	34	2	5
Winneba	2	70	4	8
Total	5	185	9	26

After making a decision on the sample, researchers try as much as possible to get a sample that is representative of the population in interest that means they prefer random sampling. According to Sidhu (2003) sampling is the procedure for selecting a representative unit from a population. Similarly, Cohen and Maninon (1994) explain that in sampling, the researcher endeavours to gather information from small group or subsets of the population in a manner that the knowledge obtained is representative of the entire population.

The study used a non-probability sampling. The non-probability method used was purposive sampling. According to Ross (2000), purposive sampling have explicit characteristics of interest that address the purpose of a specific research problem under study. On the other hand, Morgan (2008)

explains that in random sampling, each source of data in the population has an equivalent chance of being selected in the study. Because random samples are likelihood samples, this generates the opportunity for generalisation to a larger population, but this generalising power is not absolute.

Purposive sampling was used because the study focused only on the institution with major components ODL, namely the University of Education, Winneba. Purposive sampling was also used in selecting lecturers in open and distance learning programmes because they are directly involved in the provision of ODL at the UEW and are more familiar with the challenges learners encounter in the delivery of ODL and are consequently in a position to recommend areas that need improvement.

Data Collection Instrument

The questionnaire was the main research instrument for the study. A questionnaire is a document consisting of a list of questions or statements relating to the aims of the study, and research questions to be verified and answered, to which the respondent is required to respond to. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions (or other types of prompts) for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (Given, 2008).

Questionnaire assists in effectively gathering data from population. For example, a questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument because similar studies by Kudryavtseva (2014), Ekwunife-Orakwue and Teng (2014), Al-Arimi (2014), and Kritpracha, Kaosaiyaporn and Atisabda (2015) successfully used a similar instrument for data gathering. The questions on the questionnaire direct and reflect the objectives of the research.

Questionnaires were suitable for collecting data from a large number of students registered in open and distance learning and were capable of providing an accumulation of data (Walker, 2005). Questionnaires also clarify the purpose of the study and give meaning to items that may not be clear (Best & Kahn, 2002). The researcher used a questionnaire for both students and teachers because they all looked at the same issue. The questionnaire had both open-ended and closed-ended questions.

The questionnaire was structured to seek information on: the modes of delivery instruction in open and distance learning, the type of technology used in reaching students, the challenges they face in the provision of the programmes through open and distance learning, and their suggestion on how the challenges could be solved. Most of the items were closed-ended Likert-scale type. This type of questionnaire has been found to be the most suitable type of instrument for the measurement of attitudes and perceptions. This is because it enables respondents to indicate the degree of their belief in a given statement (Best & Khan, 2002). The few open-ended questionnaires which were used were expected to offer the respondents an opportunity to express their opinions on challenges facing students pursuing DL at the tertiary level. Though the questionnaire was the main instrument for the study interviews were used to solicit data or information from the administrators and centre coordinators. This instrument was structured to capture information on: the policy guideline for ODL; the facilities used in ODL; adequacy of funds for ODL; the challenges the institutions encounter in the provision of the programmes; and solution to address the challenges.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection stage took a form of fieldwork, which was to collect primary data on ways of increasing access to higher education through open and distance learning at the Institute of Distance and e-learning Department of the University of Education, Winneba. However, questionnaires were used as the main data collection instrument.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity address issues concerning the quality of the data and appropriateness of the methods used in carrying out a research project. Following Guba and Lincoln (1994) cited in Trochim (2006), however, modified interpretations for the framework of reliability and validity were preferred due to the descriptive approach used for the study. Internal validity involved establishing that the results of the research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research (Trochim, 2006). This is because the purpose of the interviews conducted was to understand issues concerning ways of increasing accessibility to tertiary education and are therefore the only ones who can legitimately judge the credibility of the results. The major concern of the researcher at this stage was how confident he could be in his observations, interpretations and conclusions (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2002).

Pre-Testing of the Instruments

The reliability of the questionnaires guide was ascertained through a pre-test of students from the College of Distance learning, University of Cape Coast. The pre-testing of the instrument was carried out to ensure that the instrument was capable of reliably collecting valid data. In all, twenty-five

students, two lecturers, one administrator, and one coordinator were selected and the questionnaire was administered to them. This was purposely conducted in order to help find out the weaknesses and problems with the instrument. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient for the two parts of the questionnaire stood as .718, 0.72, 0.75 and .709 respectively. The pre-test revealed some ambiguities and repetitions in the statements (Danielson, 1999). The researcher made modifications to come out with an efficient and reliable instrument for collecting data.

Data Processing and Analysis

Bodgan and Biklen (1982) have argued that analysis in data involves working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned and deciding what to tell others.

Data were analysed quantitatively. Before the analysis, data collected were edited and then coded. The questionnaires utilised a four-point likert scale. The ratings on the four-point likert scale were strongly agree, agree disagree and strongly disagree. This four-point likert scale was used because it was appropriate and convenient for this population and sample size. The questionnaires were checked to determine whether they were complete and that the sample collected was acceptable. After going through the questionnaires collected from respondents, responses from the questionnaires were arranged and grouped according to individual research questions and were analysed using the version 22 of Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS). After all, items have been carefully and dully entered into the SPSS

Programme and it was used to extract frequency (N), and percentages for the discussion.

Summary of the Chapter

The research was conducted using descriptive research design. The rationale for the research design was to try to describe, analyse and interpret strategies to increase accessibility to tertiary education via open and distance learning and challenges learners encounter in the DL in Ghanaian Universities especially University of Education, Winneba. The target population was drawn from students and lecturers of the University of Education, Winneba. The population was drawn from all the DL campuses of University of Education, Winneba in the Central Region. The total population was 1887. The population of the students was 1800, 75 lecturers, 5 study centres coordinators and 8 administrators.

The sample size for the study was 225. The study used a non-probability sampling. The non-probability method used was purposive sampling. The questionnaire was the main research instrument for the study. The data collection stage took a form of fieldwork, which was to collect primary data on ways of increasing access to higher education through open and distance learning at the Institute of distance and e-learning Department of the University of Education, Winneba specifically the study centres the Central Region. Data were analysed quantitatively. Before the analysis, data collected were edited and then coded.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter elaborates on the analysis of data, findings, and discussion of the data. The research sought to assess ways to increase access to higher education through ODL in the University of Education, Winneba. A questionnaire was developed and administered to students, lecturers, administrators and coordinators of the University of Education, Winneba at the Central Region study centres. The return rate of the questionnaires was 100%. All the selected participants participated in the study.

Background Information of Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of respondents in the study. The first part of the questionnaire asked for information about respondents. Tables 3 to 6 display the distribution of information on the respondents.

Table 3: Categories of Respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Students	185	82.2
Tutors	26	11.6
Administrators	9	4.0
Coordinators	5	2.2
Total	225	100

Source: Field Survey (2019)

With regards to categories of respondents, Table 3 shows that the majority of the respondents were students (82%; n=185), 11.6% of the tutors (n=26), 4% were administrators (n=9) and 2.2% were coordinators (n=5). This

result indicates that there were more students in the study than lecturers, coordinators and administrators. This distribution is similar to that of the entire population.

Table 4: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	168	75.0
Female	57	25.0
Total	225	100

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 4 shows that a larger proportion of the respondents were males (75%; n=168) and 25% were females (n=57). This shows that there were more males in the study than female.

Table 5: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
WASSCE	141	62.7
Diploma	35	15.5
First Degree	20	8.9
MA/M.Ed/MSc	15	6.7
M.Phil	10	4.4
Ph.D	4	1.8
Total	225	100

Source: Field Survey (2019)

From Table 5, 62.7% of the respondents possess WASSCE certificates, 15.5% have diploma certificates, 8.9% of them have first degree, 6.7% have MA or MSc or M.Ed, 4.4% have M.Phil and finally, 1.8% have Ph.D

qualification. This attests to the fact that the respondents are capable of partaking in this study.

Table 6: Years of Involvement in Open and Distance learning

Years	Frequency	Percentage
1-4	137	60.9
5-9	82	36.5
10-14	5	2.2
15-19	1	0.4
20-24	0	0
Total	225	100

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 6 shows that 60.9 % of the respondent have been with open and Distance learning at the central region study centres of the University of Education, Winneba for the past 1 to 4 years, 36.5% have been involved in the programme for the past 5 to 9 years, 2.2% have been with the school for the past 10 to 14, 0.4% of the respondents have been with the school for the past 15 to 19 year and none of the respondents has been with the school for the past 20 to 24 years. The analysis of the respondents' involvement in open and distance learning shows that the majority (60.9%) of them have been with the system for long and therefore the response to the questionnaire is accurate.

Analysis of Main Data

This section of the analysis focuses on analysing the main data. The analysis in this section of the report focuses on addressing the research objectives. This study was undertaken to provide information on the following objectives:

1. Identify the modes of delivering open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.
2. Find out the students' preferences of the mode of instruction on the open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.
3. Find out the challenges associated with the delivery of open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.
4. Identify possible solutions to address the challenges confronting open distance learning students of the University of Education, Winneba.

Research objective one: Identify the modes of delivering open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba

This research objective sought to identify the modes of delivering open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba. Frequency and percentage counts were used to present data with the aim of providing an answer to the research question. Issues considered were the type of equipment and resources used in the delivery of open and distance learning programme.

As part of assessing the mode of delivery of open and distance learning programme, the resource material used were also explored. Table 7 presents the details of the results.

Table 7: Resource Materials Used in Open and Distance Learning Programme

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Modules	213	94.7
Textbooks	0	0
Internet	12	5.3
Total	225	100

Source: Field Survey (2019)

The results revealed that the larger percentage of the participants (94.7%) were of the view that modules are the main resource material used in open and distance learning whereas 5.3% says the internet is used. Truly, all students receive module at the beginning of every semester and also they register their causes online. This might have accounted for these results.

Further, the state of the resource material was significant in this study. The result is provided in Table 8.

Further analysis was done to find out the state of the equipment used for the delivery of ODL programme. Table 7 provides the details.

Table 8: Status of the Equipment employed in the Delivery of Open and Distance Learning Programme

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	12	5.3
Good	47	20.9
Average	60	26.7
Poor	106	47.1
Total	225	100

Source: Field Survey (2019)

In examining the state of the equipment involved in the delivery of ODL programme, it was found that 5.3% of the participants are of the view that equipment used in open and distance learning is excellent, 20.9% reported it as good, 26.7% says it is average and 47.1% says it is poor. The results depict the fact that most of ODL are not online base, hence proper equipment for lesson facilitation is zero or nearly unavailable.

To have a better view of the results, the study investigated whether programme resources and delivery materials were consistent across all geographical locations.

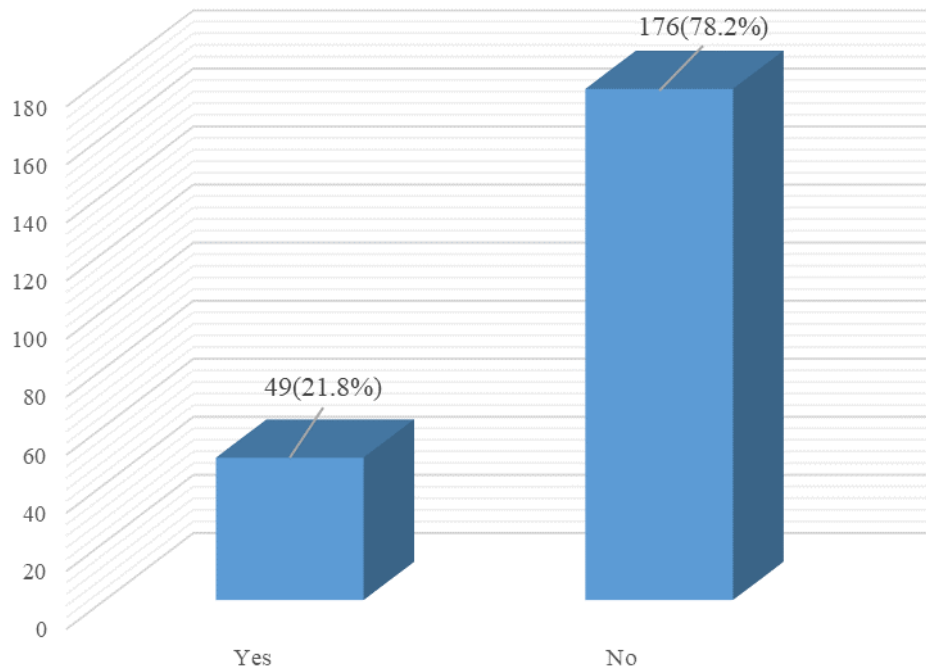


Figure 1- Consistent of Resource and Delivery across Geographical Locations

Most of the participants (78.2%) indicated that resources and delivery materials were not consistent across all geographical locations (Figure 1). Few respondents (21.8%), however, that resources and delivery materials were consistent across all geographical locations. Those participants who responded with a “No” answer indicated that: “*Different tutors teach at the various study*

centres hence there is a gap in facilitations. The impact is that some tutors are good; others are not; Some centres are better off in terms of resources, hence resource gap resulting in uneven content delivery. The participants gave some suggestions on ways to improve the gaps by stating that *there should be the online transmission of instructions and there should be an online repository of resource materials for students.*

On a whole, the study revealed that computers were the major device used for delivery in ODL at the University of Education, Winneba. In examining the state of the equipment involved in the delivery of ODL programme, it was found that most of the equipment (computers) used were poor. It was again revealed that the major resource material used for the delivery of ODL programme was the module. Further analysis found that the modules were mostly in excellent state. Most of the participants indicated that resources and delivery materials were not consistent across all geographical locations.

The findings of the study seem to contrast to the observations of Lehman (1998) that DL programmes in most universities in Africa were delivered through print media, television; audio, video, and radio. Dabaj (2011) argued that in contemporary times, most distance learning programmes have adopted internet and web-based instructional delivery due to the resurgence of the internet. The assertions and findings of Dabaj (2011) are consistent with the findings of this study.

Research Objective Two: Find out the students preferences of the mode of instruction on the Open Distance Learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.

What are students preferences of the mode of instruction on the ODL programmes at the University of Education, Winneba?

This research question sought to examine students preferences of the mode of instruction on the ODL programmes at the University of Education, Winneba. Responses were presented in the form of percentages and frequency counts. A number of responses have been discussed here.

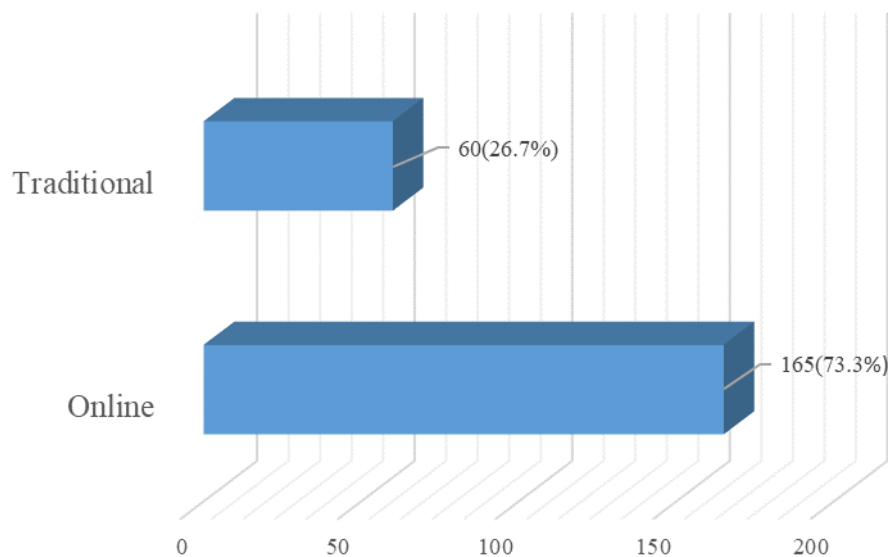


Figure 2- Preferences for Mode of Instruction in Open and Distance Learning

Results, as shown in Figure 2, revealed that 73.3 % of the respondents preferred the online mode of instruction to the traditional mode of instruction in the ODL programme. They believed that there was a difference between the performance of students who were taught using traditional face-to-face instruction and those who were taught at a distance using technology. They are of the view that those taught online will perform better than those taught on traditional face-to-face mode. They also opined that students taught online can

at any point in time have access to the instructions delivered since it is done online.

On the other hand, 27% of the respondents preferred the traditional model of instruction to the online mode of instruction in the ODL programme. They believe that there was no difference between the performance of students who were taught using traditional face-to-face instruction and those who were taught using technology. The reason being that the same content in face to face learning is replicated online. Hence the same content is delivered to both online and traditional face to face learning.

Further analysis was conducted to find out how well the ODL programme was delivered. With regards to this question, 95.4% of the respondents believe that the programme is well delivered, the remaining 4.6% believe the programme is not well delivered. Those saying no are of the view that the same methods of delivery are not offered across all the study centres.

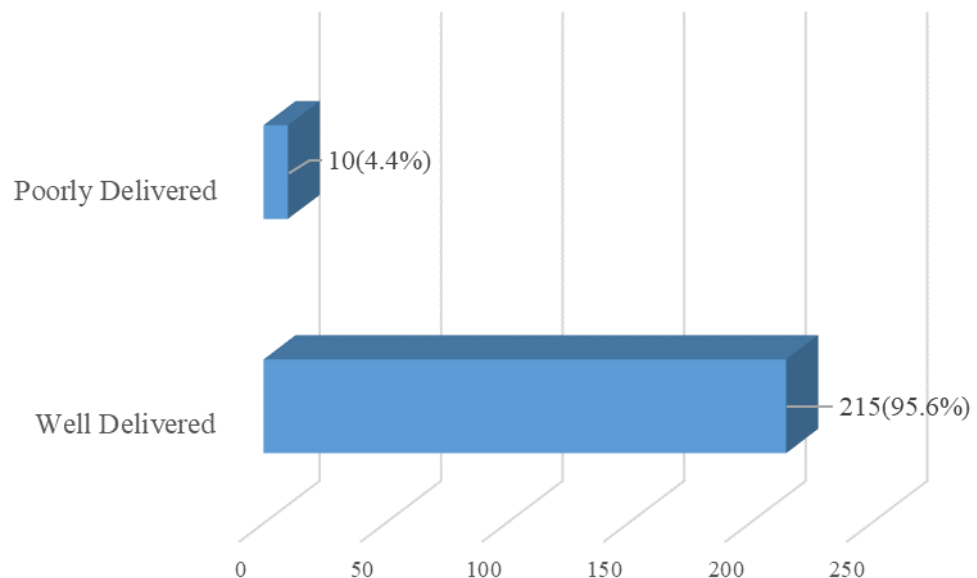


Figure 3- Extent of Delivery of Open and Distance Learning Programme

In conclusion, it appears that the online mode of instruction was preferred to the traditional mode of instruction in the ODL programme. They believed that there was a difference between the performance of students who were taught using traditional face-to-face instruction and those who were taught using technology. They are of the view that students taught online will perform better than those taught using traditional mode. The findings of the study corroborate with that of Akrofi (2010) which found that the largest proportion of university students in the US preferred reading online to reading hard copies of books. Liu (2005) supported this by indicating that screen-based reading is engineered by scanning and browsing online which most students preferred.

Other scholars like Wexelbaum and Parault (2011) indicated that university students mostly used e-books for fairly a precise set of activities relating to research. Van der Velde and Ernst (2009) also found in their study that university students frequently owned and used e-books. These findings are consistent to the findings of this study. Although the above-mentioned studies used regular students, this study used DL students, administrators and lecturers. Despite this disparity, similar results were found.

Research Question Three: Find out the challenges associated with the delivery of Open Distance Learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.

What are the challenges associated with the delivery of open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba?

This research objective sought to examine the challenges associated with the delivery of ODL programmes at the University of Education,

Winneba. A number of statements were made concerning the challenges faced in running the ODL programmes at the University of Education, Winneba. Respondents rated these statements on a four-point Likert scale (1 to 4) from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Table 9: Challenges Associated with Delivery of Open Distance Learning Programmes

Statements	Mean	SD
Inadequate feedback and contact with tutors/lecturers	3.40	0.548
Inadequate provision of modules	1.40	0.548
Poor quality of modules	1.80	0.447
Inadequate student-support system	3.40	0.548
Inadequate tutorial sessions (online)	3.20	0.447
Students are not comfortable with the method of teaching used	1.80	0.447
Students/tutors/lecturers do not receive modules on time.	1.40	0.548
Inadequate in-service training for tutors	3.60	0.548
There are inadequate qualified tutors/lecturers	1.60	0.548
The programme does not meet students' expectation	3.20	0.447
Mean of mean	2.48	0.510

Source: Field Survey (2019)

From Table 9 most of the respondents (M=3.40; SD=.5477) agreed that inadequate feedback and contact with tutors/lecturers is a major challenge. It was found that majority (M=1.40; SD=.5477) of the respondents disagree

that there was an inadequate provision of modules. With regards to the statement “Poor quality of modules”, it was seen that most ($M=1.80$; $SD=.447$) of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

Looking at the statement “Inadequate student-support system” from Table 11, the respondents ($M=3.40$; $SD=0.548$) unanimously agreed with the statement. Also, the respondents agreed ($M=3.20$; $SD=.4472$) that there were Inadequate tutorial sessions (face-to-face meetings). Concerning the statement “Students are not comfortable with the method of teaching used.” the respondents disagreed ($M=1.80$; $SD=.4472$) with the statement.

As shown in Table 9, the respondents disagreed ($M=1.40$; $SD=0.548$) that Students/tutors/lecturers do not receive modules on time. The respondents agreed ($M=3.60$; $SD=0.548$) with the statement “I would not use multimedia; it never promotes understanding”. The respondents disagreed ($M=1.60$; $SD=0.5477$) that Students/tutors/lecturers do not receive modules on time. Similarly, Majority agreed ($M=3.20$; $SD=0.447$) that there is inadequate in-service training for tutors.

The mean of means score ($M=2.48$; $SD=0.510$) in Table 9 shows that respondents at the central region study centres of University of Education, Winneba are of the views that the university is doing well in terms of open distance learning but there are some challenges the university has to look at. Challenges such as unavailability of online support for effective instructional delivery, inadequate feedback and unavailability of an online repository of modules. When these challenges are solved, then ODL at the university will be near 100% efficient and effective.

The findings of this study are consistent with that of Keegan (1986) and Tinto (1975) who argued inadequate feedback is a major barrier to distance learning. Keegan (1986) contends that the bridge between the student and the teacher creates a vibrant atmosphere in teaching-learning operation and that the connection, which is damaged by distance, must be reestablished one way or the other. This specific challenge results in an evaluation problem for the student. However, Braimah and Osiki (2008) advanced that the utilisation of ICT in distance learning comes with numerous challenges as a result of unequal and uneven accessibility to internet and computers. This challenge was found revealed in this study.

Other challenges facing the University of Education, Winneba DL programme were reported. The respondents stressed on the fact that instructional delivery is not able to meet the learning style and cultural challenges of students who are scattered in the various regions of the country. Also, the majority explained that instructional materials come to students very late. They complained about challenges in tutoring, challenges in registration processes, the inadequacy of tutorials, timeliness, and prompt evaluation and feedback related to assignments. Findings from Wood (1996) reflects the findings of this study. Wood (1996) stated that getting study materials and borrowing library materials, the disadvantage of not been able to work with other colleagues were one of the major challenges of DL students.

Research Question Four: Identify possible solutions to address the challenges confronting Open Distance Learning students of the University of Education, Winneba.

This research question enabled the researcher to determine the solutions to addressing the problems with ODL at the University of Education, Winneba. The details of their responses are represented in Table 10.

Table 10: Solutions to Address the Challenges Confronting Open and Distance Learning

Statement	Mean	SD
Utilisation of online students' support system	3.40	0.548
Prompt feedback to students	3.37	0.796
Internet based instruction delivery	3.97	0.360
Online repository of study materials	3.40	0.548
Online interaction	3.20	0.447
Online portal display of students' results	3.57	0.608
Mean of mean	2.48	0.510

Source: Field Survey (2019).

From Table 12, majority (M=3.40; SD=0.548) of the respondents are of the view that utilization of online students support system will solve the problems of ODL programme at University of Education, Winneba. Also, (M=3.37; SD=0.796) of the respondents think that feedback to students will solve open and distance learning challenges.

Furthermore, majority (M=3.97; SD=0.360) of the respondents agreed that internet based instruction delivery will solve the ODL problems at University of Education, Winneba. Also, (M=3.40; SD=0.548) of the

respondents agreed that online repository of study materials will solve the ODL problems at University of Education, Winneba.

Moreover, (M=3.20; SD=0.447) of the respondents agreed that online face to interaction of lecturers and students will solve majority of the challenges faced by students at the University of Education, Winneba.

Finally, most (M=3.57; SD=0.608) of the students agreed that online portal display of their results is key to the success of the open distance learning at University of Education, Winneba.

Summary of Chapter

The findings in this study indicate that ODL in the central region's study centres of the University of Education, Winneba is on going. It was seen that there is a supply of quality and efficient modules to tutors and students. There are enough qualified tutors/lecturers and students are very comfortable with the teaching methods used. The challenges facing ODL in this institution are inadequate feedback and contact with tutors/lecturers, inadequate student-support system, inadequate tutorial sessions (online), inadequate in-service training for tutors and students. As a result, the programme does not meet the tutors and students' expectation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusion and outlines recommendations including areas for further research.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the access to higher education through open and distance learning at the University of Education, Winneba. The study particularly sought to:

1. Identify the modes of delivering open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.
2. Find out the students' preferences of the mode of instruction on the open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.
3. Find out the challenges associated with the delivery of open distance learning programmes at the University of Education, Winneba.
4. Identify possible solutions to address the challenges confronting open distance learning students of the University of Education, Winneba.

The research was conducted using descriptive research design. The rationale for the research design was to try to describe, analyse and interpret strategies to increase accessibility to tertiary education via open and distance learning and challenges learners encounter in the distance learning in Ghanaian Universities especially University of Education, Winneba. The target population was drawn from students, lecturers, centre coordinators and administrators of the Central Region study centres of the University of Education, Winneba. The population was drawn from all the distance learning

campuses of the University of Education, Winneba in the Central region. The total population was 1887. The population of the students was 1800, there were 130 lectures, 5 study centre coordinators and 9 administrators.

The sample size for the study was 225. The study used a combination of probability and non-probability sampling. The non-probability method used was purposive sampling. The questionnaire was the main research instrument for the study. The data collection stage took a form of fieldwork, which was to collect primary data on ways of increasing access to higher education through ODL at the Institute of Distance and e-learning Department of the University of Education, Winneba specifically the study centres in the Central Region of Ghana. Data were analysed quantitatively. Before the analysis, data collected were edited and then coded.

Major Findings

1. The study revealed that modules were the major form of instructional delivery usage for the ODL at the University of Education, Winneba.
2. In examining the state of the equipment involved in the delivery of ODL programme, it was found that most of the equipment used were computers.
3. It was again revealed that the major resource material used for the delivery of ODL programme was the module.
4. Further analysis found that the modules were mostly in excellent state.
5. Most of the participants indicated that the resources and delivery materials were not consistent across all geographical locations.
6. It was found that the online mode of instruction was preferred to the traditional mode of instruction in the ODL programme. They believed

that there was a difference between the performance of students who were taught using traditional face-to-face instruction and those who were taught using technology. It was found that the ODL programme were well delivered.

7. The challenges associated with the delivery of ODL programme were reported as inadequate feedback and contact with tutors/lecturers; Inadequate student-support system; Inadequate tutorial sessions (face-to-face meetings); inadequate use of multimedia. Other challenges facing the University Of Education, Winneba Distance learning Programme were reported. The respondents stressed on the fact that instructional delivery is not able to meet the learning style and cultural challenges of students who are scattered in the various regions of the country. Also, the majority explained that instructional materials come to students very late. They complained about challenges in tutoring, challenges in registration processes, the inadequacy of tutorials, timeliness and prompt evaluation and feedback related to assignments.
8. The respondents agreed that technology is a major tool that can make ODL more effective to students. When all forms of technology is inculcated in DL, it becomes effective to students and lecturers. In this case, communication becomes effective and quick to students.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that the major resource material for the delivery of ODL in the study centres are the modules. It was also revealed that the online mode of instruction was preferred to the traditional mode of instruction. However, a number of challenges were found which need to be resolved. The

challenges associated with the delivery of ODL programme were reported as inadequate feedback and contact with tutors/lecturers; inadequate student-support system; inadequate tutorial sessions (face-to-face meetings); inadequate use of multimedia. Other challenges facing the UEW distance learning programme were reported.

Recommendations

From the summary of the major findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. It is recommended that the university makes available the best mode of open distance education delivery through the use of technology. Since students, tutors and coordinators preferred using online mode of instruction delivery of open and distance learning.
2. Since students prefer technology for instructional delivery, the university should make available fast internet service for students and lecturers. There should be online learning management system for both lecturers and students.
3. The management of the university should develop a strategy where students will have access to tutorials either by tutors or trained teaching assistance. The university should do well to bear the cost associated with this. This will provide students with technology platform where they will be able to clarify any misunderstanding when learning at a latter date.
4. The management of the university should replace old computers with new ones to promote efficiency in teaching and learning

activities. It is suggested to the University management to set up an online system for instructional delivery.

5. The management of ODL in University of Education, Winneba should ensure equitable distribution of modules to centres across the country.



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APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF DISTANCE LEARNING
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

This research is being conducted by a student to solicit your views on ways of increasing access to higher education through open and distance learning at University of Education, Winneba. You are kindly requested to provide appropriate response for the purpose of helping the researcher gather data to undertake the study. All information provide will be treated as confidential and solely for academic purposes.

SECTION A:

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Kindly tick a response to the closed ended questions and provide written responses to the open-ended ones.

1. Category of Respondent

Student [] Tutor []

Administrator [] Coordinator []

1. Gender:

Male [] Female []

2. What is the highest level of education attained?

WASSCE []

Diploma []

First Degree []

M.Phil []

MA/M. ED/MSc []

Ph.D []

3. How long have you been involved in the open and distance instruction?

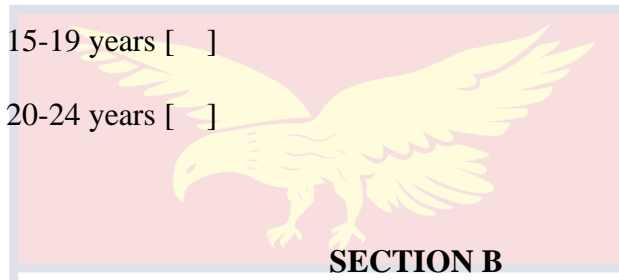
1-4 years []

5-9 years []

10-14 years []

15-19 years []

20-24 years []



**Modes of delivering ODL programmes at University of Education,
Winneba**

4. Have you received special training on the open and distance learning instruction?

Yes []

No []

5. If your answer is yes, has the training been helpful in delivering this type of programme and in what way(s)?

.....
.....
.....

6. How do you compare delivery of open and distance learning with the traditional face to face?

Excellent []

Good []

Average []

Fair []

7. Which equipment do you employ in open and distance learning instruction? Computer [] Television [] Radio []
Other (Please specify).....

8. What is your opinion on the equipment used in the delivery of open and distance learning?
Excellent [] Good [] Average [] Poor []

9. What are the resource materials used in open and distance learning instruction?
Modules [] Textbooks [] Internet []
Other (Please specify)

10. What is your opinion on the resource materials used in the delivery of open and distance learning?
Excellent [] Good [] Average [] Poor []

11. Are programme resources and delivery consistent and appropriate across all *geographical* locations?
Yes [] No []

a. If your answer is no, what are the gabs and their impact on the nature and outcome of the services provided?
.....
.....
.....

b. What is your suggestion on ways to improve the gabs?
.....
.....
.....

12. How do you rate performance of open and distance learning students compared to their counterparts in the residential programme?

Good [] Average [] Poor []

13. In your opinion is the programme well delivered and organized?

Yes [] No []

If no, what measures do you suggest should be put in place to improve the programme delivery?



.....
.....
.....

14. Are adequate resources being used to deliver the programme?

Yes [] No []

15. Is programme staffing sufficient to ensure appropriate standards?

Yes [] No []

SECTION C:

Challenges associated with delivery of ODL programmes at UEW

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

SD = Strongly Disagree

D = Disagree

Challenges of the UEW Distance learning Programme include:	SD	D	A	SA
16. Inadequate feedback and contact with tutors/lecturers				
17. Inadequate provision of modules.				
18. Poor quality of modules.				
19. Inadequate student-support system.				
20. Inadequate tutorial sessions (face-to-face meetings)				
21. Students are not comfortable with the method of teaching used.				
22. Students/tutors/lecturers do not receive modules on time.				
23. Inadequate in-service training for tutors.				
24. There are inadequate qualified tutors/lecturers.				
25. The programme does not meet students' expectation.				

26. From the items 21-26, please indicate any other challenge(s) facing the UEW Distance learning Programme.

.....

.....

.....

.....

SECTION D:

Possible solutions to address challenges confronting UEW Distance learning programmes?

27. Could you tell us some possible solutions to address challenges confronting distance and e-learning programmes at the UEW?



SECTION E:

**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL FACE-TO-FACE
INSTRUCTION AND ONLINE LEARNING**

28. Do you think there is difference in the performance of students who were taught using traditional face-to-face instruction and those who were taught at a distance using technology?

YES []

NO []

29. Please explain your answer to question 29?

