LEARNER SUPPORT SYSTEMS IN ENHANCING THE DELIVERY OF DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMMES FOR IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA: THE CASE OF KYAMBOGO UNIVERSITY.

BY

OTTO ARON YONA
REG. NO. E83/15335/05

A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY.

MAY 2011

REFERENCES 220

Appendix I: Location of Co-ordinating Centres for DEPE/DSNEE 233

Appendix II: In-service Teachers' Questionnaire 234

Appendix III: Facilitators Questionnaires 240

Appendix IV: Kyambogo University Monitors' Interview Guides 246

Appendix V: PTC Administrators' Interview Guides 249

Appendix VI: Observation Checklist 251

DECLARATION

This research report is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university or any other award

Otto ..... Date 6th/5/2011

Otto Aron Yona

We confirm that the work presented in this research report was carried out by the candidate under our supervision

..... Date 09.05.2011

Dr. Edwin Ndichu Gitau
Senior Lecturer
Department of Educational communication & Technology
Kenyatta University

Henry O. Ayot Date May 9, 2011

Prof. H.O. Ayot
Department of Educational Communication & Technology
Kenyatta University

DEDICATION

To my wife, Jacinta for her encouragement which enabled me to produce this work and to my son, Richard who supported my family financially when I was away at Kenyatta University - Kenya.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is not possible to express all my thanks in terms of the kind heartedness, tireless work and total dedication bestowed upon me by my supervisors Dr. Ndichu E. Gitau and Prof. H.O. Ayot of the Department of Educational Communication and Technology (Com-Tech) – Kenyatta University – Kenya. Their professional competence, coupled with resourcefulness, constant feedback and an ever encouraging spirit enabled me to do this research within the limited time frame.

I would wish to thank chairman and members of the academic staff Com-Tech department for their help and administrative guidance while writing this report. May I, also thank the support staff of the department for the assistance they extended to me whenever I contacted them.

I wish also to thank Kyambogo University for providing me with an enabling environment particularly the financial support which enabled me to complete this research report on schedule. I am greatly indebted to the Ministry of Education and Sports, Uganda, for giving me access to some useful literature based on Teacher's Education in Uganda. The role played by the two Governments namely, Uganda and Kenya to allow me to travel both to and from the two countries cannot be ignored either.

To the members of my family, I pray that the Almighty God continues to bless them. Lastly, it would be wrong to forget Ms. Gladys Muwanga of Kyambogo University for having typed this thesis. Finally I want to thank my two sons, Denis and Collins and my daughter Paska for editing my research work.

May the Lord God bless you all!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Declaration		ii
Dedication		iii
Acknowledgement		iv
Table of Contents		v
List of Tables		ix
List of figures		xii
Abbreviations and Acronymns		xiii
Abstract		xiv
CHAPTER ONE:	**BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEMS**	
1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Background to the Problem	1
1.1.1	Technology Support in Distance Learning	4
1.1.2	Distance Learning in Uganda	8
1.1.3	Distance Education at Kyambogo University	15
1.2	Statement of the Problem	21
1.3	General Objectives	23
1.4	Objectives of the Study	23
1.5	Research Questions	23
1.6	Significance of the Study	24
1.7	Assumptions of the Study	25
1.8	Scope and Limitations	25
1.9	Delimitations	26
1.10	Theoretical Framework	28
1.11	Definition of Terms Used in the Study	31
1.12	Summary	35
CHAPTER TWO:	**LITERATURE REVIEW**	
2.0	Introduction	36
2.1	Types of Learner Support	36

2.2	The Gap in the Provision of Learner Support to the Distance Learners	38
2.3	The Methods of delivery of face-to-face sessions to the Distance Learner	42
2.4	Options of Learner Support currently available to the Distance Learner for effective use	47
2.4.1	Radio	47
2.4.2	Audio Cassette Programmes	50
2.4.3	Telephone/Mobile Phone Technology	51
2.4.4	Video Technology	52
2.4.5	ICT and e-learning Support	53
2.4.6	Resource Centres/Library	59
2.4.7	Summary	60

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0	Introduction	62
3.1	Research Design	62
3.2	Study Locale	63
3.3	Population of the Study	63
3.4	Sample and Sampling Techniques	64
3.5	Research Instruments	65
3.6	Validity and Reliability	68
3.7	Ethical Considerations	69
3.8	Data Collection Procedure	70
3.9	Data Analysis and Interpretation	70
3.10	Summary	71

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0	Introduction	72
	Demographic Information	74
4.1	Research Question One: What are the learner support systems that exist in the delivery of distance learning programmes at Kyambogo University?	86
4.2	Research Question Two: What gaps exist in the provision of learner support systems for distance learning programs at kyambogo university	101

4.3 Research Question Three: what methods are used by the lecturers to facilitate face-to-face sessions for the distance learners in Uganda? 132
4.4 Research Question Four: What models of learner support systems would be needed to improve the delivery of distance learning programmes at Kyambogo University? 145
4.5 Findings from the Interview with the PTC Administrators 154
4.6 Findings from the Interview with the Monitors of Face-to-face Session 165
4.7 Summary of findings from the Observation Checklist 173

4.8 **Discussion of the Findings** 177
4.8.1 The Learner Support Systems that Exist in the Delivery of Distance Learning Programmes in Uganda 177
4.8.2 The Existing Gaps in the Provision of Learner Support Systems for Distance Learning Programmes in Uganda. 183
4.8.3 Methods/Support Systems used by the Lecturers to deliver Face-to-face Session 195
4.8.4 The Models of Learner Support Systems needed to Improve the Delivery of Distance Learning Programmes at Kyambogo University. 199

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.0 Introduction 208
5.1 The outcomes of the assumptions of the study 208
5.2 Findings of the Study 209
5.3 Conclusion 214
5.4 Recommendations 215
5.4.1 Ministry of Education and Sports, Uganda 215
5.4.2 Kyambogo University 215
5.4.3. PTC Co-ordinating Centres 217
5.4.4 In-service Teachers 217
5.4.5 Facilitators (Lecturers/Tutors) 218
5.5 Further Research 218

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES			PAGE
Table 1.1	-	Country and Kyambogo University Information	10
Table 1.2	-	Diploma in Education Primary External (DEPE) statistics of students who completed the course.	17
Table 1.3	-	Students currently on the DEPE course	18
Table 1.4	-	Diploma in Special Needs Education External students statistics who completed the course	19
Table 1.5	-	DSNEE Students currently on the course	20
Table 3.1	-	Samples used in data collection	65
Table 4.1	-	Gender of respondents	73
Table 4.2	-	Age of the respondents (In-service Teachers)	74
Table 4.3	-	Highest Secondary Education qualification reached by In-service Teachers	75
Table 4.4	-	Experience as a Grade III Teacher	76
Table 4.5	-	Current position in school/workplace	78
Table 4.6	-	Present year of study (In-service Teachers)	79
Table 4.7	-	PTC Co-ordinating Centres	80
Table 4.8	-	Gender of the respondents (Facilitators)	81
Table 4.9	-	Place of work of the respondents (Facilitators)	83
Table 4.10	-	Educational qualification of the respondents (Facilitators)	84
Table 4.11	-	Programme that respondents facilitate	85
Table 4.12	-	Face-to-face as a support service to the distance learner	87
Table 4.13	-	Chi-square test on face- to- face as a support service	88
Table 4.14	-	Library services as a learner support service	89
Table 4.15	-	Chi – square test on Library as a support service	90
Table 4.16	-	Student Peer group meeting as a learner support service	91
Table 4.17	-	Chi – square test on student peer group as a support service	92
Table 4.18	-	Guidance and Counselling services as a learner support system	93

Table 4.19	-	Chi – square tests on guidance and counseling as learner support service	94
Table 4.20	-	Access to Media/ICT services as a learner support	95
Table 4.21	-	Chi – square test on Media/ICT as a support service	96
Table 4.22	-	Coursework assignments as a support service to the distance learner	97
Table 4.23	-	Chi – square test on coursework assignment as a support service	98
Table 4.24	-	Feedback on assignments as a support service to the distance learners	99
Table 4.25	-	Chi – square test on Feedbacks on assignment as a support service	100
Table 4.26	-	Challenges/gaps met in support services while pursuing DEPE/DSNEE programmes	102
Table 4.27	-	Modules as media in supporting distance learners in their Studies.	108
Table 4.28	-	Phones as media in supporting the distance learners	110
Table 4.29	-	Audio cassettes as a media in supporting distance Learners.	112
Table 4.30	-	Radio as medium that supports distance learners	114
Table 4.31	-	Television (TV) as a media that helps to support the Distance learners	116
Table 4.32	-	Video technology as a media in supporting the distance learners.	118
Table 4.33	-	Computers as medium in supporting distance learners in their studies	120
Table 4.34	-	CD-Roms as a medium in supporting distance learners in their studies	122
Table 4.35	-	Library as a support service for the distance learners	124
Table 4.36	-	Library books referred to during face-to-face session of two weeks	126

Table 4.37	-	Facilitators' responses about the existing gaps in the provision of learner support services	128
Table 4.38	-	The most suitable support for tutoring/facilitation for DEPE/DSNEE Programmes	133
Table 4.39	-	Other support learners find helpful in their studies	137
Table 4.40	-	Facilitators' support for the learners during face-to-face Sessions	141
Table 4.41	-	Models of learner support systems needed for programmes' improvement at Kyambogo University	146
Table 4.42	-	Other models of learner support systems needed for programmes' improvement at Kyambogo University	148
Table 4.43	-	Some models of learner support systems needed for Improvements of programmes at Kyambogo University	150
Table 4.44	-	Some more models of learner support needed by KYU	151
Table 4.45	-	In-service teachers' views on models of learner support needed to improve the delivery of KYU	153
Table 4.46	-	Designation of the PTC Administrators	155
Table 4.47	-	Duration of services in the PTC co-ordinating centres	155
Table 4.48	-	Learner support system for the distance learners	156
Table 4.49	-	The gaps that exist in the provision of learners support systems	157
Table 4.50	-	Availability of library services in the PTC co-ordinating centres	158
Table 4.51	-	Provision of other non-academic support services	159
Table 4.52	-	Reading of modules to motivate learners to read more	160
Table 4.53	-	Integrating of modules with other materials	160
Table 4.54	-	Useful aspects of face-to-face sessions to distance learners	161
Table 4.55	-	Commitments of the facilitators at face-to-face sessions	162
Table 4.56	-	Problems met at the centres during face-to-face sessions	163
Table 4.57	-	Benefit of the Programmes to the PTC co-ordinating centres and staff	164

LIST OF FIGURES

		Page
Figure 1.1	Conceptual Framework	27
Figure 1.2	Theoretical Framework	29

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CAL	-	Computer Assisted Learning
CES	-	Centre for External Studies
CML	-	Computer Mediated Learning
CoL	-	Commonwealth of Learning
DEPE	-	Diploma in Education Primary External
DL	-	Distance Learning
DSNEE	-	Diploma in Special Needs Education External
IEC	-	International Extension College
IGNOU	-	Indra Ghandi National Open University
ITEK	-	Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo
ITEK	-	Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo
KU	-	Kenyatta University
KYU	-	Kyambogo University
MA	-	Master of Art
MEd	-	Master of Education
MITEP	-	Mubende Integrated Teacher Education project
MoES	-	Ministry of Education and Sports
MSc	-	Master of science
NITEP	-	Northern Integrated Teacher Education Project
NTC	-	National Teacher's College
PHD	-	Doctor of Philosophy
PTC	-	Primary Teacher's College
TDMS	-	Teacher Development and Management System
U.K	-	United Kingdom
Ug	-	Uganda
UNEB	-	Uganda National Examination Board
UNISE	-	Uganda National Institute of Special Education
UPK	-	Uganda Polytechnic, Kyambogo

ABSTRACT

The focus of this research study was on learner support systems in enhancing the delivery of distance learning programmes for in-service teacher education in Uganda: the case of Kyambogo University. The study recognizes the development of distance learning in Uganda in general and the use of distance learning in improving the training of teachers in particular. The study stresses the need for better trained teachers whose roles are changed from being expositors to that of facilitators of learning activities. Such teachers must be provided with an educational environment which is conducive to learning, replete with resources of various kinds, print-based, audio visual, ICT and mechanical devices where possible to support such learners. This study was carried out in nine Primary Teachers' Colleges co-ordinating centres. These are: Kibuli, Busuubizi, Nkokonjeru, CTK Gulu, Lodonga, Kabwangasi, Bukedea, Ibanda and Kiyoora. The research design used was cross-sectional survey. This design helped the researcher to gather information from different categories of samples at the same time. The primary data was collected by use of questionnaires, interview and observation tools. The secondary data was obtained from reference books, magazines, journals, periodicals and internet materials. A total of 420 respondents were used for the study. The data collected were analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods in an inter-complementary manner. Qualitative analysis was used to analyse views of the respondents, while quantitative data were entered into the computer and analysis was done using computer statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The results of the study revealed a number of challenges associated with learner support system in enhancing the delivery of distance learning programmes at Kyambogo University. The key challenges the study identified were, lack of provision of a variety of learner support services, poor facilitation skills by lecturers, lack of library uses by the distance learners, poor co-ordination of the distance learning activities between Kyambogo University and the PTC co-ordinating centres, delay in release of results and lack of Government involvement in supporting distance education programmes in Uganda. In view of these challenges, key recommendations were made, notable are that, Kyambogo University should review its learner support services to improve programme delivery systems, study materials be provided in time for the distance learners to access, staff training in distance education should be enhanced and effective guidance and counseling services be provided to improve support services. Prompt release of results to the distance learners should be done timely to encourage them to work harder in their studies. Above all, practical work and library facilities should be made available for the learners and facilitators to access and utilize inorder to improve teaching and learning at a distance.