

**COPING STRATEGIES TO LEARNING CHALLENGES FACED BY RURAL
DISTANCE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

BY

MARGARET MWALE-MKANDAWIRE

**A thesis submitted to the University of Zambia in fulfilment of the requirement for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Administration**

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

LUSAKA

2020

0

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The thesis by **Margaret Mwale-Mkandawire** is approved as fulfilling the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Zambia

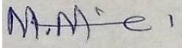
Signed:..... Date:.....

Signed: Date:.....

Signed: Date:.....

DECLARATION

I, Margaret Mwale-Mkandawire, declare that this thesis represent my work. It has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other university and does not incorporate any published work or material from another thesis.

Signed: ... 

Date: 30 / 04 / 2020

THE ABSTRACT

This study has reported, in more detail the coping strategies to challenges experienced by students from the rural areas of Zambia who are studying by distance at the University of Zambia (UNZA). An initial literature review suggests that a number of studies completed in the past report that most of these studies had been carried out from the point of view and perspectives of the education providers and the management of the institutions providing distance education. However, this research is a case study which has looked at distance education as it was discussed and described by the learners themselves because this was their story, their experiences and their perspectives.

In particular, this research looked at the coping strategies to experiences by the male and female distance education students, from rural areas of Zambia, at UNZA. Distance education had helped UNZA to reach a relatively larger pull of students with little additional cost by comparison to enrol in full-time study programs. It had also contributed positively towards the institution's policy of increasing the participation of women and rural people in university education (Siachiwena, 2005). This study topic aroused from the discussions with the students rather than being preordained by the research design or derived directly from my own initial interest as a researcher, full-time and distance educator at UNZA.

The research mainly employed qualitative methods in the collection and analysis of data. This was because the respondents described their experiences about their learning by distance means. Triangulation was used to verify the information which was given during the study. In terms of theory, a comprehensive literature review was carried out to determine the works other researchers had done in the area of distance education, especially on experiences of distance education students in rural areas.

The conclusion of this research has indicated that in designing the learning support, while looking at some good strategies to challenges rural distance learners experience, this paper wishes to encourage the distance education providers to choose appropriate combinations of methods for particular learning contexts. The findings of this study may be of assistance to policy makers and implementers at the Ministry of Education and other institutes of Distance Education in Zambia, to ensure quality, increased access to and participation by males and females in the distance learning programs.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late First-Born son, Mizzie for assisting me with some graphs in this work, just before he was called to be with the Lord. My late parents Edinala-Nyathole Mtonga and Israel-Kasilizika Mwale Chirwa for providing me with the much needed education at such trying moments in their lives. I also dedicate this work to my beloved husband Mloyiso Mkandawire and our sweetest children Songelo, Sunga, Chalo and Dekhani.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, praises go to my Creator, The Most High, God, for giving me courage to continue with my studies even after going through a terrible experience of losing my dearest first born son Mizzie, while I was in the middle of writing this Thesis. Further, my gratitude goes primarily to my sponsor, the University of Zambia, whose financial, moral and administrative support enabled me to pursue and complete my PhD study at the University of Zambia.

Specifically, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to my two supervisors, Prof. Mubiana Macwang'i and Professor Austin Cheyeka, for their constructive guidance and critical feedback in support of my thesis. My sincere thanks for their tolerance and passion, and for the social and emotional support they provided me with in their mentoring role. It was only through their tireless facilitation and helpful advice that I was able to realise my research and academic goals.

I direct Special thanks to the Director of the Institute of Distance Education at the University of Zambia for allowing me to carry-out this study at the institute. Many thanks also go to all the research participants that is; Graduates, Students, Tutors, Assistant Directors and all other officials at the Institute of Distance Education at the University of Zambia, for the contribution they made towards the success of my study. Without their motivation and desire to improve teaching and learning support practices in rural Zambia, the successful outcomes achieved in this research study would not have been attained.

My sincere appreciation and many thanks also go to my lovely husband Mloyiso for the support and encouragement in every way, and for always remaining awake, braving the cold and the discomfort as he waited for me, during late hours, to always keep me company as I sat on the computer writing this work.

Further, I wish to give thanks to my siblings Tamalizgika, Silverster, Ovaline, Mary and Clement for inspiring me in my educational journey since childhood. Their love and encouragement, allied to the considerable emotional and material support they have given me has made me what I am today.

I also remember with affection my PhD colleagues and Classmates of November, 2012, a class sponsored by OSSREA and organised by the Late Dr. Chawatama (May HIS Soul REST In Eternal Peace) at the University of Zambia. The academic feedback we shared during PhD seminar sessions and at different social gatherings helped to sustain me and gave me courage to continue with my studies.

The successful completion of this thesis is as a result of the contributions from many people. It is not possible to mention each of them individually, but I am grateful to them all. As the Bemba saying goes; “ Ushitasha Mwana we Ndoshi”, and the Tonga saying in the same vain ; “Utalumbi ngu mwana Wambwa”, meaning that it is very important to always remember to appreciate anything good happening in one’s life.

COPYRIGHT

All rights reserved. No part of this thesis may be reproduced or utilised in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the author or the University of Zambia.

© Margaret Mwale-Mkandawire, 2017.

ABBREVIATIONS

AFT	American Federation of Teachers
ASS. EDITOR N/S	Assistant Editor Natural Sciences
ASS. EDITOR S/S	Assistant Editor Social Sciences
C.S	Counselling Sessions
CSO	Central Statistical Office
DDE	Director of Distance Education
DE	Distance Education
DL	Distance Learners
EFA	Education for All
FAWEZA	Forum for African Women Educationalists in Zambia
FGD	Focus Group Discuss
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDE	Institute of Distance Education
IT	Information Technology
LSS	Learner Support Services
MBD	Marketing and Business Development
MOE	Ministry of Education
NUEA	National University Extension Association
ODE	Open and Distance Education
PD	Program Developers
PDU	Production and Distribution Unit
PG	Post Graduate
QA	Quality Assurance
RCP	Research Consultancy and Publication
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SIM	Self Instructional Materials

UNISA	University of South Africa
UG	Under Graduate
UTH	University Teaching Hospital
UNZA	University of Zambia
U.S CONGRESS	United States Congress
ZOU	Zimbabwe Open University

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL	i
DECLARATION.....	ii
THE ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
COPYRIGHT	viii
ABBREVIATIONS.....	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xvi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.....	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.2 Reasons for my study	2
1.3 Zambia’s rural areas	3
1.4 Distance Education in Zambia	4
1.5 The University of Zambia	5
1.6 The Institute of Distance Education	6
1.7 History of Distance Education at the University of Zambia	10
1.8 Policy Documents on Education	13
1.9 Summary of the Chapter.....	16
CHAPTER TWO.....	17
INTRODUCTION.....	17
2.0 Overview	17
2.1 The Status of Distance Education in Zambia	17
2.2 The Role of Distance Education.....	19
2.3 Statement of the Problem	19

2.4 The Main Objective of the Study	20
2.5 Specific Objectives of the Study	20
2.6 Research Questions	21
2.7 The Conceptual Framework	21
2.8 Theoretical Framework	23
2.8.2 The Need for an Appropriate Theory for Distance Learning	24
2.8. 3 The Equivalent Theory	24
2.9. Theoretical perspectives and its Implications for Women in Distance Learning.	31
2.10 Significance of the Study	34
2.11 Limitations of the Study	35
2.12 Delimitation of the Study	35
2.13 Operational Definition.....	35
2.14 Summary	37
CHAPTER THREE	39
LITERATURE REVIEW	39
3.0 Introduction	39
3.1 The Nature of Distance Education	39
3.2 Definition of Distance Education	40
3.3 History of Distance Education	43
3.4 History of Distance Education in Zambia	47
3.5 Importance of distance Education	48
3. 6 Zambia’s Population Distribution	51
3.7 Rural Population and Distance Education in Zambia	52
3.8 Learning Instructional Strategies in Distance Education	53
3.9 Material Development for Distance Education	55
3.10 Gender and Distance Education	56
3.11 Institutional Concerns for Growth in Distance Education	65

3.12 Assessment of Learning Outcomes in Distance Education.....	67
3.13 Technology as a Component of Distance Education.....	67
3.14 Challenges	69
3.15 Summary	71
CHAPTER FOUR	73
METHODOLOGY	73
4.0 Introduction	73
4.1 The world	73
4.2 Research Design	74
4.3 Rationale for Using Qualitative Research Methods.....	75
4.4 Population.....	77
4.5 Sampling and Sample Size	77
4.6 Research Instruments	77
4.7 Data Collection Procedures	78
4.8 Ethical Considerations.....	86
4.9 Summary	86
CHAPTER FIVE	87
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	87
5.0 Introduction	87
5.1 Background Information	88
5.2 Description of Distance Education from the perspective of Students.....	91
5.3 The Influence of Support Services Available for Distance Students	91
5.4 Gendered Experiences of Students on Distance Learning Programs from Rural Zambia.....	93
5.4.3 Gendered Experiences of Students on Distance Learning Programs	96
5.5 Identified Challenges to Distance Learning	98
5.6 Coping Strategies to the Challenges Faced by Distance Education Students ...	111
5.7 Summary	117

CHAPTER SIX.....	118
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	118
6.0 Introduction	118
6.1 Discussion on the Background Information.....	118
6.1.3 Age Ranges of Distance Students	120
6.2 Description of Distance Education by students.....	121
6.3 Support services available for distance students	126
6.4 Gendered experiences of female distance students from rural areas.....	131
6.5 General Experiences of Distance Students from Rural Zambia.....	132
6.6 Challenges to Distance Education	143
6.7 Coping strategies to the problems/challenges experienced by distance education students.....	149
6.8. Summary of the coping strategies to specific problems.....	154
6.9 The Institute of Distance Education (IDE).....	159
6.10 Policy for Open and Distance Learning	171
6.11 Lecturers’ Perceptions and the Integrated System of Teaching at UNZA	174
6.12 Summary of the Chapter.....	176
CHAPTER SEVEN	177
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	177
7.0 Introduction	177
7. 1 Conclusion.....	177
7.2 Recommendation.....	180
7.3 Contribution to the Body of Knowledge	183
REFERENCES	184
APPENDICES.....	194

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	Higher education legislation	14
Table 2:	List of statutory bodies in the higher education sector	15
Table 3:	Distance Education and other Theories	34
Table: 4:	Administrative and Academic Challenges for Distance Education Expansion	67
Table 5:	Support services provided by institutions	94
Table 6:	Categories of Challenges Faced by Distance Students from Rural Areas.....	102
Table 7:	Problems/challenges faced by distance students from rural areas of Zambia	113
Table 8:	Distance Students Statistics by sex from 2010 to 2015	120

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:	Map showing rural areas of Zambia	3
Figure 2:	Map of the University of Zambia	6
Figure 3:	Map showing the Provincial capitals which also have provincial centres of the Institute of Distance Education.....	10
Figure 4:	Enrolment trend analysis of distance students since 1967.....	12
Figure 5:	The conceptual framework	22
Figure 6:	The Theoretical Framework	25
Figure 7:	Percent distribution of the population by rural/urban in 1990, 2000 and 2010.	53
Figure 8:	Gender Parity Index by Rural/Urban and Province, Zambia 2010	59
Figure 9:	UNISA Formal registration by gender.....	62
Figure 10:	Sex of Respondents	90
Figure 11:	Education Levels of the Respondents	91
Figure 12:	Age Ranges for Respondents.....	91
Figure 13:	Participants' Year of Study	92
Figure 14:	Description of Distance Education by Distance Students.....	93
Figure 15:	Student Experiences on Distance Learning	96
Figure 16:	Benefits of distance education	97
Figure 17:	Gendered experiences	98
Figure 18:	Challenges Associated with Distance Education	100
Figure 19:	Summary of the background information	119
Figure 20:	IDE main organogram : Showing the Management Structure of the IDE	161
Figure 21:	Organisation of program development department	162

Figure 22	Department of quality assurance	163
Figure 23:	Department of research consultancy and publication	164
Figure 24:	Marketing & business development unit	165
Figure 25:	Production and distribution unit (PD)	166
Figure 26:	Support services	167
Figure 27:	Registry unit	168
Figure 28:	Library and information services department	169
Figure 29:	Accounts unit	170
Figure 30:	IT manager	171

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter gives the background information to the study. The background consists of an explanation of what gave me the desire to carry out the study, a discussion of Zambia's rural areas and distance education (DE). The next section presents the history of distance education at the University of Zambia (UNZA). The last section in this chapter discusses the policy documents on education. The background chapter has given a comprehensive context of the investigation which explored the coping strategies to barriers experienced by male and female students at the University of Zambia from rural parts of the country as they studied by distance education.

Distance education is becoming a more vital part of the higher education family in Zambia and indeed in many other developing countries. Distance education reaches a broader student audience, better addresses student needs, saves money, and more importantly, uses the principles of modern learning pedagogy (Fitzpatrick, 2001). Public as well as political interest in distance education is especially high in geographic regions where the student population is widely distributed (Sherry, 1996). In fact, public policy leaders, in some places in Zambia, are recommending the use of distance education as opposed to traditional learning. This is because movement to established schools is sometimes difficult geographically, as some roads are impassable during the rainy season and that the fees are more manageable for distance programs compared to the full-time learning.

The case of the Institute of Distance Education, at the University of Zambia is an example of an institution that has previously relied on residential schools to provide interaction between learners and lecturers. The Institute of Distance Education is, from recent past, changing the mode of delivery of its programs. The Institute has introduced the e-learning

for the delivery of its programs at all levels. The residential schools are still being conducted at all levels too.

1.2 Reasons for my study

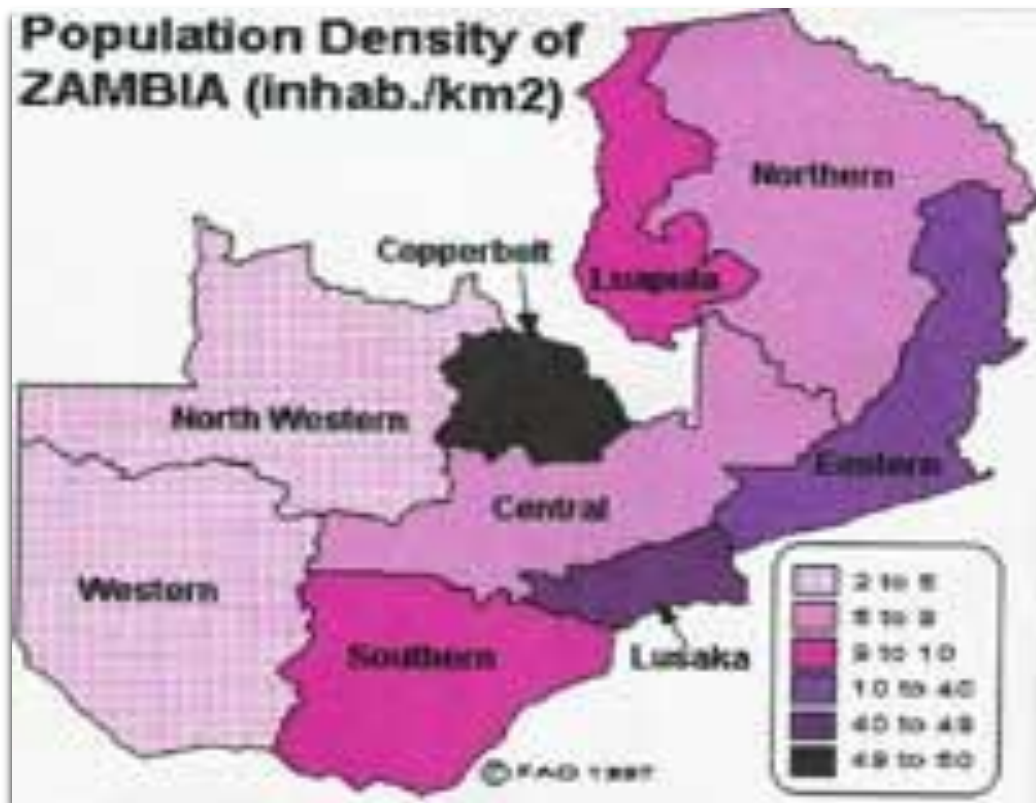
As one of the teaching staff and a coordinator of some courses in one school at UNZA, I was given an opportunity to get involved in the teaching of students who were in the Full-time which is regular and parallel as well as distance education. With this involvement I was able to compare the students' performance in all the above programs. Each group of students performed differently in the course work, examinations and the academic writing in general. Many more appeal cases for students who were studying by distance were forwarded to me for considerations by my supervisors. The appeal cases from the full-time and parallel students were far less in comparison. While some students performed very well, a lot more distance students than the regular students did not perform well at the end of each academic year. Following this trend it was my wish to undertake a study on the students' experience as they study by distance with the aim of finding coping strategies to the negative experiences the students had experienced.

My interest in the field of DE expanded when I noticed that some of the students I was teaching had come from all parts of Zambia. Other students came from the rural areas of Zambia. Some of the students who had come from the rural areas had various negative experiences which I have discussed in this paper in the coming chapters. Others, despite the various challenges they still performed well and even better than the full-time students studying at the University of Zambia. My interest was to find out what coping strategies were used, by the distance students, to do well as they studied. The findings would be very useful to all distance students studying by the distance mode, especially those facing a lot of challenges while learning.

The choice of this case study was by purposeful selection. According to Yin,(1984; 1994) often case studies outstand in their own right. The case in this study was selected by simple intuition. The University of Zambia (UNZA) Distance Education program best fitted my picture of a dual system institution providing both the conventional campus based education and distance education.

1.3 Zambia's rural areas

Figure 1: Map showing rural areas of Zambia



Zambia currently lacks the physical and human infrastructure to cope with the demand for post-secondary education. Further, accessibility to post-secondary education is affected by the distribution of institutions throughout the country. Most of the registered universities are located in the central or urban region of the country, yet the majority of the population

lives in rural areas. The distribution of institutions affects the cost of access. Most of the students are not able to commute from their homes to institutions located in urban areas; thus, they must live near the institution and thereby incur additional costs.

The surface area of Zambia is not very small. It does not allow people to move from one border to another in one single day. Indeed this takes many hours over sub-standard roads too. The sole means of transport is by road, using buses and minibuses as few Zambians own vehicles in rural areas. The roads are mostly gravel and are in poor condition. They are also not lighted. Thus, transportation is a limiting factor to educational access. In Zambia, University Distance Education addresses this barrier, as the majority of the population lives in rural areas. The distribution of institutions affects the cost of access. Most of the students are not able to commute from their homes to institutions located in urban areas; thus, they must live near the institution and thereby incur additional costs. The roads, even those with asphalt, are in poor condition and are not lighted. Due to poor road conditions, the poor mechanical conditions of the vehicles, and speeding, at least 2,000 people die annually from road accidents and about 10,000 are injured. Thus, transportation is a limiting factor to educational access. Distance education addresses this barrier.

1.4 Distance Education in Zambia

Generally, there has been a steady rise in student population among the distance education students in Zambia compared to the conventional study mode since 2006. This could represent the high demand for University education in Zambia at present. The currently high demand for tertiary education is consistent with the Sixth National Development Plan which advocates expansion in access for tertiary education (GRZ, 2011).

Reflecting on the level of access to education in, there has been an upswing increase among distance learning students compared to the conventional students over time. As is commonly noted in Zambia, the distance education female students have consistently outnumbered their male counterparts under the distance learning mode and their number is higher than their female counterparts under the conventional study mode. Generally, there has been a high rise among students accessing university education under the distance learning than under the conventional learning mode as shown by the narrowing of the gap between the two modes of studies in studies conducted by the Ministry of Education.

1.5 The University of Zambia

At independence in 1964, Zambia had just over 100 university graduates and no public university was present. The University of Zambia, the first public university, was established in 1966 and opened its doors to 310 students in its first year. By 1994, the University of Zambia and the Copper belt University had a total enrolment of almost 6 000 students, with 4 592 enrolled at the University of Zambia and 1 393 enrolled at the Copper belt University. (Siachitema, 2005).

By then both universities had cumulatively awarded more than 16 000 degrees, diplomas and certificates (UNESCO 2007; Bloom, Cuning and Chan 2006). The University of Zambia is the country's largest university with a student population of over 15 000 on its two campuses. The main campus is called the Great East Road Campus and is on the Great East Road about 7 km from Lusaka's Business Centre.

The second campus is the Ridgeway Campus in Lusaka, located at the University Teaching Hospital (popularly known as UTH). This campus specifically houses students pursuing courses in medical and pharmacological fields. The University of Zambia has nine Schools (known in some universities as faculties): Agricultural Sciences, Education, Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences, Law, Medicine, Mines, Natural Sciences, and Veterinary medicine.

Figure 2: Map of the University of Zambia



Great East Road Campus

1.6 The Institute of Distance Education

The Institute of Distance Education at the University of Zambia has been mandated to offer their programs exclusively by the distance learning mode starting with programs where study materials and modules were made available to students at all levels.

Distance education at UNZA is parallel to formal education such that there is no direct interaction or face-to-face activity between teacher and students but it is compensated by

contact or counselling sessions (CS) during residential school. The CSs are conducted by the course lecturers who make a few contacts with the students only during the same period.

There is a two-way communication between the lecturer and the student which is facilitated by UNZA through the IDE. The IDE with the help of course lecturers develop self-instructional materials (SIMs) which are called modules. These materials are prepared by course lecturers and the IDE. The communication between lecturers and students is termed as indirect interaction which takes place through mails and is supplemented by some electronic media. The media, either print or electronic, is very important, in as far as communication is concerned in DE.

One of the recommendations of the Lockwood Commission, whose report in 1963 led to the establishment of the University of Zambia, was that degree programs should be available by distance study to suitably qualified candidates who might not be in a position to attend the University on full-time basis. The University set about implementing this recommendation at once and hence from the outset it has offered some degree programs by distance teaching (Siaciwena, 1988).

Chifwepa (2006), observes that an autonomous Department of Correspondence Studies was established in 1966 to coordinate distance learning courses, which were launched in March, 1967. This was offered by various Schools at the institution. In 1975 the Department of Correspondence Studies became part of the Centre for Continuing Education (C.C.E.), which was established by merging into one body the Department of Extra-Mural Studies (established in 1966), the Department of Correspondence Studies (established in 1966) and the Institute of Education (established in 1967). In 1994 the

Centre for Continuing Education was dissolved and the Directorate of Distance Education was created. Following the approval of the expansion project by the University of Zambia Human Resource and Infrastructure Committee, the Directorate was later transformed into the Institute of Distance Education (IDE) in July, 2009.

Under the old structure, the organization, administration and coordination of distance learning courses was the responsibility of the Institute of Distance Education, but all tuition was given by members of academic staff of the various Schools of study. Members of staff of the Schools offering courses by distance teaching prepared all study materials and assignments in accordance with approved course outlines, (Siaciwena, 2007). This was, however, likely to change because, following the attainment of a semi-autonomous status, the IDE was allowed to recruit its own academic and support staff.

Currently, the IDE offers one (1) Doctorate (Doctor of Philosophy- DPhil), Sixteen (16) Master's degree programs, Four Diploma programs and one (1) Certificate. All students admitted to all programs can now access training via Astria Online Platform from wherever they are. The new applicants can also apply via online and get instant feedback. The Institute of Distance Education has its centres in all the Provinces in Zambia, where students can access these centres for various queries. For example, writing of examinations can also be done in all these centres and a student does not require to travel to Lusaka, the capital city, to write an examination for assessment.

The following are the Provincial Centres for the IDE of the University of Zambia;

Kitwe – 3466, Kantanta Street, Nkana East.

Solwezi – NAPSA Building, R30 Ground Floor.

Livingstone	–	Kenyatta Street
Kasama	–	Zambia National Building Society. 1 st Floor
Chipata	–	Moth Area, Kombe Street Parirenyatwa Road
Mongu	–	NAPSA Building, R506 Northern Wing.
Mansa	–	NAPSA Building, R3404
Kabwe	--	NAPSA Building, chitanda house, 2 nd Floor, R207
Choma	–	Choma Secondary School
Mpika	–	Zambia College of Agriculture
Lusaka	--	UNZA, Great East Road Campus

Source: IDE 2016

Figure 3: Map showing the Provincial capitals which also have provincial centres of the Institute of Distance Education



1.7 History of Distance Education at the University of Zambia

The University of Zambia (UNZA) established its distance education Unit in 1966, the year of its inception (Siaciwena and Lubinda, 2008). Indeed since then, distance education has played its historical role of contributing to the development of human resources and has helped to address the issues of inequalities in higher education provision in Zambia. Key areas of human resource development include: enhancement of teacher quality in the school system; training of information managers and librarians; training of personnel in social sciences; upgrading of teacher trainers and education administrators; training of teachers for children with special education needs; training of adult educators and community development workers. Most recently, the University has added new fields of study via the distance learning mode such as: training of nursing staff; training of

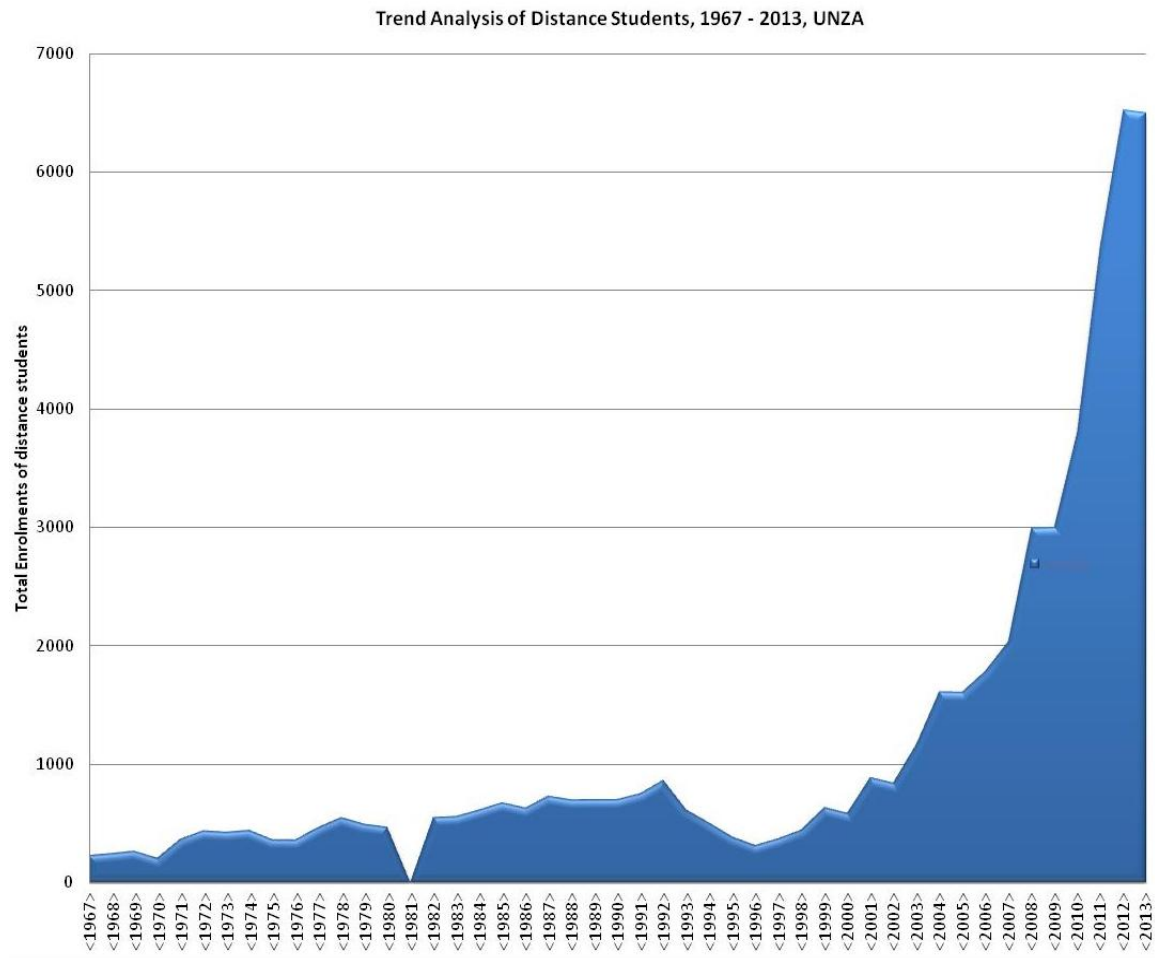
laboratory diagnostics experts; heard health managers; sports administrators and environmental educators.

Much as there has been noticeable increase in the number of programmes offered through the distance learning mode, there has been no attempt to compare levels of access to education at the University of Zambia in relation to the mode of study, that is distance and conventional. Potentially, in the absence of such vital information, the decision making process regarding resource allocation, responsive system designing, relevant policy formulation, become a night mare. This is the gap that the study sought to bridge. It was hoped that through this study, the University could reposition itself as a leader not only in the country but also in the sub-region in the provision of distance education.

Progression of IDE since 1967

The University of Zambia, through the Institute of Distance Education (IDE), has been offering distance education since 1966. The number of distance students has grown tremendously in the past 49 years from the initial 300 to about 8,000 students currently registered (see Fig. 3).

Figure 4: Enrolment trend analysis of distance students since 1967



Source: IDE, 2015

In 2009 Directorate of Distance Education (DDE) was renamed Institute of Distance Education (IDE). This signalled an expansion of its programs and it now became semi-autonomous in its operations within the University of Zambia. Unfortunately, there has been no corresponding increase in staffing levels to the expansion in the IDE programs and student numbers. Although the establishment for IDE is eighty (80) members of staff, only thirty eight (38) are on station, culminating in compromised quality of delivery to our Distance Students.

IDE currently offers thirteen (13) degree programs and three (3) Diploma programs to Undergraduate students. Furthermore, in accordance with Strategic Direction 8.3, starting from 2014/2015 Academic Year, IDE, in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU), started offering postgraduate programs. There are Four (4) Masters Degrees (Master of Science in Peace, Leadership and Conflict Resolution; Master of Business Administration; Master of Science in Counselling; Master of Education in Educational Management) as well as Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programs in various fields. For the 2016/2017 academic Year there are about 300 students registered under the UNZA-ZOU Postgraduate program. Altogether there are over 8, 000 Distance Students studying at UNZA currently (IDE, 2015).

1.8 Policy Documents on Education

The higher education policy environment in Zambia is increasingly diverse and complex, with more institutions, students and regionalisation. It is regulated by autonomous, semi-autonomous and government institutions. The main regulator of higher education is the Higher Education Authority (HEA) through the Ministry of Higher Education.

There are various pieces of legislation, regulation and policy governing education in Zambia. Goals and objectives for the higher education sector have been set through consultative processes, involving all stakeholders (including civil society, non-governmental organisations and co-operating partners). In addition, Zambia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2007) identifies a series of broad roles for higher education.

Table 1: Higher education legislation

Higher education legislation	Brief description
The Education Act of 1966, supported by the Zambia Statutory Instrument No. 43 of 1993	Provides a legal framework for the development of the education system in Zambia (basic, high school, college education and university education).
The Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) (Amendment) Act, 2005	Provides the necessary legal framework for the development of TEVET in general and the establishment of the TEVETA and management boards for training institutions in particular. It also provides for the active participation of the private sector in the provision of TEVET programmes in Zambia.
The University Act No. 11 of 1999	The legal requirements for the establishment and governance of university education. It also defines the conditions and parameters for establishing private institutions and for maintenance of academic standards.

Source: Umlilo we Mfundo (2007)

Table 2: List of statutory bodies in the higher education sector

Statutory body	Brief description
The Technical Education and Vocation Training Authority (TEVETA)	The regulatory body for technical and vocational training institutions.
The Examination Council of Zambia	The body responsible for regulating examinations with the exception of university examinations.
University councils	The bodies responsible for overseeing university education within the Institutions themselves at policy level.

Sources: SARUA MoE questionnaires (2011)

Other important documents that inform higher education policy and planning include the Zambia Vision 2030 document, the Fifth National Development Plan (2006–2010) and the Sixth National Development Plan (2011–2015) (GRZ 2006a, 2006b). Vision 2030 is Zambia’s first long-term plan, expressing the country’s aspirations by the year 2030. Its intention is to provide a common planning interface for all sectors and a source of direction for subsequent short and long-term plans.

With the growing numbers and types of higher education institutions, the policy considerations imply that, in the absence of an integrated national policy for higher education, provision at this level tends to be fragmented and uncoordinated. To remedy this situation, the government plans to establish a Higher Education Authority (HEA) for the co-ordination of all higher level education, and will mandate the Ministry of Education

to facilitate its establishment. The HEA has advisory, planning, quality assurance, financial and administrative functions.

Six points sum up the higher education policy context in Zambia:

- i. The Ministry of Education promotes the co-ordination and harmonisation of higher education and policy through the Higher Education Authority (HEA).
- ii. The ministry's policy framework for publicly-funded universities is that: (a) their teaching and research programmes be responsive to the real needs of society; (b) their teaching, research and service be of international standards; and (c) they establish suitable quality assurance and public accountability systems.
- iii. The financing of higher education will be shared between the government, the institutions themselves, and students.
- iv. Higher education institutions will develop strategies for widening their resource base and diversifying their sources of revenue.
- v. Government support for students in higher education institutions will be in the form of loans that will be recovered once the students find employment.
- vi. Higher education institutions will be given equal opportunity to access government consultancies for which they will compete on an equal footing with other applicants.

1.9 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has given the background of the study. The desire for having come up with this study and a comprehensive background has been explained. The history of distance education at UNZA has also been presented with a discussion on policy documents on education.

CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION

2.0 Overview

This chapter presents an introduction to this Study. It discusses the status of distance education at the University of Zambia (UNZA) and the role of distance education for the rural population in Zambia. The chapter further presents the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study and the research objectives from which the research questions were derived. In addition, this chapter discusses the theoretical framework which has the inclusion of the equivalent theory and the definition of theory, from where this study has derived its ideas on coping strategies to distance education, followed by the significance of the study and the operational definitions. Lastly, a summary of the chapter is presented.

2.1 The Status of Distance Education in Zambia

Since its inception, in 1966, the University of Zambia (UNZA) has been offering some of its degree, diploma and certificate programs through distance learning. According to Siachiwena (2000) distance education was developed to: - (a) contribute to the development of human resource, (b) meet the educational needs of many capable adults who missed the opportunity to benefit from university education because of lack of facilities prior to 1966, and (c) widen access to university education to many adults who, for various reasons, cannot attend the university full-time. Generally education in Zambia is recognized as a very important pre - requisite for socio - economic development.

The University of Zambia is mandated, and expected, to help overcome the social, economic and scientific challenges of the 21st century through the provision of high

quality, high level human resources. This in turn will help to manage the dynamic and vibrant economy of the entire nation (Mwanza 2006). It is also expected to widen participation in higher education (University of Zambia 2002; Serpell 2006).

With the steady rise of access to higher education in the country, many programs have been developed at the University of Zambia to remain competitive. University education by distance will also prepare to accommodate an increase of adult learners and students in remote locations especially the rural parts of Zambia. However, with quick growth, critics have questioned everything about distance education. Problems with quality, support services and developing new learning techniques to engage and encourage learners in a completely online setting have been a very big challenge (Siaciwena, 2007). This is because most rural parts of Zambia are not developed.

Distance education has helped UNZA to reach a relatively large pool of students with little additional cost by comparison to enrolment in full-time study programs. It has also contributed positively towards the institution's policy of increasing the participation of women and rural people in university education. Thus, it has served as a means of ensuring that the learning needs of young people, as well as those of adults are met (Siaciwena, 2006)

In a broader sense distance education at UNZA contributed to the efforts made as the country struggled in as far as the achievement of the third Millennium Development Goal (promoting gender equality and empowerment of women) was concerned. This is because

more female students have enrolled to learn by distance model than by the regular or traditional model.

2.2 The Role of Distance Education

The idea that Education is a right and not a privilege has further supported the growth and development of distance education programs Worldwide. Meyer (2006) explores the role of distance education in the great access to education debate. Meyers (2006) explains, “Distance education is the avenue for making higher education universally available” (Meyers, 2006:55). Distance Education has indeed increased access to education for formally underserved populations. Deimann and Bastiaens (2010) add, “Distance Education has emerged as a significant trend in our ever-changing, knowledge-based society” (Deimann & Bastiaens, 2010:1). Online Learning has allowed active military to participant in programs while deployed; working adults and parents to return to school to pursue a degree or to change careers; and people in isolated regions to gain access to higher education just because they own a computer.

2.3 Statement of the Problem

Barriers, which cause problems encountered by undergraduate distance education students from rural areas of Zambia and, indeed in most parts of the country, fall into several distinct categories such as; costs and motivators, feedback and teacher contact, student support and services, alienation and isolation, lack of experience, and training (Siaciwena, et al, 2005). More so than conventional students, distance education students are more likely to have insecurities about learning (Knapper, 1988). These insecurities are founded in personal and school related issues such as financial costs of study, disruption of family life, perceived irrelevance of their studies and lack of role models in the communities, as

fewer people prefer to work from rural areas than in urban areas. These pressures often result in less completion rates than among conventional students (Sweet, 1986).

Specifically, distance education students from rural areas of Zambia face distinct barriers such as; poor communication, lack of role models in their immediate communities, lack of knowledge in the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) facilities, disruption of family life in the case of females, limited availability of library facilities, lack of ideal energy facilities, some restrictions of male chauvinists in spouse's educational advancements and long distance between fellow learners. These barriers have caused problems for some of the students at distance education as some students have failed to complete their studies (Randall, 2008). Some take unnecessarily longer period to finish their programs.

However, while some students from rural areas fail to complete their studies, others have managed to finish their studies with less difficulties. We do not know how these students studying by distance in rural parts of Zambia cope with all the barriers mentioned above as well as other experiences this study may review. This case study is set out to establish and explore coping strategies to barriers experienced by male and female undergraduate distance education students, from rural parts of Zambia, at the University of Zambia.

2.4 The Main Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study was to identify and explore coping strategies to experiences of distance undergraduate students at the University of Zambia from rural parts of Zambia as they learn by distance. The study also intended to examine the nature and provision of support services at UNZA and to work toward recommendations for their improvement.

2.5 Specific Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- a) To establish the meaning and scope of distance education from the perspective of students.
- b) To identify the influence of different forms of support services available for distance students in the rural areas.

- c) To identify gendered experiences of undergraduate university students at distance education from the rural areas.
- d) To explore how distance students from the rural areas in Zambia cope as they learn at the University of Zambia .

2.6 Research Questions

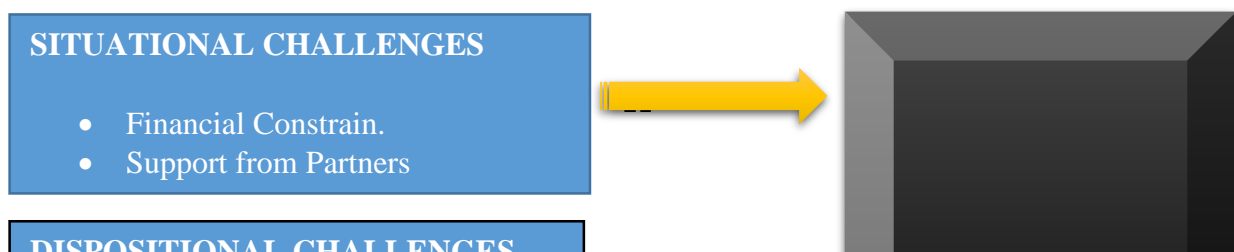
The questions that I had were research questions based on substantial experience and Theoretical knowledge of distance education and distance learning that I had been part of over the years as a Lecturer. The questions were then refined and grounded from the discourse and discussions with different DE stakeholders at UNZA. The research questions were continuously revised and refined to function as interpretative type of questions. The following were the research questions developed for this study:

- a) What is the meaning and scope of distance education from the perspective of students?
- b) How do different forms of support services available for distance students in the rural areas of Zambia influence their learning?
- c) What are the gendered experiences for undergraduate university students at distance education from the rural areas of Zambia?
- d) How do distance students from the rural areas in Zambia cope with the negative experiences as they learn at the University of Zambia?

2.7 The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for coping strategies to challenges experienced by students at distance education from rural areas of Zambia.

Figure 5: The conceptual framework



a)

b)

c)

d)

Source: Field Work 2016

A conceptual framework is a written or visual presentation that explains either graphically, or in narrative form, the main things to be studied, the key factors, concepts or variables and the presumed relationship among them. This conceptual framework below is my own model which has illustrated variables that have specified the challenges experienced by distance education students from the rural areas in Zambia. These variables have given a direction for this study, as the main objective of this study was to explore the coping strategies to challenges experienced by distance students from the rural areas in Zambia.

As it is said that when one wants to win the battle, at a battle front, one must, first of all, study the weaknesses of one's enemy. This will make one to strike effectively and win the battle. In this case, the enemies are the four categories of the challenges which the distance

education students from the rural areas face as they study using the distance mode of learning. If the challenges can be known and well-studied, it can be very easy for the coping strategies to be worked upon for the challenges to have less impact.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

This section outlines the theory of distance education as used in this study. It has mainly discussed the equivalent theory by Simonson (1995). The section has also sighted some theories which have been proposed to describe distance education which relate to the equivalent theory. These are theories of Independence and Autonomy by Wedemeyer (1971) and (Moore, 1994).

2.8.1 Definition of Theory

Theory provides a means (order and explanation) to make sense of complex practices and phenomena (Garrison, 2000). Ideally, theory can describe current activities and provide direction for new approaches. According to Garrison, meaningful and relevant theory is essential to the vitality and influence of any field of practice – distance education is no exception.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1984: 11) a theory is “an explanation, a systematic account of relationships among phenomena.” It is a coherent and systematic ordering of ideas, concepts, and models with the purpose of constructing meaning to explain, interpret and shape practice. Theory, therefore, can provide a perspective that reduces complexity while suggesting generalizability in the practice of distance education. Theories must be developed that speak to the needs and concerns of new audience. In this

study, the new audiences are the group of male and female distance learners that are at the University of Zambia from the rural areas of Zambia. Another kind of the new audiences is traditional higher education institutions which have a strong interest and stake in adopting distance education approaches but are in conflict internally (Garrison and Anderson, 1999).

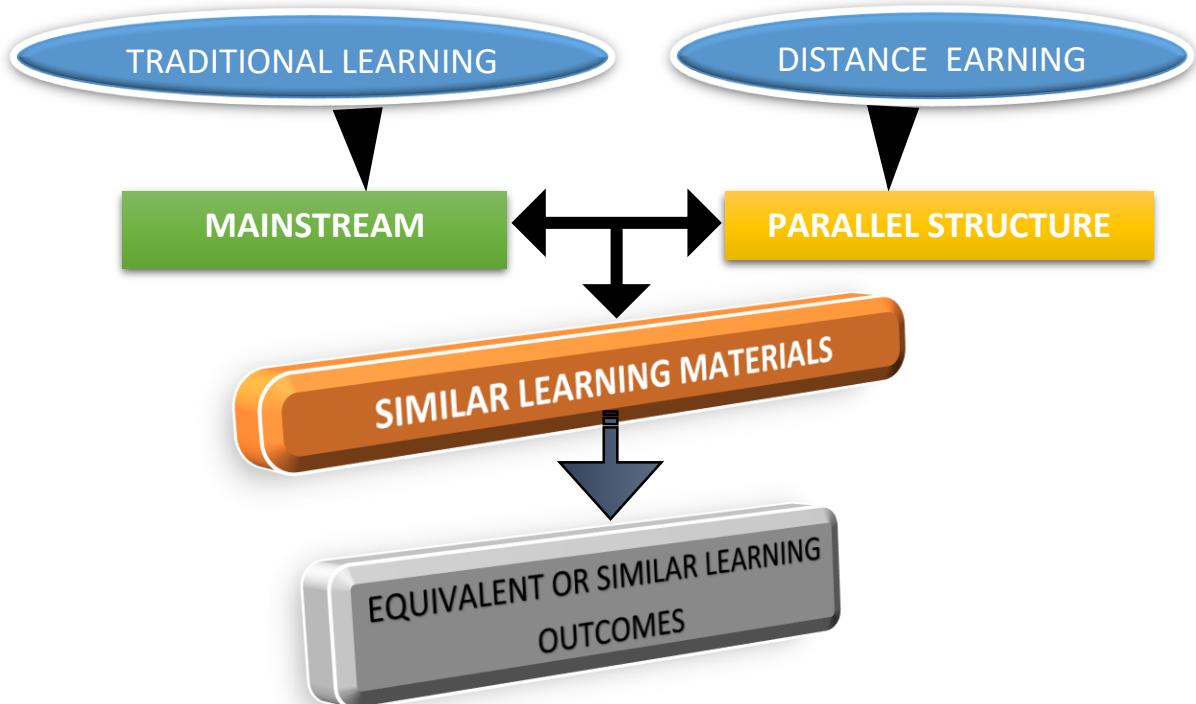
2.8.2 The Need for an Appropriate Theory for Distance Learning

Classical distance education theorists need to address the changes to distance education facilitated by new technologies and meaningful strategies to enhance distance learning. Advocates of the new theories must consider the relationship of these to the traditional strengths of distance education. For example, the new theories' focus on face-to-face instruction eliminates the advantage of time independent learning that traditional theories of distance education value. The debate of these theoretical issues will only increase in the face of continued technological change which can cater for all students including those from rural parts of Zambia.

2.8.3 The Equivalent Theory

This study has mainly used The Equivalent Theory by Simonson (1995). Central to this theoretical approach is the concept of equivalency. Simonson and Schlosser (1995) have written a lot on this theory that it should not be necessary for any group of learners to compensate for different, possibly, lesser instructional learning experiences. The theory points out that it is the responsibility of the distance educators to design learning events that provide experiences with equal value for learners. Students should have learning experiences that are tailored to the environment and situation in which they find themselves.

Figure 6: The Theoretical Framework:



Source: Simonson and Schlosser (1995)

Figure 2.8.1 above shows the theoretical framework adopted in this study. The theoretical framework diagrammatically presented shows that traditional learning and distance education achieves similar outcomes when similar materials are used for the purpose of learning.

However, it is important to make mention that the challenges, whether in the mainstream or parallel programs, that students face from different localities differ. That is, the challenges that distance education students' face in urban areas are different from those faced by students from rural parts of the country. As the case is with distance learners from rural parts of Zambia the learning experiences of these learners and their counterparts from urban areas in Zambia therefore may not be the same. This is due to many reasons which this paper has mentioned in the later chapters.

The equivalency approach is generally supported by Shale (1988), who argues that distance education is not a distinct field of education. Keegan (1995: 19) also supports this idea and states that; “The concept of equivalency is central to the widespread acceptance of distance education”. This means therefore that if teachers, learners, and the public, in general, identify learning at a distance as the equivalent of what they consider to be traditional learning, then distance learning will become mainstream, in Zambia and particularly for the students that are from the rural areas just as shown in the figure above. If equivalency is not what the public perceives, then distance education will continue to be less important to the field of education.

According to Simonson, there are several key elements to Equivalency Theory. These are; appropriate application, concepts of equivalency, learning experiences, students and outcomes (Simonson et al 1999).

Below is an outline of these key elements to the Equivalency Theory as stated by Simonson and the others (1999);

2.8.4 Appropriate application

Appropriate application implies that learning experiences suitable to the needs of the individual learner and the learning situation should be available and that the availability of learning experiences should be proper and timely. In other words, learning experiences that are made available to either distant or local learners should allow delivery of instructional ideas that fit the expectations and facilities available to them; desktop video conferencing should not be expected of learners accessing Web-based information by modem. Similarly, collaborative learning strategies are not appropriate when an individual

learner is isolated unless an equivalent, technology-based collaboration is arranged. . This also means that there must be an equivalent portion of learner activities for the students from the rural and remote areas who are studying at UNZA by the distance mode, as the Web-based information may not be available to most of the students.

2.8.5 Concepts of equivalency

Central to this theoretical approach is the concept of equivalency. Local and distant learners have fundamentally different environments in which to learn. It is the responsibility of the distance educator to design learning events that provide experiences with equal value for learners. Just as a triangle and a square may have the same area and be considered equivalent even though they are different geometrical shapes, the experiences of the local learner and the distant learner should have equivalent value even though these experiences might be very different (Simonson, et al 1999)

It is important to make mention that the changing and diverse environment in which distance education is practiced has inhibited the development of a single theory upon which to base practice and research. Although a variety of theories have been proposed to describe traditional distance education, recent emerging theories based on the capabilities of new interactive telecommunications-based audio and video systems suggest that distance education may not be a distinct field of education. Both the utilization of existing educational theory and the creation of equivalent experiences for the distant and local learner have been emphasized in this study. Classical distance education theorists need to address the changes to distance education facilitated by new technologies to embrace all. It should include the people and students from the rural areas in the developing nations.

Therefore, the Advocates of the new theories must consider the relationship of these to the strengths of distance education. For example, the new theories' focus on face-to-face instruction eliminates the advantage of time and independent learning that traditional theories of distance education value.

However, the concept of equivalency is central to the widespread acceptance of distance education. If teachers, learners and the public in general, do identify learning at a distance as the equivalent of what they consider to be traditional learning, then distance learning will become mainstream. If equivalency is not what the public perceives, then distance education will continue to be peripheral to the field of education.

2.8.6 Learning experience

A learning experience is anything that happens to the student to promote learning, including what is observed, felt, heard, or done. It is likely that different students in various locations, learning at different times, may require a different mix of learning experiences. Some may need a greater amount of observing while others require a larger dosage of doing. The goal of instructional planning is to make the sum of experiences for each learner equivalent. Instructional design procedures should attempt to anticipate and provide the collection of experiences that will be most suitable for each student or group of students. For example, if library resources are important to a course or unit, then library resources should be available. This does not mean that distant learners in a university research course will need access to a modern research library. It does mean that the educational equivalent of the resources of the library should be as readily available to the distant learner as they

are to the local learner, whether electronically, through collaborative agreements with local libraries, or through the delivery of library resources to the distant student.

2.8.7 Students

Students are the ones involved in the formal, institutionally based learning activity which is the course or unit of instruction. Students should be defined by their enrolment in a course, not by their location. They necessarily seek institutionally-based education, sanctioned by a recognized and accredited organization.

2.8.8 Outcomes

The outcomes of a learning experience are those obvious, measurable, and significant changes that occur cognitively and effectively in learners because of their participation in the course or unit. Outcomes consist of at least two categories: those that are instructor determined and those determined by learners. Instructor-determined outcomes are usually stated as course goals and objectives and identify what learners should be able to accomplish after the learning experience that they could not accomplish prior to participating in it. Learner-determined outcomes are less specific, more personal, and relate to what the learner hopes to accomplish as a result of participation. Equivalent learner-determined outcomes are identified when students enrol in follow-up courses or apply newly learned skills to job or course situations.

Keegan's concept of distance education is the separation of teaching acts in time and place from learning acts (Keegan 1986). Successful distance education, he believes, requires the reintegration of the two acts. Possibly the emphasis on making learning experiences equivalent for learners would contribute to the reunification of teaching and learning as

simultaneously occurring acts. Equivalency theory should be evaluated by applying Keegan's criteria, as well as others, to determine if it is an approach to distance education that is appropriate.

2.8.9 Theories of Independence and Autonomy

Charles Wedemeyer (1971) in the 1960s broke from the concept of correspondence study and focused, instead, on independent study or learning. He noted that a “ particular philosophy of teaching and learning usually lies behind the concepts of independent study and learning” (Wedemeyer 1971: 548) The focus on pedagogical assumptions of independent study was dominated by organizations and administrative concerns, to a focus on educational issues concerning learning at a distance (Garrison Randy, 2000)

According to Wedemeyer (1971) independent study was focused on the characteristics and advantages of independent learning – not the least of which was “a democratic social ideal” (Wedemeyer 1971:549) of not denying anybody the opportunity to learn. This would also include the learners who came from rural areas as opposed to those from urban areas. Most significantly, Wedemeyer (1971) also noted that; “Independent study courses offer less freedom in determination and activity selection”, Wedemeyer (1971:551). He insisted that the independent study methods is not in its basic concepts, different from other teaching – learning methods. This makes Wedemeyers’ work very relevant to this study as it contributes to the new era of theory development which will help map out some workable strategies to learning experiences in distance education at The University of Zambia.

2.9. Theoretical perspectives and its Implications for Women in Distance Learning.

The concept of open and distance education is a scheme that affords a nation the opportunity to effectively transmit educational benefits to all its citizens cheaply and more effectively, especially those hitherto unreached or denied access on the basis of one social consideration or the other. Zambian women undoubtedly fall within this category and this system of education affords them the opportunity to pursue the gift of knowledge without contradicting any societal dictates. . The uniqueness of distance education as a women empowerment strategy can be gleaned from the fact that it straddles so many facets of the social system. The social realities in contemporary times has shown that the limitation in the access of many women to Education Opportunities which would have enhanced their empowerment is due chiefly to the inability of the learner and the instructor to be in face-to-face contact.

Okeke (1995: 60) in her definition of the term empowerment she stated that:

Empowerment is the process and the result of the process whereby the powerless or less powerful members of the society gain greater access and control over material and knowledge, resources, challenges and ideologies of discrimination and subordination and transform the Institutions and structures through which unequal access and control over resources is sustained and perpetuated.

The above definitions show that empowerment implies that an individual or a group had really lacked power or authority by circumstances, denial or default. The issue of women empowerment has become a part of popular debate in a lot of societies. It has however been misconstrued in many ways; to a great majority empowerment suggests women's

power to fight men, including their husbands. The very mention of the term empowerment generates strong emotional connotations that construe violent revolutionary action of some sort or the other. (Olakulein, 2004).

The distance learning system holds special implication for the women, especially in a developing society such as Zambia. Many market women, traders, businesswomen, working women as well as women and girls resident in the sub-rural societies could benefit from this scheme. Another implication of distance education is that it would go a long way in increasing on the literacy level of Zambians, especially those from rural and remote areas generally and the women especially. This observation confirms the assertion of Okeke (1995) that education is the most effective strategy for promoting women empowerment.

Education opens the opportunity and choice for women (UNFPA, 1994). This means that when women are given the requisite education, relevant to their needs and environment, they will gradually become more visible and recognised in the mainstream of activities both at home and in society at large.

In a paper on Research in Distance Education – Past, present and future (Rekkedal, 1994), observes that in the 1970's it was quite common that reports from distance education research projects started with a regret for the lack of prior theory or empirical research data. Despite this observation one could admit that progress has been made in developing a body of theory of distance learning. Theories on distance education and the few that are available on women have therefore been reviewed to assess their implication for open and distance learning for women.

Desmond Keegan (1986) identifies three historical approaches to the development of a theory of distance education. He classified them into the following three categories:

Theories of independence and autonomy (Wedemeyer and Moore, 1990), Theories of industrialization of teaching (Peters, 1993) Theories of interaction and communication (Holmberg, 1989)

Table 3: Distance Education and other Theories

Classes of Theories	Main theme	Key words
Theories of independence and autonomy	DE is the independence of the students	Learner's autonomy, distance between teacher and learner
Theories of industrialization of teaching	DE is the industrialised form of teaching and learning	Mechanization, assembly line, mass production, and standardization
Theories of interaction and Communication	Distance teaching supports student motivation, promote learning pleasure, creates feelings of rapport between learner and the distance education	Motivation, learning pleasure, rapport between learner and the distance education institution.

	institution	
--	-------------	--

Source: Desmond Keegan (1986)

All these theories have categorised a certain approach to the development of distance education which is very beneficial to this study of coping strategies to distance education by rural students at the University of Zambia.

2.10 Significance of the Study

The study has provided evidence supporting the assumption that even though students have different experiences, both positive and negative experiences, while learning by distance, solutions to some of the negative experiences may be found as education is a mechanism for sustainable education in Zambia and anywhere else globally.

Distance Learners may have different prior learning experiences, and have different learning styles and preferences and coping strategies. These differences are important and must be addressed to meet the learners' diverse needs, and to improve the educational experience of distance learning. Although these diversity are sometimes treated as marginal or remedial, they are central to DE. Learners who are actively engaged in the learning process and sufficiently supported will be more likely to achieve success.

The findings of this study may be of assistance to policy makers and implementers at the Ministry of Education and other Institutes of Distance Education in Zambia. This in the long run will ensure increased access to, and participation by men and women in the distance learning Programs with fewer difficulties.

2.11 Limitations of the Study

Due to large numbers of distance university students in almost all parts of the rural areas of Zambia and the limited funds available for this study, the study was limited to UNZA students coming from only a few selected rural areas of Zambia.

2.12 Delimitation of the Study

This study was made a lot easier as part of the data was collected from distance students who had come to UNZA, for residential school. It was during the same period that some of the data was collected as some of the students who had come to the University of Zambia, Great East Road Campus, for residential school, had come from the research areas for this study.

2.13 Operational Definition

Rural Population : People living in rural areas of Zambia as defined by Zambia National Statistical Office. It is calculated as the difference between total population and urban population.

Distance Education : A system of education in which Students, Tutors and their institutions of learning are separate in space and time (Keegan, 1990, 1996). Teaching and learning is mainly done electronically and through print media.

Technology : The computer industry and internet networks which has improved the global communication which has also imparted learning in a much more efficient and interactive way. Multimedia technology and internet networks have changed the whole philosophy of

learning and distance learning and has provided an opportunity for close interaction between teachers and learners.

- Adult Learner** : Students who are 35 years old and above.
- Young Learner** : Students who are 34 years old and below.
- Experience** : The apprehension of emotion through the senses or mind. The ultimate source and justification for all knowledge which has accumulated in human memory and culture.
- Coping Strategy** : It is a process through which the students successfully manage to learn and complete their studies by distance despite experiencing challenges. Primarily it is a psychological concept of a struggle with conflicts, emotions and demands. It is also a system that individuals have worked out to deal with a social or emotional situation that would otherwise be intolerable.

2.14 Summary

To conclude this chapter, it is important to make mention that the changing and diverse environment in which distance education is practiced has inhibited the development of a single theory upon which to base practice and research. Although a variety of theories have been proposed to describe distance education, recent emerging theories based on the capabilities of new interactive telecommunications-based audio and video systems suggest that distance education may not be a distinct field of education. Both the utilization of existing educational theory and the creation of equivalent experiences for the distant and local learner have been emphasized in this chapter. Classical distance education theorists need to address the changes to distance education facilitated by new technologies to embrace all. It should include the people and students from the rural areas in the developing nations. Therefore, the Advocates of the new theories must consider the relationship of these to the strengths of distance education. For example, the new theories'

focus on face-to-face instruction eliminates the advantage of time and independent learning that traditional theories of distance education value.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 Introduction

This chapter has presented literature that has been written by various scholars, both in Zambia and other parts of the World. The literature has focused on coping strategies to experiences of distance students from rural areas. This literature has been presented under the sub-headings derived from the study objectives as stated in the previous chapters.

3.1 The Nature of Distance Education

The nature of distance education requires learner to be internally motivated; self-directed and possess superior time management skills in order to structure and complete course requirements. Distance Education programs, often heavily marketed to adult populations, provide an excellent opportunity to gain access but only to the right type of students. Distance Education programs need to possess the correct support services to meet the needs of learners but also need to evaluate the type of learner being enrolled in the programs.

Gayle et al (2003) has pointed out that “educational technology and emergence of distance education has continued to grow,” (Gayle et al, 2003:70). Distance Education programmes have enabled students in remote areas or even active deployment to benefit from the educational experience that is delivered to them regardless of their location.

Distance Education programs rely on low overhead and fail to deliver a holistic collegiate experience which can complement, supplement and support students as they pursue their academic goals. Shelton and Saltsman (2005) acknowledge that many distance education

institutions' view do not recognize the need to attain and attract qualified faculty and administrators that can be instrumental in student success (Shelton & Saltsman, 2005).

The idea that Education is a right and not a privilege has further supported the growth and development of distance education programs. Meyer (2006) explores the role of distance education in the great access to education debate. Meyers (2006) explains that, "distance education is the avenue for making higher education universally available" (Meyers, 2006:55). Distance Education has indeed increased access to education for formally underserved populations, including the rural population in Zambia. Deimann and Bastiaens (2010) add, "Distance Education has emerged as a significant trend in our ever-changing, knowledge-based society" (Deimann & Bastiaens, 2010:1).

Davies et al (2010) emphasizes that establishing acceptable principles of best practices and developing standards of quality by which distance education practices can be judged is an appropriate measurement in assessing the validity of distance learning itself (Davies et al, 2010). The quality of a distance education programme is of the utmost importance.

3.2 Definition of Distance Education

A precise definition is important for both the teachers and students when contemplating distance education, and yet, it is not easy to do so. Defining distance education is made more difficult because the development of distance education has changed quickly from first-generation correspondence education to fifth-generation, Gatewood, (2014). Greenberg (1998) defines contemporary distance education as, "planned teaching and learning experiences that use a wide spectrum of technologies to reach the learner at a distance and is designed to encourage learner interaction and certification of learning"

(Greenberg,1998:47). However, Greenberg’s definition does not address whether the student is learning asynchronously or synchronously.

According to Moore (1994), distance education is composed of two elements, each of which can be measured. The first element is the provision for two-way communication (dialog); some systems or programmes offer greater amounts of two-way communication than others. The second element is the extent to which a programme is responsive to the needs of the individual learner (structure); some programs are very structured while others are more responsive to the needs and goals of the individual student. This may be one of the factors which make it very difficult for some students in the rural areas in Zambia to work as expected when learning by distance.

Further, distance education has been defined by Perraton (1986: 19) as “an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and time from the learner”. The link between that “someone” and the learner is provided by different means of communication and institutional support.

Keegan (1995) says that distance education and training result from the technological separation of teachers and learners which frees the student from the necessity of travelling to a fixed place, at a fixed time, to meet fixed people, in order to be trained. This study on copying strategies to challenges on experiences by students in distance education in rural areas of Zambia identifies Keegan’s definition to be the most thorough, although it does not define education as opposed to learning. According to Keegan (1982: 58), Distance Education includes:

- i) *The separation of teacher and student which distinguishes it from the conventional “face to face” learning.*
- ii) *The use of technical media usually prints for writing by both the teacher and learner and so conveys the educational content.*
- iii) *The provision of two-way communication so that the student may Benefit from or even initiate dialogues.*
- iv) *The possibility of occasional meetings for didactic and socialization purposes.*

According to Simonson et al (2000), the term distance education has been applied to a tremendous variety of programs serving numerous audiences via a wide variety of media. American Council on Education (ACE) defines distance education as ‘a system and a process of connecting learners with distributed learning resources’ (Chute, 1999). Students in DE system communicate with the teachers and other fellow students through several media.

Dohmen (1967) further defines distance education as a systematically organized form of self-study in which student counselling, the presentation of learning materials and the securing and supervision of students are carried out by a team of teachers by means of media which may cover long distances.

Differences in time and space for distance education place situational constraints that are not seen in traditional classrooms and must be addressed. According to Gateway (2014), a better word to define distance education is “online”. Technology has advanced a great deal such that distance learning and online learning have for all practical purposes become synonymous. Defining the education as online alerts all parties that technology is being used to carry-out distance education (Gateway, 2014). For students coming from rural parts of Zambia, and learning through distance education, online is not attainable. This is

because most parts of rural Zambia are not yet connected to the national grid, although efforts are underway to electrify rural areas in Zambia and a few parts of these areas have already been electrified.

3.3 History of Distance Education

The application of distance education process goes back to the beginning of 20th century (Kürşat Demiryürek, 1993). Later, distance education was used in both formal and informal education such as teacher training, adult education, continuing education, open learning and higher education. One of the commonly using areas of distance education is rural areas.

Distance Education has grown in popularity, acceptance, and effectiveness. In 1915, creation of the National University Extension Association (NUEA) broadened the focus to other issues, such as necessity of new pedagogical models and new national level guidelines, such as university policies regarding acceptance of credit from correspondence courses, credit transferral, and standard quality for correspondence educators Bizhan Nasseh, (1997).

The University of Chicago faculty survey findings in 1933, suggested that correspondence study should be justified on an experimental basis, generating innovations and research data leading to improvements in teaching methodology (Gerrity, 1976). This research study was very important for the future knowledge base in this field.

Britain's Open University brought a new vision of independence for distance education as distinct from traditional education. Britain's Open University played a major role in the

development of much of the important research in distance learning (Zigerell, 1984). Two individuals who played major roles in the advancement of the state of scholarly research in the field are Charles Wedemeyer of the University of Wisconsin and Gayle Childs of the University of Nebraska (Wright, 1991).

With the advancement in technology, independent study has become more accessible for distance education students. Zigerell (1984:53) wrote, "The ease with which modern communications technologies can link educational institutions to homes, work-sites, and community centres has made adult education and lifelong learning matters of national policy". At the same time, the loads and responsibilities of adults have become of interest to experts and educators in distance learning. Feasley (1983) stated that individuals who must learn at a distance have ongoing obligations such as employment, family responsibilities, handicaps, or live in geographically isolated area, like the case of rural areas of Zambia.

The 1970s and 1980s introduced the related concept "distance education" which posed new challenges to traditional independent study, forcing a re-examination and redefinition of the place of independent study in this new international movement (Wright, 1991).

There has been a tremendous progression in the development of distance education in the whole World from 1728 to 2011. According to Bizhan (1997) the following is a time-line as distance education progressed;

- *1728 : Shorthand correspondence courses become advertised in local newspapers.*
- *1856 : In Europe, language courses become established through post.*

- *1858 : The University of London offers distance-based courses, claiming to be the first of its kind.*
- *1873 : The University of the Cape of Good Hope established as a dedicated distance-learning facility.*
- *1900 : A home-based program targets women in New York, over 20,000 enroll.*
- *1922 : Pennsylvania State College broadcasts courses across radio networks.*
- *1934 : The University of Iowa becomes the first to use television as a learning tool.*
- *1963 : The FCC dedicates 20 television channels for university use and instruction.*
- *1968 : 'Correspondence' is changed to 'Independent study' to divide university and home schooling.*
- *1969 : A 'University without walls' becomes established.*
- *1986 : Pennsylvania State University offers computer-based courses with audio conferencing.*
- *1992 : The Electronic University Network helps to develop university virtual campuses through AOL.*
- *1995 : Regent University offers the first online Ph.D. in communication.*
- *1996 : Duke University offers its Global MBA; combining online classes with campus learning.*
- *1997 : Web CT is released.*
- *2001 : The virtual learning environment, Moodle, is developed.*
- *2005: Almost 3.2 million U.S. students were taking at least one online course at university.*
- *2009 : YouTube EDU introduces thousands of free lectures.*
- *2011 : Distance learning becomes a serious option for UK students hit with a tripled university fee.*

Bilzhan Nasseh (1997: 8).

The research activities of Britain's Open University provided new directions and emphasis for more research in this field. Publication of *Research in Distance Education* in 1989 provided great opportunity to collect information about ongoing research projects and the results of current research in the field of distance education (Moore, 1985).

Coldeway (1982) identified the following reasons for the limitation of research activities in distance education;

- i. Educational researchers are rarely present during the design of distance learning systems.
- ii. There is no clear paradigm for research in distance learning, and it is difficult to attract funds to develop one.
- iii. Some institutions are averse to defining boundaries and variables clearly.
- iv. Educational researchers often ask questions of no practical or even theoretical relevance.
- v. Researchers in the distance learning test variables that are really classes of variables (such as comparisons of distance and classroom learning).

A recent American Federation of Teachers (AFT) task force report states that too little is known about the effectiveness of distance learning and that more independent research is needed (Twigg, 1996). At the same time, Clark (1996), in his paper mentioned that media forms are mere vehicles that deliver instruction, but do not influence student achievement. Clark believes that it is not media, but variables such as instructional method that foster distance learning.

Although there is a visible growth in the amounts of distance education in Zambia's higher educational institutions, few studies have examined students' learning experiences and coping strategies to the challenges of distance learners from rural areas of Zambia. However, it is not media, but variables such as instructional method that foster distance learning.

3.4 History of Distance Education in Zambia

Distance education is an important educational activity especially for developing countries, including Zambia. Distance education has been serving as an alternative method for delivering information to those unable to attend traditional classes regularly for a long time.

Distance education in Zambia has a long history dating as far back as the 1940s, when many Zambians were studying for post primary qualifications through commercial colleges in South Africa and Britain. When Zambia got its independence from the British Colonial Rule in 1964, there was a shortage of educated and trained personnel in both the public and the private sector. This prompted the government of Zambia to adopt Distance and Open Learning as viable strategies to enhance access to education (Siachiwena, 2005). These strategies were particularly important because the government did not have enough money to build sufficient schools. For this reason, a number of programs offering education by distance and non-formal ways were introduced. These included National Correspondence College, and University of Zambia, which also started offering small-scale distance learning programs and technical education and vocational training.

The University of Zambia (UNZA) has been offering some of its degree and diploma programs through distance learning since its inception in 1966. According to Siachiwena, (2007) Distance education was developed to: -

- i) Contribute to the development of human resources,*
- ii) Meet the educational needs of many capable adults who missed the opportunity to benefit from university education because of lack of facilities prior to 1966, and*
- iii) Widen access to university education to many adults who, for various reasons, cannot attend the university full-time*

(Siachiwena, 2007: 1)

Provision of education has taken centre stage in the development processes of most developing countries, including Zambia. It is gratifying to note that, across Zambia, there is an increased seriousness in tackling the challenges to education provision in areas of enrolment, retention, quality, financing and management of education systems.

By ratifying the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or the Education For All (EFA) Declarations, the Zambian Government and indeed most countries have had no option but to address the challenges to the provision of education to all the people including distance education students from rural areas of Zambia.

3.5 Importance of distance Education

Although there are many barriers to distance learning, Evans (1995) has proved that distance learning is very helpful in the education of those not privileged to learn at the

right age and time. Calvert (1986) asserted that distance learning helped to extend the market for education to clients who had not been served with special attention. In addition, Ofoegbu (2007) suggested that one of the ways to ensure that the demand for education conformed to growth in educational facilities was to ensure a well-organized distance education system, which should reach all the people including those from remote and rural parts of a nation. Distance education trends indicate that less effort is needed to ensure access to education for all; especially for the females who are socialized to be more domesticated and docile while boys are encouraged to learn.

Distance learning has been identified as the panacea to the perennial educational challenges of equitable access to learning, equality of educational opportunities, as well as providing a second chance for females and males who drop either out from school due to various reasons or are prevented from receiving face-to-face education by their socio-economic obligation. Coping strategies to the challenges faced by the learners at distance in rural areas of Zambia should be found in order to help them go through the learning process with less difficulty.

It seems clear that distance education will be a substantial alternative for future education systems for governments in not only developed countries, but also developing countries, like Zambia. The emergence of new information dissemination technologies especially the Internet and World Wide Web has significant socio-economic implications in developed countries. New forms of distance education based on these recent communication technologies seem to be more suited people in developed countries due to their available infrastructure and human resources. On the other hand, developing countries have still lack of investments and infrastructure about these technologies and people (especially in rural areas) have less access to them due to their lack of computer literacy and skills Demiryürek and Köprülü (2005). Thus, television seems to be a more suitable and still substantial medium for distance education for rural people in developing countries. It is more accessible and reaches more people, usually with a minimal cost.

The experience of various distance education projects for rural people all over the world shows that multiple media approach which is the combination of television, printed materials and group discussion is more effective in making the learners get something while at distance learning. In particular, the effectiveness of rural distance education can be increased with the support of regular extension services Demiryürek (2000). Rural distance education for developing countries will invariably have to be integrated whole with suitable television broadcasting, simple manuals and regular advisory services in order to achieve satisfactory success.

In relation to coping the strategies employed and perceived levels of self-esteem have been shown to have an impact upon individual wellbeing (Lane et al, 2002; Rector and Rogers, 1996). Self-esteem in this respect can be defined as the extent to which one accepts oneself, respects oneself, and considers oneself a person of worth (Rosenberg and Kaplan, 1982). Coping can be defined as an individual's cognitive and behavioral strategies to manage, reduce or tolerate the external and, or internal demands encountered in any situation (Crocker, et al, 1998, Litman , 2006) and is reflected in the self-protection strategies adopted by the individual.

Owing to the diverse and growing population within higher education in Zambia, a need arises to provide a variety of support mechanisms that are integral to all aspects of the distance student experience in order that student retention and overall cognitive development are enhanced.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Education and Training calls for harmonization of education and training policies in the region that promote widening of provision and access to education and training as well as addressing gender equality at all levels (SADC Protocol on Education and Training, 2000). Omolewa M. (2008) articulates that in Open and distance learning, there is inclusive and free of restrictions imposed by distance and space. In addition, distance learning creates

opportunities for those excluded from formal education because of their gender, age or status. Distance learning makes education accessible to those who are not able to study full time due to their social responsibilities and commitments (SADC Gender Policy, 2008). It also calls upon member states in objective seven to review the educational curricular to make it more relevant to local conditions and ensure that they offer females and males equal access to education.

However, the SADC Protocol does not outline the strategies which can be used by the learners at distance Programs, who are in rural areas of Zambia and, indeed, other member countries to mitigate the many challenges they face as they learn.

A study by Sharmar and Samdum (2008) recommends that increasing access for all to all components of learning; ensuring that no new barriers to access for all through use of technology are created, and providing adequate emotional and academic support to Open and Distance Education Learners.

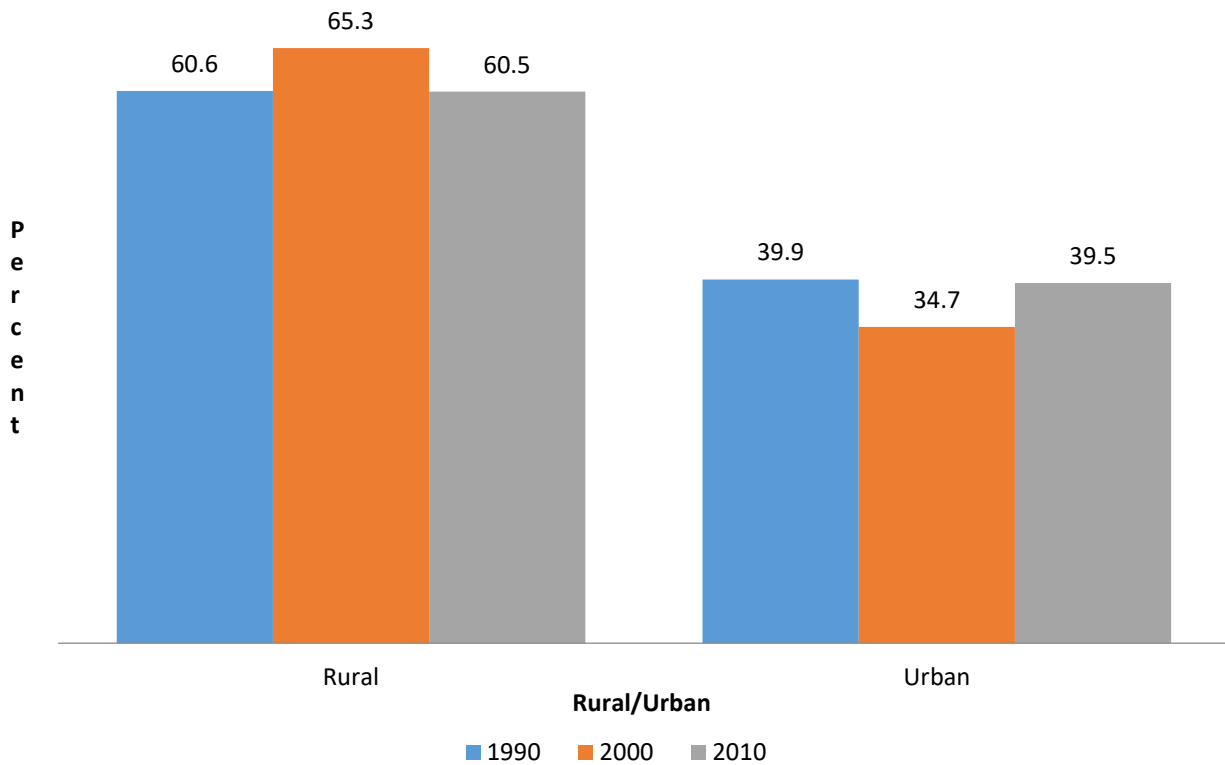
In many developing countries distance education has been used and it has positive impacts in the transfer of information to rural people (Perraton, 2000). Van den Ban and Hawkins (1996) make mention that there are positive impacts of distance education in rural development and stress that the effects of audio-visual media are higher when supported with printed materials and advisory services. In addition, distance education (especially with audio-visual media) relatively attracts more people's attention, supports learning and decision-making while reaching large audiences with lower cost per person reached (Leeuwis, 2004).

3. 6 Zambia's Population Distribution

The population of Zambia has remained largely rural, though the country is also highly urbanised. Between 1990 and 2000, Zambia's rural population increased from 60.6 percent to 65.3 percent. In 2010, the population living in rural areas declined to 60.5 percent. The

urban population in 2010 made up 39.5 percent of the total population. Between 1990 and 2000, the urban population declined from 39.4 percent to 34.7 percent.

Figure 7: Percent distribution of the population by rural/urban in 1990, 2000 and 2010.



Source: 2010 Census of Population and Housing

3.7 Rural Population and Distance Education in Zambia

Since this Case Study is primarily looking at the coping strategies to experiences by students in distance education from rural areas of Zambia, it is important that rural population is defined. As such, rural population refers to people living in rural areas of Zambia. It is calculated as the difference between total population and urban population, (CSO, 2011). However, aggregation of urban and rural population may not add up to total population because of different country coverage.

In 2010 Zambia's population was 13 093 666 (CSO Report, 2012). This was an increase from 9 885 591 in 2000. The population grew at an average annual rate of 2.8 per cent during the 2000-2010 inter-censals. This annual rate was higher than 2.4 per cent recorded in the inter-censal period 1990-2000 (CSO Report, 2012). This ever-growing population needs a rich kind of education which should reach all the citizens including those who live in the rural areas.

3.8 Learning Instructional Strategies in Distance Education

The pervasiveness of differences in learner performance in most instructional settings which include distance education is evidence of the fact that there are, different ways of going about learning (Rigney, 1978). These ways of going about learning have been commonly referred to as learning strategies, cognitive strategies, study habits or approaches to studying (Ibid). If particular learning strategies tend to be more effective for some learners and with certain kinds of subject matter, then it would seem appropriate to investigate if better learning and retention techniques can be taught, especially to students from rural areas in Zambia.

Rigney (1978) describes a learning strategy as embodying the operations and procedures that learners use to acquire, retain, and retrieve different kinds of information. A learning strategy, therefore, may be conceptualised into two parts:

- (a) An orienting task for inducing learners to perform particular kinds of operations and which may be either prescribed by the instructional system or embedded in the instructional materials, and

- (b) One or more representational or self-directional learning capabilities which may also be either prescribed by an instructional system or generated by the learner.

He proposed that, if learning strategies can be considered as either designer-imposed or learner-generated, then there are two ways in which cognitive processes can be enhanced with the help of instructional strategies to ensure maximum benefit for learners. These are as embedded strategies and detached strategies. Embedded strategies are not explicitly identified independently of content. Instead, the instructional materials are designed to coerce learners into using particular processing resources in order to accomplish the orienting tasks that have been specified (Rigney, 1978).

The underlying premise of these approaches is that it is desirable, and also possible to teach students how to be more effective as learners in the acquisition, retention, and retrieval of information, as well as in the performance of given tasks in their materials.

Distance education places greater emphasis on guided independent study on the part of the learner, without eliminating the possibility of some face-to-face contact, either between the teacher and the learners, or the learners themselves.

The greatest challenge for DE institutions, therefore, is the variety of functions they must conduct which call for an equally large number of organisational styles. While running production systems and operating course materials warehouses may be best done through the rigour of industrial processes, functions such as the creation of DE course materials by course teams, as well as by individuals, require the most modern forms of project and personnel management and skill in systematic instructional materials design. In the same

manner, organising the information flows necessary to support effective tutoring and counselling for DE learners is also a complex task.

3.9 Material Development for Distance Education

Since many of the instructional activities commonly associated with conventional face-to-face instruction, such as classroom discussion and immediate and direct feedback are not easy to provide in the DE context. The role of the instructional materials that are prepared in advance of the learning activity is especially important. This is because the quality of the teaching and learning process in DE is dependent on the quality of the study materials (Siachiwena, 2005). The development of high quality instructional materials for DE is a labour intensive and costly affair, and draws upon a wide range of expertise that is not normally found in the repertoire of skills of any one person. Consequently some variation of a team approach to the process is strongly recommended and often adopted (Shaw and Taylor, 1984).

Several approaches to course teams to suit different organisational circumstances have been proposed in the DE arena, and discussed by Holmberg (1983), Mason and Goodenough (1981) and Smith (1980). The dynamics of developing study materials within the context of a team has numerous implications for its members. These range from faculty concerns about losing their control of course content to the day-to-day management of the developmental task.

According to Naidu (1987; 1988), training of staff engaged in the development of DE course materials is necessary, especially to cater for students from rural areas. This is because these students are geographically disadvantaged as the areas they are found in do not have facilities like ICTs and Libraries. DE study materials replace the teacher in more

than the subject matter alone (Jenkins, 1990). Therefore, the materials must be designed in such a way that they provide a substitute for the dialogue possible in the conventional classroom situation, and that it is not just a matter of possessing a good writing style. They should be able to assist the learner from the rural areas as well as those from other places.

The materials, once developed, are considered self-instructional, and, upon receipt of these packages, students are expected to be able to progress with their study independently, with the least amount of additional support. This literature review has not indicated any best way in which students from the rural parts of Zambia.

3.10 Gender and Distance Education

Gender disaggregated data on education has revealed that compared to their male counterparts, women have, for the most part, attained only low levels of formal education. This is based on cultural factors and women's role in society, thus, child bearing, child upbringing, community commitments and societal perceptions (Kwapong, 2008). In Zambia emphasis has not been placed in the Government's policy to directly use distance learning (DL) to facilitate women's education at the higher level of learning.

Distance learning has proved as a sure way of widening access to education most especially for women. It is an educational philosophy that seeks to overcome or remove most of the barriers to education. Open and distance learning could simply be explained as an educational programme that is both open and offered at a distance. The emphasis is on open and distance. It is open in the sense that there are no barriers to accessing the programmes. The distance also implies that the learner and the teacher could be at a

different place and time and engage in an educational transaction using an appropriate media such as print or electronic.

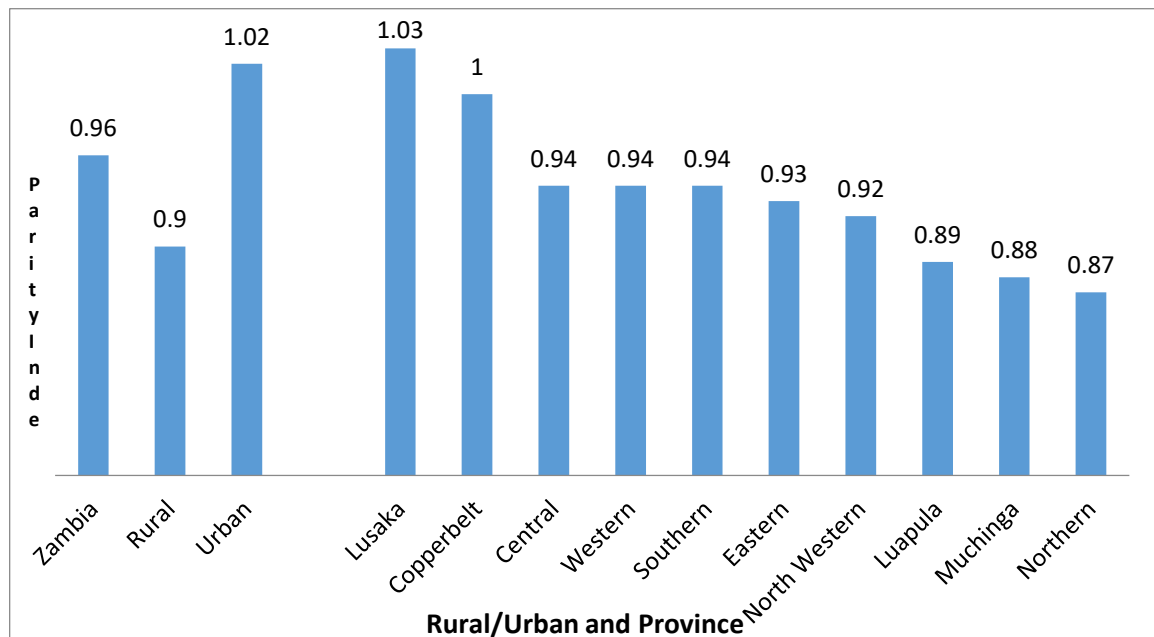
UNESCO (2002) has explained that open and distance learning refers to approaches to learning that focus on freeing learners from constraints of time and place while offering flexible learning opportunities. For many students open and distance learning is a way of combining work and family responsibilities with educational opportunities.

3.10.1 Gender Parity Index

Gender parity index shows the disparities in access to education between males and females. The index helps in addressing unequal access to education among females. Overall, the gender parity index for those currently attending school in Zambia was 0.96. This indicated that there were fewer females than males attending school.

The findings of this study will help providers of distance education in Zambia to come up with ways of addressing the disparities in access to education between males and females.

Figure 8: Gender Parity Index by Rural/Urban and Province, Zambia 2010



Source: 2010 Census of Population and Housing

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) for rural areas was 0.90 while that of urban areas was 1.02. Lusaka Province had the highest GPI of 1.03 while Northern Province had the lowest at 0.87

The concept of open and distance education is a scheme that can afford a nation like Zambia the opportunity to effectively transmit educational benefits to all its citizens cheaply and more effectively, especially those hitherto unreached or denied access on the basis of one social consideration or the other. *Zambian women do fall within this category and this system of education affords them the opportunity to pursue the gift of knowledge without contradicting any societal dictates. The uniqueness of distance education as a women empowerment strategy can be gleaned from the fact that it straddles so many facets of the social system (Olakulehin, 2012).*

The first group to be considered are the class of women who are full time house wives. These women have never had access to formal education or had to give up school at early

stages of their lives. Women in this group are not usually enthusiastic about formal education because their husbands had indicated that they are to sit at home and take care of the home and the children. According to Olakulehin, (2012) such women are usually unable to leave their spouse and children to travel away to a conventional university system.

The challenges posed by this social system is far reaching, in the sense that the woman cannot venture out of the home to a formal school system where she can pursue the much craved training, skills development and education. Many of them have to be contented with seeing their dreams come alive in their children's lives and they unconsciously transfer their dreams to their children's lives. Women in this category will definitely be grateful for distance education, since it allows them to sit at home and study for a programme without jeopardising their marriages or abandon their children (Emunemu and Ayeni, 2003). It is certainly a means of fulfilling the life dreams of many women who have been saddled with the function of full-time housewives. The issue of women education is essential for rural development and women are not well equipped to contribute their useful quota to the society as a result of illiteracy (Azikiwe 1992).

Another group of women are those women who have been denied the access to formal training provided by schools and colleges because of their obedience to some religion and cultural practice. These women can still have access to qualitative education through the open and distance learning approach that allows them to pursue their education at a 'safe distance' from the instructors. They can study, turn in assignments and write examinations after adequate arrangements have been made. A woman in purdah, for example, can be trained and given the opportunity to contribute her own quota to national development

without disobeying any of the injunctions of her religion. Distance education is an alternative that affords this group of women access to quality study materials on any field of their choice without any of the barriers associated with the conventional system and her religious dedication.

3.10.2 The University of South Africa and Distance Education

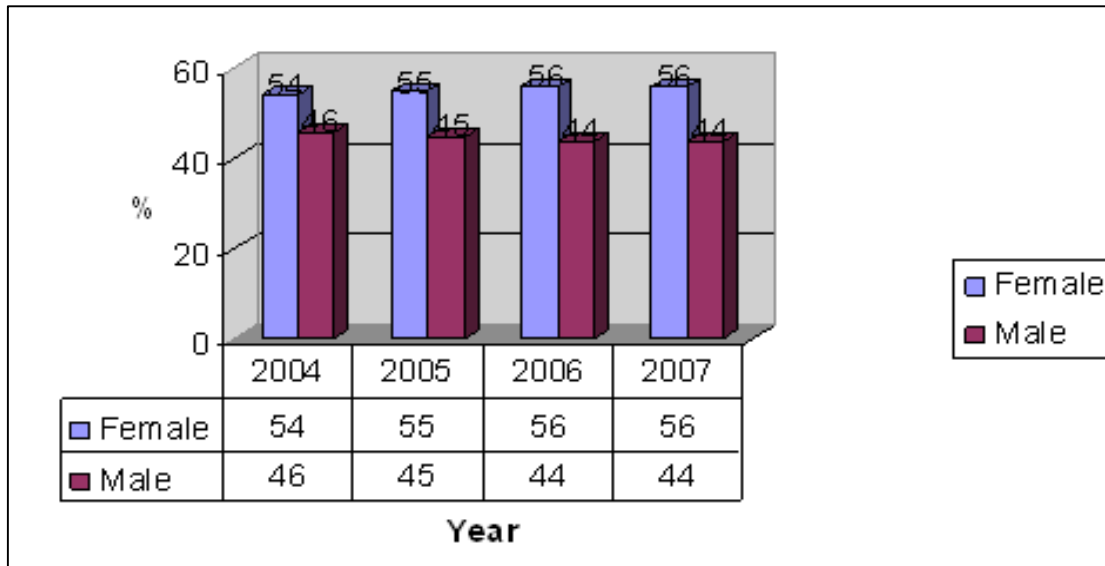
The University of South Africa is located in the sub-Saharan part of Africa. It is one of the oldest Universities involved in the practice of distance education in the Southern African Region (Ngengebule, 2008). This is because it has more than fifty years' experience and takes its place among the major universities of the world (Ngengebule, 2008). As a higher education learning institution, UNISA enrolls more than 85% of the entire distance learning community of students in South Africa (Lephalala and Makoe, 2012). Currently, several lecturers in the School of Education, at the University of Zambia, are also studying for their PhD by distance mode UNISA.

About 60 per cent of the enrolled students at UNISA come from historically marginalised areas (Ngengebule, 2008). This asserts the role of distance education in widening access to marginalised people and to those students living in impenetrable areas. The teaching and learning processes at UNISA are facilitated through the use of face-to-face sessions, correspondence tuition, technology and onsite facilities (Ngengebule, 2008). Tutors use these facilities to contact students and they also use letters and faxes for communication purposes.

It is also worth mentioning it that UNISA enrolled more female students than male students in the years from 2004 to 2007.

More percentages of female students than male students participated in distance education at University of South Africa (UNISA) from year 2004 to 2007.

Figure 9: UNISA Formal registration by gender



Source: UNISA, 2007

Phummer (2002) has observed that just as in on-campus programmes, women do not highly subscribe to science oriented courses. Compared to their male counterparts, women mostly subscribe to humanities rather than the sciences. Conscious effort should, therefore, be made to attract women to the science oriented courses in open and distance learning as well as on-campus.

In trying to search for ways of ensuring that both men and women have equal opportunities to and equal returns from the development processes, as well as equal protection of the human rights of both sexes, vigorous analysis of the gender dimension of development has been undertaken (Mluma, 2006). Many theories have been advanced and models on how to integrate gender in the development processes. For example, approaches have moved from that of Women in Development to Gender and Development and to the Women Empowerment framework, among others.

The education sector, in general, has witnessed numerous efforts to attain gender equality, backed by the realization that education is the key to development. It has been proved, for example, that the education of women significantly enhances the health, education and economic welfare of the family. The Millennium Development Goals report of 2006 states, for example, that survival rates of children of mothers with at least a secondary education are twice as high as those for children with less educated mothers. The under - five mortality rate for children with mothers with secondary education stands at 82 per 1,000 live births as compared to 157 for children with uneducated mothers.

Such evidence, coupled with the broad acceptance that education is a basic human right, accounts for the inclusion of specific gender goals in the EFA and the Millennium Development Goals namely;

"Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality".

(EFA goal no. 2)

"Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality."

(EFA goal no. 5, MDG no. 3)

3.10.3 Gender Interventions at Policy and Implementation Levels in Distance

Education

Recently there have been many interventions at policy and implementation levels, towards meeting the gender equality goals in the education sector, in Zambia.

At policy level interventions have included the following:

- Policy analysis of education policies and plans for gender responsiveness.
 - Sustained advocacy to raise the awareness of education policy makers and planners on the importance of gender equality in education.
 - Development of gender mainstreaming and gender auditing tool.
 - Mainstreaming gender in education policies and plans.
 - Establishment of policies specific to addressing gender-based constraints to participation in education.
- (National Gender Policy, 2014)

Examples of such policies include;

Formulation nation education gender policies;

- Institution of free and compulsory basic education;
- Provision of scholarships to needy girls;
- Affirmative admission policies to reduce the gender gap;
- Institution of re- entry to school after delivery for schoolgirls who get pregnant;
- Legal provisions against such practices as early marriage and sexual harassment to curb non-enrolment and ensure retention of girls in school.

At practical level examples of interventions include:

- Sustained advocacy to raise awareness of education practitioners, parents and the community at large on the importance of sending girls to school and supporting their retention.
- Increasing places for schooling through construction of more schools.
- Provision of boarding facilities for girls to address distances from school and domestic chores constraints to learning.
- Review of curriculum, teaching and learning materials for gender responsiveness.
- Training teachers into gender responsive pedagogy.
- Empowerment of girls with skills to overcome gender challenges and empowerment of boys to respect and practice gender equality.
- Transformation of school environments to become gender responsive academically, physically and socially. This includes provision of sanitary facilities such as separate toilets for boys and girls, water and sanitary wear.

- Making school management systems gender responsive and equipping them with skills with which to handle such issues as sexual harassment, bullying and other forms of gender discrimination.
- Promoting equal participation of both boys and girls in Science, Maths and Technology subjects.

(Mlama , 2006)

All these efforts have resulted in significant achievements in reducing the gender gaps in access, retention and achievement as well as raising the gender awareness of education providers.

This study, could therefore, learn and benefit from the gains of these undertakings in whatever action we may take towards achieving gender equality in Distance Learning.

Various forms of socially constructed gender inequities and inequalities continue to foster gender gaps in education (Ibid). For example, in many parts of the developing world, cultural practices, values and attitudes such as early marriages and domestic labour continue to impact negatively on enrolment, retention and achievement of the girl child (Mlama 2006).

Retention of girls in school is further complicated by teenage pregnancies, lack of gender responsiveness in the teaching and learning processes, the school physical, social and academic environment, as well as in the attitudes of the teachers and the school community as a whole.

The above challenges within the convention class room -based education systems lead to a large pool of girls and women who either, have not had the opportunity to access education or have had to drop out before attaining the required levels of education or girls

and women whose academic performance has been negatively affected leading to their inability to advance to higher levels.

The distance learning system holds great advantages for the entire society. Almost anyone can benefit from this unique system of education. The system, however, holds special implication for the women, especially those from rural areas in a developing country such as Zambia.

According to Okeke (1995), education is the most effective strategy for promoting women empowerment. This is echoed by the United Nations Report on Human Development which has indicated that in Sub-Saharan Africa, education seems to be the only effective means of empowering women.

The influence of quality education in the rural parts of Zambian societies cannot be over emphasized. It is a poverty reduction scheme. It can be used to sensitize women about family planning issues, HIV/AIDS issues, issues relating to peace and governance within their societies, primary health maternal and infant mortality as well as environmentally sustainable practices. Since rural areas of Zambia have the larger population of both the women and men, it is very necessary that the people from the rural areas are assisted to attain higher education through distance education. This can be done by coming up with the coping strategies to the challenges which these people face as they learn by distance mode.

3.11 Institutional Concerns for Growth in Distance Education

It is very important that distance education expands to most rural parts of Zambia, as its importance is crucial to all. This is because most people live in rural parts of Zambia

compared to those living in towns. However, this has not been the case due to many reasons. According to Miller and Schiffman (2006), many of the most important short term concerns about the growth of distance education are administrative. Others are something to do with academic. The table below has shown the administrative challenges and academic challenges which derail the expansion of distance education:

Table: 4: Administrative and Academic Challenges for Distance Education Expansion

ADMNISTRATIVE	ACADEMIC
Funding course development	Fully recognising faculty contributions when their individually authored content is shared by other faculty.
Supporting the new needs for technical help and other student support issues.	Championing a new pedagogy.
Ensuring a flow of resources back to academic units that take faculty from their regular teaching to reach out to on-line learners.	Effectively assessing and evaluating all aspects of the performance of on-line courses.
Deciding which services should be supported centrally and which should be supported locally.	Holding faculty members accountable for their use of on-line materials in a blended environment.
Managing the breakdown of traditional areas of administrative authority and turf as innovation diffuses throughout the institution	Ensuring curricular coherence across sections of a course or across campuses.

Source: Miller and Schiffman (2006)

Faculties who teach distance education courses need organizational and administrative support from the institution. Funding should be provided to create an administrative unit that is to be responsible for managing the program. Institutional leaders must be committed to distance programs. Mars (1995) agrees when he says, "Without this support, distance education is at risk of becoming a peripheral activity, without commitment from or significance to the institution." (Mars, 1995: 21)

3.12 Assessment of Learning Outcomes in Distance Education

When assessing DE students, the learners' performance has to be appropriately assessed. A wide range of strategies may be applied as part of this process. According to Kulhavy (1977), the choice of these will vary according to the intended learning outcomes and the learning tasks that were prescribed. For example, if the nature of the learning task was more collaborative, situated and distributed in its context, conventional methods of assessment of learning outcomes would be inadequate. These will need to be replaced by cognitive tasks and assessment procedures that can focus on the processes of learning, perception, and problem solving. In addition, assessment could no longer be viewed as an add-on to an instructional design or simply as separate stages in a linear process of pre-test, instruction, and post-test. Assessment must become an integrated, on-going, and seamless part of the learning environment Kulhavy (1977).

3.13 Technology as a Component of Distance Education

While technology is a necessary component of distance education, the institutions still need to appropriately teach and facilitate learning. Schulte (2010) supports faculty facilitated learning through technology in distance education. According to Schulte (2010) "available distance education technology dictates the way courses are taught" (Schulte,

2010:9). Distance Education courses rely on discussion boards and chat features to expand on the knowledge presented through course material and required textbooks. This cannot replace the value of an experienced and qualified teacher to extend the material and help students apply this material to both professional and personal settings.

Changes in technology have accelerated the growth of distance learning. The improved access and availability of electronic technology has enabled more adult students to participate in the learning process. According to Chifwepa's study (2006) concerning the development of a model plan for the application of information communication technologies in distance education at UNZA, lecturers perceptions were that, "ICT could improve learning and that it should therefore be employed in the delivery of distance education"(Chifwepa, 2006:3). However, inadequate computers, and computer skills were a major hindering constraints towards the application of the model (Chifwepa 2006). Students who enrol in distance learning courses do so for convenience. They are either time-bound due to work or travel schedules or location-bound due to geographic or family responsibilities.

Another important emerging technology in the realm of distance education is the utilisation of Smartphone's. Blackberry and Iphone now support a Blackboard application where learners can access course content and materials from their phone. The idea of carrying books and heavy materials is no longer an option. The Blackboard application, still in its infancy, is being developed to turn smart phones into portable classrooms. Since smart phones already possess the ability to stream live video and upload multimedia, the future of higher education and distance education is lending itself to a handheld learning device

further promoting access to more students than originally imagined. Another important emerging technology in the realm of distance education is the utilisation of Smartphone's. Blackberry and Iphone now support a Blackboard application where learners can access course content and materials from their phone. The idea of carrying books and heavy materials is no longer an option. The Blackboard application, still in its infancy, is being developed to turn smart phones into portable classrooms. Since smart phones already possess the ability to stream live video and upload multimedia, the future of higher education and distance education is lending itself to a handheld learning device further promoting access to more students than originally imagined.

There is need therefore, for ICT to be integrated in the distance education curriculum for all the students and teachers in all parts of the country including rural areas in Zambia.

3.14 Challenges

The primary challenge of distance education is quality. Instead of fake courses and predetermined course shells by discipline, the future of distance education requires personalized services addressing the variety of needs of a diversified population of learners, just like the learners from rural parts of Zambia. Gokool-Ramdoo (2009) asserts that transactional distance is still the biggest challenge in devising an effective distance education experience. Instead of the initially devised low-overhead, high revenue programme, the future of distance education will require more fiscal resources as technology costs mount and students require more academic and social support. This is true especially for the students from rural areas studying at university level. Simonson et al (2011) caution, "teaching must remain flexible and sensitive to learner's needs" (Simonson et al, 2011:57).

Further, distance learners are more likely to have insecurities about learning (Knapper, 1988). These insecurities are founded in personal and school related issues such as financial costs of study, disruption of family life, perceived irrelevance of their studies and lack of support from employers. These pressures often result in higher dropout rates than among traditional students (Sweet, 1986).

Another area of concern for the distance students is the perceived lack of feedback or contact with the lecturers. Students may have trouble in self-evaluation because there is no frequent contact or face to face. Keegan (1986) believes that the separation of student and teacher imposed by distance removes a vital "link" of communication between the distance learners and their lecture. Citing Tinto (1975), Keegan (1986) hypothesized that students who did not receive adequate reintegration measures such as electronic or telephone communication, would be less likely to experience complete academic and social integration into institutional life. Consequently, such students would be more likely to drop out (Sheets, 1992).

Geographical isolation has been identified as one of the major problems for distance students (Meacham and Evans 1989). In addition to the practical problems of contacting academic and administrative staff, obtaining study materials and borrowing library books, distance students suffer from the disadvantage of being unable to interact with other students and are often denied the perception that they belong to a scholarly community. According to Wood, (1996) this may lead to feelings of inadequacy and insecurity, and a lack of confidence in their own abilities.

Additionally, another problem encountered by students is the lack of student training, particularly in reference to technical issues. Many adult students are not well versed in the uses of technology such as computers and the Internet (Oaks, 1996). Using electronic medium in distance learning can inadvertently exclude students who lack computer or writing skills. These skills are required if computer technology is used. Students will typically be offered volumes of electronic-based information. Using this information will be a problem for some non-technical students. The challenge here is the technical barriers.

As the main purpose of this study is to explore coping strategies to challenges faced by distance education learners from rural areas of Zambia, at the University of Zambia, (Oak, 1996) has also recommended that a further research into some of the learning techniques will help learning institutions understand which methods work best for distance learners.

3.15 Summary

In this chapter, I have critically reviewed as much literature related to coping strategies to experiences by students in distance education from rural areas of Zambia as possible. A key emerging issue was the inadequate use of modern technology to facilitate teaching and support practices in rural areas in Zambia. This has made UNZA as well as other universities in the developing world to continue to focus more on traditional ways of teaching.

Studies of students' experiences relating to gender, teaching and learning were also part of the discussion in this chapter, by which I was able to identify the gaps in existing knowledge to be addressed by this study.

From the literature review above, it is clear that students studying by distance education from rural areas of Zambia require other dimensions so that what they learn, and how they learn, should be equivalent to the traditional students in most ways. As Simonson and Schlosser (1995) have pointed out, as they explain the Equivalent Theory of distance education in this study's Chapter Two, it has been reviewed, in this chapter that it is the responsibility of the distance educators to design learning events that provide experiences with equal value for learners.

In the next chapter, which is chapter four, the research design and methods of data collection will be described.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used for this study. The research design is clearly presented and a justification is given for the choice of the design. The chapter further discusses the rationale for using qualitative research methods. The third section of the chapter discusses the population followed by the sampling and sample size. The research instruments used are also explained followed by a discussion of data collection procedures. The chapter then presents the discourse and thematic data analysis methods used to analyse data which was collected using different research instruments effectively. The subsequent section discusses the ethical considerations and the justification of the research approach taken. The last section is the summary.

4.1 The world

Today, political and public interest in distance education is especially high in areas where the student population is widely distributed. Each region has developed its own form of distance education in accordance with local resources, target audience, and philosophy of the organizations which provide the instruction. Many institutions, both public and private, offer university courses for self-motivated individuals through independent study programs. Students work on their own, with supplied course materials, print-based media and postal communication, some form of teleconferencing and/or electronic networking, and learner support from tutors and mentors via telephone or E-mail (US. Congress, 2000).

Distance education technologies are expanding at an extremely rapid rate. Too often, instructional designers and curriculum developers have become enamoured of the latest technologies without dealing with the underlying issues of learner characteristics and needs, the influence of media upon the instructional process, equity of access to interactive

delivery systems, and the new roles of teacher, site facilitator, and student in the distance learning process.

Distance education systems now involve a high degree of interactivity between teacher and student, even in rural and isolated communities separated by perhaps thousands of miles. distance learning allows students to hear and perhaps see teachers, as well as allowing teachers to react to their students' comments and questions (US. Congress, 2000). Moreover, virtual learning communities can be formed, in which students and researchers throughout the world who are part of the same class or study group can contact one another at any time of the day or night to share observations, information, and expertise with one another (VanderVen, 1994; Wolfe, 1994).

Traditionally, we think of distance learners as adults. Whole institutions of higher learning, such as the United Kingdom's Open University, Vancouver's Open Learning Agency, Florida's Nova University, and many others, have been dedicated to providing distance education at the post-secondary level for decades. The University of South Africa (UNISA), in Pretoria, serving many international students, has had a successful distance learning program for decades. The Televised Japanese Language Program, developed at North Carolina State University, provides instruction in Japanese to ten colleges and universities in five South-eastern states (Clifford, 1990). The adult learner tradition is now changing as new programs do involve all age groups worldwide.

4.2 Research Design

There is a wide range of approaches to qualitative research. According to Atkinson et al (1998), there are seven different approaches used in British educational research deriving from symbolic interactionism, anthropology, sociolinguistics, ethnomethodology, qualitative evaluation, neo-Marxist ethnography, and feminism. Most qualitative

approaches have a focus on natural settings, an interest in meanings, perspectives and understandings with the emphasis on process.

This study mainly used qualitative method. Qualitative method was used because data was collected through interviews, observations and document and content analysis. Qualitative case study (Stake 1995) approach was used so as to understand the experiences of individual learners as they continued to study by distance education (DE) at the University of Zambia. The study used three different research instruments; the primary instrument was the interview, students' journals and some questionnaire was used to collect some quantitative data which was used to quantify some of the critical information which I collected from the respondents who came from far places as I produced the findings.

All distance students involved in this study were interviewed on a one-to-one basis during the 2014/2015 academic year. This was the basis of the data which has been reported in this study.

The interview guide was of great help during data collection for this study because it helped to ensure good use of limited interview time during the field work. Most of the interviews were conducted in the English language. The interviews were then transcribed and selectively profiled.

4.3 Rationale for Using Qualitative Research Methods

Distance learning and qualitative research share the mutual goals of dealing with subjectivity describing the complexity of lived experience and appreciating realities where holism and intuition are valued (Davies et al 2010). Although qualitative research is

criticized for its lack of generalizability, it has potential to make valuable contributions to the field of distance education despite resistance. Following my personal experience and perspective, I do acknowledge the importance case studies in qualitative research and believe that it contributes to knowledge and can promote action in the area of distance education for rural students studying by distance education.

As a researcher I tried to understand the program of distance education and its outcomes from a more qualitative and participant perspective. The emphasis was on detailed description and in-depth as it emerged from direct contact and experience with the program and participants. Qualitative technique relied on observation, interviews, focus group discussions and some questionnaires. I used the qualitative technique because the models and their variations employ the quality of divergent responses to performance assessment of higher order and critical thinking skills. Qualitative methods have also helped me to identify intangible factors such as social norms, whose role in research issues may not be readily apparent.

Rather than entering the study with a pre-specified classification system for measuring the program outcomes, I tried to understand the distance learning program and the coping strategies to the challenges experienced by the distance students from rural areas in Zambia. The qualitative technique made me to put the emphasis on the detailed descriptions and in-depth understanding as it emerged from direct contact and experience with the program and its participants. The qualitative technique relied, mainly, on observations, interviews and focus group discussions.

4.4 Population

A population is any group of individuals that has one or more characteristics in common, distinguished from other individuals and are of interest to the researcher, Best and Kahn (2008).

The population for this study had included 140 university graduates who underwent distance education and university students who were still learning by distance. The opinions of these students reflected the reality of the situation at the time. The other group comprised the Provincial Education Officers, District Education Board Secretaries, Provincial Student Support Officers and Provincial Resident Tutors from Eastern, Southern and Central Provinces. The above officers were considered because they had the experience of managing distance education in Zambia.

4.5 Sampling and Sample Size

A sample is a small representative proportion of the population that is selected for observation and analysis (Best and Kahn, 2008). Thus, 30 out of the 140 distance students were selected to participate in this study.

Purposive Sampling technique was used to select 30 respondents from distance education students. These respondents were included in the sample because they were part of the distance education students.

4.6 Research Instruments

The researcher used interview guides, document and content analysis, interpretations of audio and visual materials such as photographs, in order to obtain the in depth information on the coping strategies in distance learning. The questionnaires and focus group discussions were also used to collect data. Questionnaires were used to collect data from some of the participants who were in places that were very far to be reached. Data was collected in two phases, namely; Phase 1 and Phase 2. During the first Phase data was

collected when students came for Residential School at UNZA main campus and the second Phase saw the researcher out into the field into all the three study areas namely, Lundazi in Eastern Province, Kabwe rural in the Central Province and Livingstone rural in the Southern Province.

4.7 Data Collection Procedures

Data for this research was collected to further the understanding of the distance learners from the rural areas in Zambia who were at UNZA. This made me to have a clear understanding of what I hoped to obtain and how I could obtain it. Further, as a researcher I needed to have a clear vision of the instruments to use, the respondents and the selected area of study. In a qualitative study, like this one, multiple data collection procedures were supposed to be used (Creswell, 1994). This study, therefore, employed the survey approach which made me to collect information from different participants. The term ‘survey’ represents a broad category of techniques that use questions as a strategy to collect information (Merriam and Simpson, 1995). For this study, I employed four qualitative data collection techniques to collect primary and secondary data as explained below.

4.7.1 Document Review

Documents are a useful source of data in qualitative research, although they have to be treated with care. This research used mostly the official documents from other institutions in the sample and some personal documents from students in the sample.

Official documents used for this research included confidential documents showing results of various students both still studying and those that had graduated from the University of Zambia and had studied through distance means. Other official documents used were photographs, department records and journals.

I decided to use documents for this study because some documentation is more objective (Cohin Lacey, 1976). Commenting on his research methods on Grammar Study, he said that the most important breakthrough for him was the combination of methods which included a key use of documents.

Documents helped me to reconstruct events and then made me write information about social relationships among the distance learners who come from rural areas of Zambia.

Among the documents the research used are the personal documents in the name of diaries and students' rough books. These documents enabled the researcher to find out something about the students' feelings about their study as distance learners, their perspectives, backgrounds and lives including their humour and their culture.

Documents available for a review in Eastern Province, Lundazi District.



Source: Field work, 2016

Diaries are frequently used in qualitative research. This research used the diaries from the students because they are natural and that they contain personal meanings and understandings. The diaries are observing and interviewing by proxy, this means that the researchers range was broadened and more data was provided and enhanced this research's findings. Material from diaries can help some of the research participants demonstrate both a lack of subtlety in the socioeconomic instruments and the degree to which the collection of socioeconomic data could be socially constrained (Bill, 1981).

4.7.2 Interviews

A great deal of qualitative material for this research came from talking with people through formal interviews and casual conversations. Interviews tapped into the depths of reality of the situation of the distance learners from rural areas of Zambia and discovered subjects' meanings and understandings. In this way the researcher had developed empathy with interviewees and won their confidence, as no influence was imposed on the interviewees.

Conducting an Interview with one of the participants in Central Province



Source: Field work, 2016

The technique used was the unstructured interview. Here, as a researcher I had some general ideas about the topics of the interview. The points were also coming naturally during the course of the interview as the interviewees talked. The researcher had engaged with interviewees on a person-to-person basis, for most of the times, especially where it concerned the PEOs, the DEBS, the Resident Tutors and graduates from the distance programs. All this time of the interview, as a researcher, I had engaged in 'active' listening, which showed the interviewee that close attention was being paid to what they were saying. I also tried to keep the interviewee focused.

4.7.3 Focus Group Discussions

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) typically emphasises a specific theme or topic that is explored in depth (Bryman 2008). Maguire (1987) further explains that focus group discussion is a situation where the researcher provides an opportunity for collective problem sharing and problem solving regarding everyday experiences. This technique was used to complement the interview method.

The first FGD was made up of six (6) participants, the second FGD had five (5) participants and the third FGD of participants also had five. All the above participants had come to UNZA for residential school during the 2014/2015 academic year. The other Focus Group Discussions were done in Lundazi, Kabwe and Livingstone at different times during data collection period for this research. Each group in these places had six (6) participants. These participants also gave individual life history accounts about their distance learning experiences at UNZA after the discussions. There was enough time for them to discuss and to narrate their professional experiences as well.

The first three focus group discussions were held from my office at UNZA. Focus group discussions were used in order for me to collect a larger amount of information in a short period of time. I took into consideration the fact that the participants had chosen to take part in the discussion because they had opinions, views and perceptions they wanted to share (Newby, 2010). I ensured that the discussion flowed so that issues and perceptions emerged and were discussed. The feelings, beliefs and ideas were revealed in the group's social setting. I recorded the proceedings of the discussion and took notes which I later compared with the voice recording.

4.7.4 Observations

In seeking to explore the natural scene, the approach used was the participant observation. Here, as a researcher, I adopted a recognised role within the group of the distance students. This technic was used because it blended in with natural activity. It also gave me the access to the same places, people and events as the subjects (Hammersley, 1993). Further, it gave

me an access to documents relevant to the role, including confidential reports and records. The observation technic also provided me with the personal first-hand experience of the role and thus heightened my understanding of it (Galton and Simon,1980).



Source: Field work, 2017

A male distance student in Southern Province fetching water. Livingstone Rural



Source: Field work, 2016.

Observing one female student at her residence in Central Province, Kabwe Rural, Zambia.



Source: Field work 2016

4.7.5 Questionnaires

As a means of collecting information from a wider sample than could be reached by personal interview questionnaires were used for this research. A questionnaire was used in the first instance, followed by qualitative techniques on a sample as a check and to fill out certain features of the questionnaire replies. Interaction among techniques in this way was typical of qualitative research.

Although the information from the questionnaires was rather limited, it was still very useful for my research as data collected from far places like some students from Chief Kazembe, Lundazi District, of Eastern Province, managed to write something and posted the questionnaires too.

4.7.6 Triangulation

In the real sense, triangles possess enormous strength. Amongst other things, they make the basic frames of bicycles, gates and house roofs. Triangulation enables extraordinary precision in measuring the height of mountains and astronomical distances. It is also a strength in research. The most common forms of triangulation in qualitative work are of methods.

I used several methods to explore the learning experiences of distance learners from rural areas of Zambia. This increased the chances of depth and accuracy for this research.

One of the commonest forms of triangulation which I used for this research was to combine interviews with observation. Observation tested and filled out accounts given in interviews, and vice versa.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

With regard to ethical considerations, I ensured that the rights of the respondents were not violated. All the respondents were consulted at the time of recruitment and they showed willingness to participate.

In order to collect the needed data from the purposively sampled participants, I sought permission by writing to the relevant authorities before going in the field to collect data. Consent of the interviewees was sought. I also asked for authority from the University of Zambia through the Directorate at the Institute of Distance Education and through my Supervisor to collect the necessary data for this study.

4.9 Summary

This section of the study showed the methodology that was used. It has also described the research design, the sample size as well as the tools which were used for collecting the data which was used for this study. The ethical consideration of the study has also been discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS



Picture 5.1.1

“No matter how overburdened and how much it takes for a woman to reach her destination she will always reach there with a smile on her face and the faces of those around her.” As a female student and a mother, studying for a Degree by distance and coming from a rural area in Zambia can be more challenging indeed, as compared to a male student and a father from the same locality.

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study from the field concerning coping strategies to experiences distance education students faced at the University of Zambia. Responses were solicited from distance education students from rural areas of Zambia who had

graduated from the University of Zambia and the students who were still studying by distance at the University of Zambia.

5.1 Background Information

The background information outlines the sex of respondents, the age ranges of distance students, their qualifications on entry into university, their family sizes and the years of study.

Figure 10: Sex of Respondents

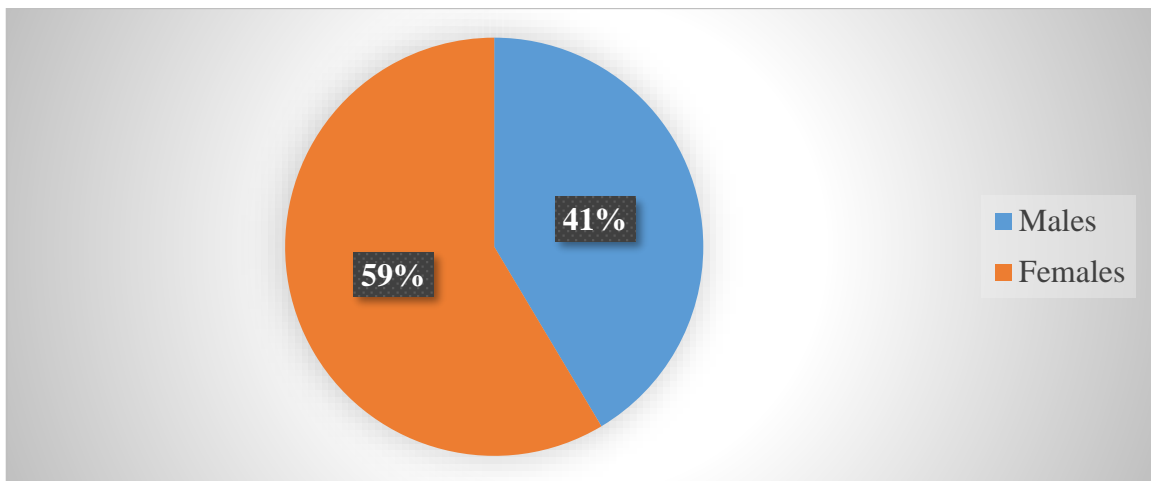


Figure 10 shows that out of the 30 students reached, 59% were females while 41% were males.

5.1.2 Qualifications of Students on Entry into University

Most Students pursuing Distance Education already have qualifications and are pursuing university studies to upgrade.

Figure 11: Education Levels of the Respondents

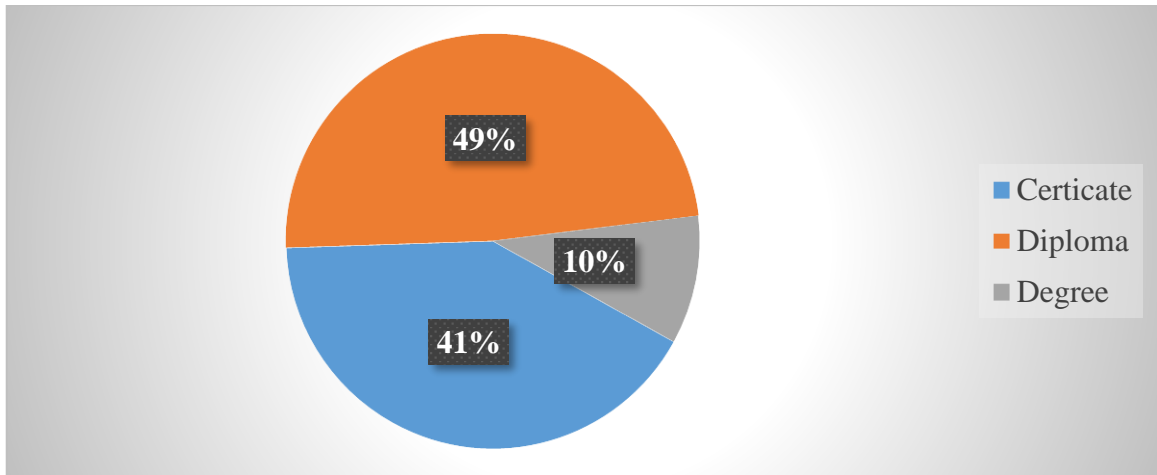


Figure 11 shows that, before entry into university, 49% of the participants had diplomas, 41% had certificates and 10% had degrees.

5.1.3 Age Ranges of Distance Students

The following figure shows the age ranges of the distance students who participated as respondents to the study.

Figure 12: Age Ranges for Respondents

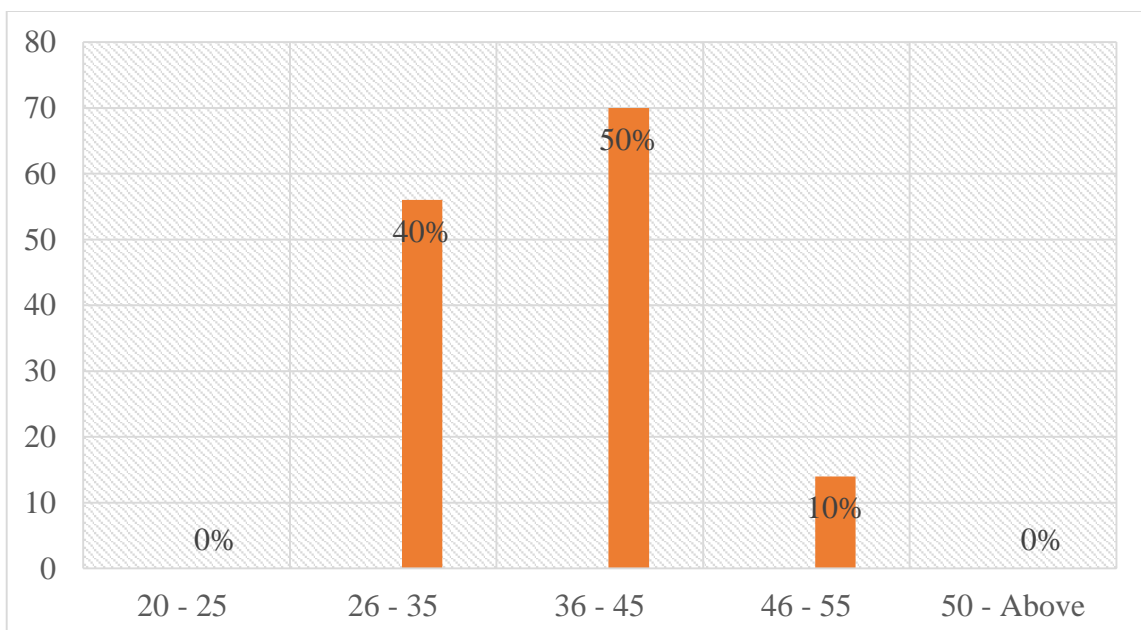


Figure 12 shows that out of 30 students who participated in the study none was aged between 20 – 25, 40% were aged between 26 – 35, 50% were aged between 36 – 45, 10% were aged between 46 – 55 and none was aged 60 years and above.

5.1.4 Year of Study for Students

The graph below shows the years of study for students who participated as respondents to the research.

Figure 13: Participants' Year of Study

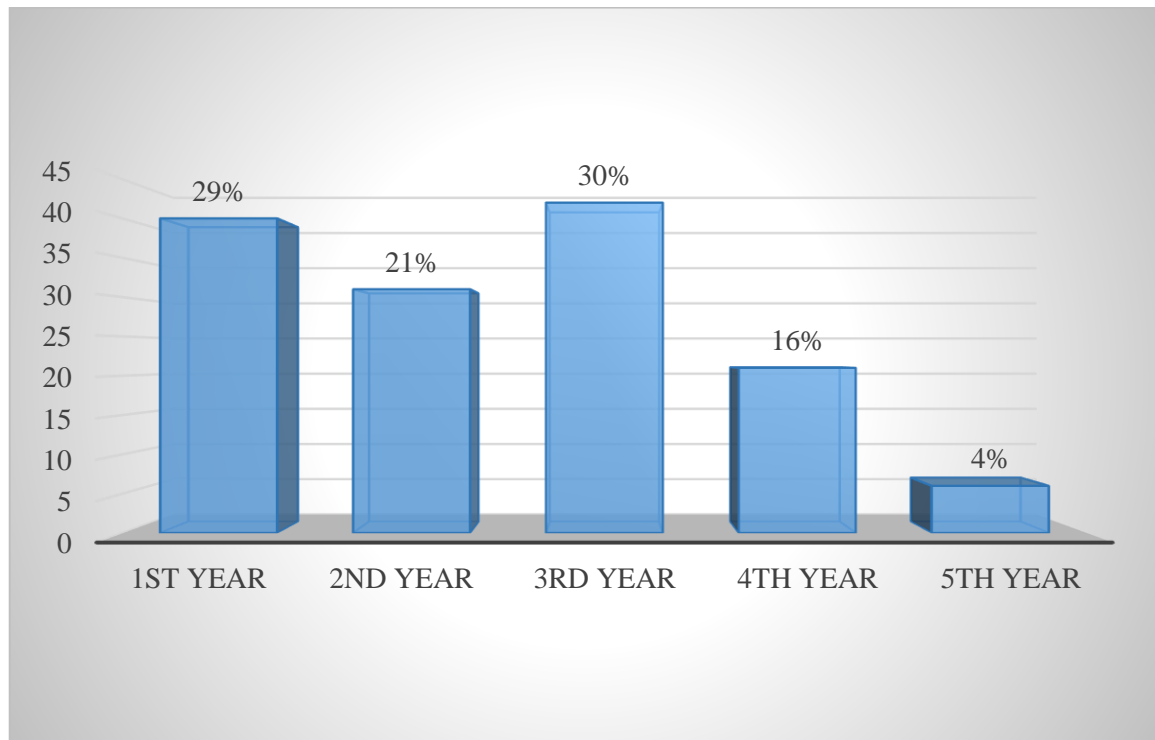


Figure 13 shows that out of the 30 students who participated in the study, 29% were in the first year, 21% were doing second year, 30% were in third year, 16% were in fourth year and 4% were doing their fifth year.

5.2 Description of Distance Education from the perspective of Students

The first objective for this study was to establish how distance students describe distance education.

Figure 14: Description of Distance Education by Distance Students

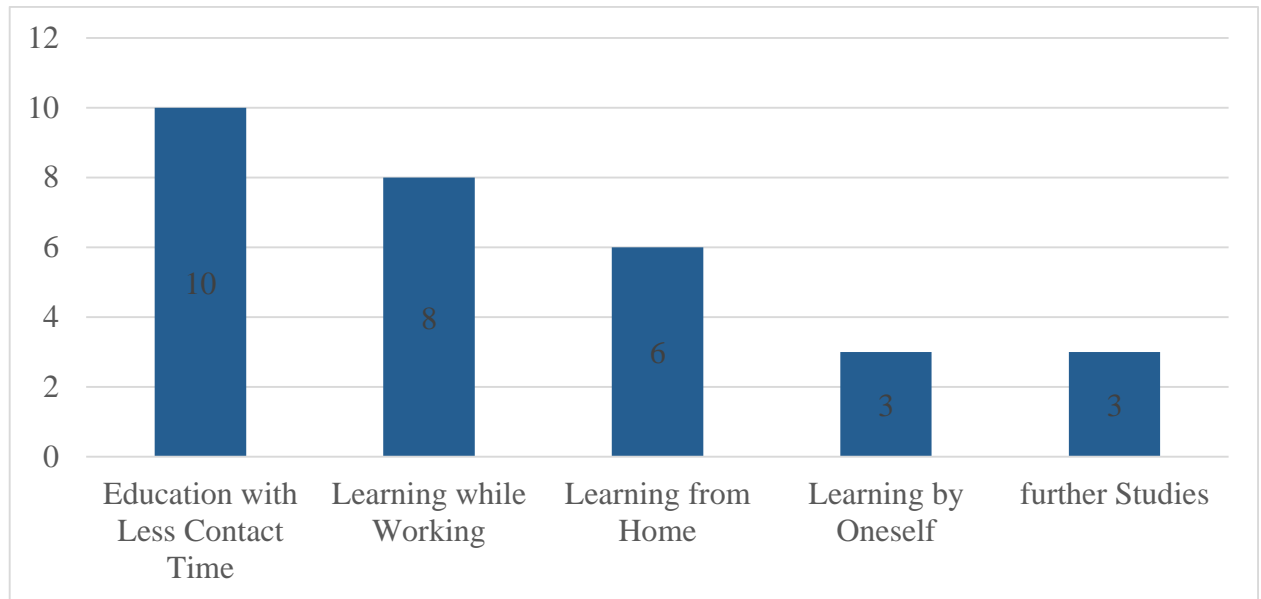


Figure 14 shows that out of the 30 respondents, 10 described distance education as the type of education that involves less contact time, 8 said distance education is that which involves learning while one is doing his or her own work, 6 described it as learning that takes place from one's home, 3 stated that distance education is learning by oneself and the other 3 indicated that distance education is that which helps people to further their studies.

One of the distance graduates said, *"I can describe distance education as that type of Education which is conducted with less contact time between students and lecturers."*

5.3 The Influence of Support Services Available for Distance Students

Like any other form of education, distance education requires some form of support services aimed at ensuring smooth delivery of education to distance students. These

support services are provided by the University of Zambia and Government through the Institute of Distance Education (IDE), Provincial and District Education Offices respectively. The following table shows the support services which distance students receive from various stakeholders in Zambia. The information was given by the student support staff from the IDE, the UNZA Provincial Centres and the Provincial and District Education Officers from Eastern, Southern and Central Provinces of Zambia.

Table 5: Support services provided by institutions

INSTITUTION	SUPPORT SERVICE PROVIDED
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION (UNZA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of study materials (modules) - Organising residential school programmes - Website for communication - Organising multi-media Technology
UNZA PROVINCIAL CENTRES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organising Examination Centres for distance students - Receiving of assignments on behalf of students - Linking the university to students
PROVINCIAL/DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Permission to go for residential school - Resource centres for study materials - Teaching Practice Environment for student teachers

“To provide support to distance students, the Institute of Distance Education has developed modules in all the courses. This provides the foundation on which students base their study before they can look for other related material,”

said one of the support staff at IDE.

One of the provincial support staff said,

“We help the institution by ensuring that we secure the venues from which the examinations for distance students are written. But this has been very difficult because in some cases we fail to find the right venues.”

This meant that the situation would be left hanging as students still write the examinations after being quarantined.

5.4 Gendered Experiences of Students on Distance Learning Programs from Rural Zambia

The third objective of this study was to identify the gendered experiences of the distance university students from rural areas. It was, however, important to start by identifying the general experiences before considering the gendered experiences.

5.4.1 General Experiences of Distance Students from Rural Zambia

The participants who had graduated from the University of Zambia after undergoing distance learning programs gave their experiences on distance learning as follows:

Figure 15: Student Experiences on Distance Learning

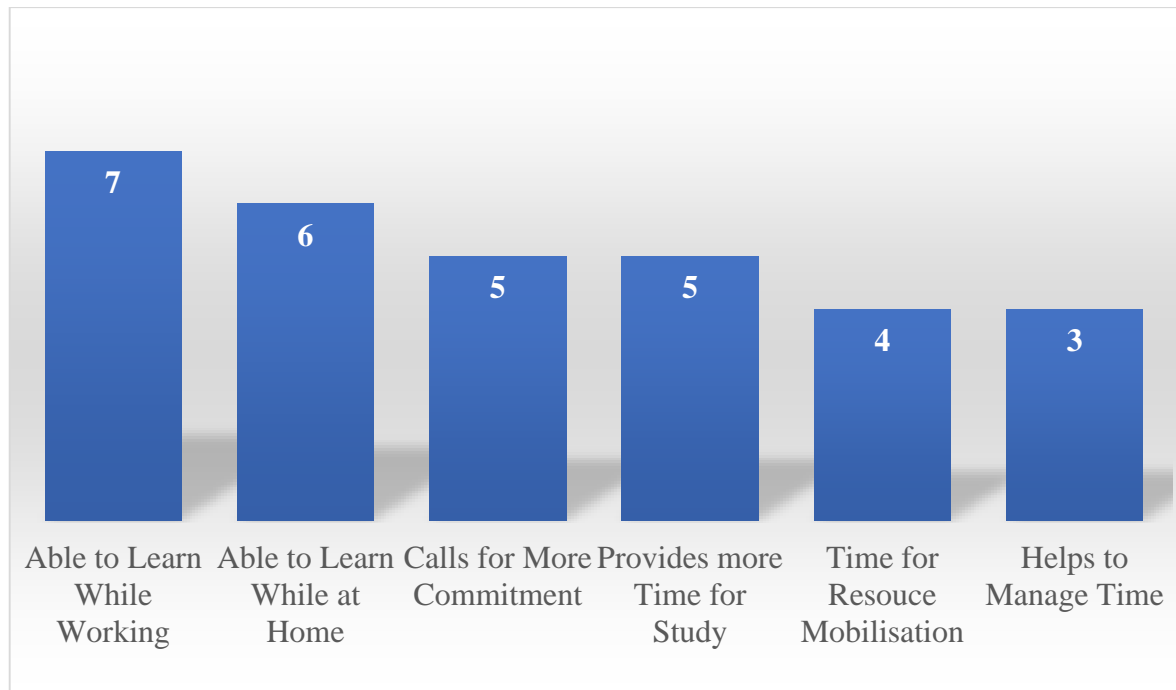


Figure 15 shows that out of the 30 participants, 7 indicated that through distance education they were able to learn while working in their various stations, 6 said they were able to learn while doing other things at home, 5 said distance learning calls for more commitment, 5 said distance learning provided more time for study, 4 said distance learning gave enough time to mobilise resources in terms of money and other 3 said distance learning helped them to manage time well. One of the distance graduates from Southern Province said;

“Learning by distance has provided us with an opportunity to learn while we continue working. This is something that cannot be tolerated under full time studies. One has to go on study leave. But it is not easy to go on study leave these days.”

“Distance learning gives me ample time to study. From the time of residential to the period of examinations, I used to study all that needed to be studied without much pressure though some of my friends have been working on gun point when it is time for exam because they tend to relax after the residential school forgetting that they are students,”

Said another respondent from one research area in the Central Province.

5.4.2 Benefits of Distance Education

The participants to this study were asked to state what they thought were the benefits of distance education and their responses were summarised as follows:

Figure 16: Benefits of distance education

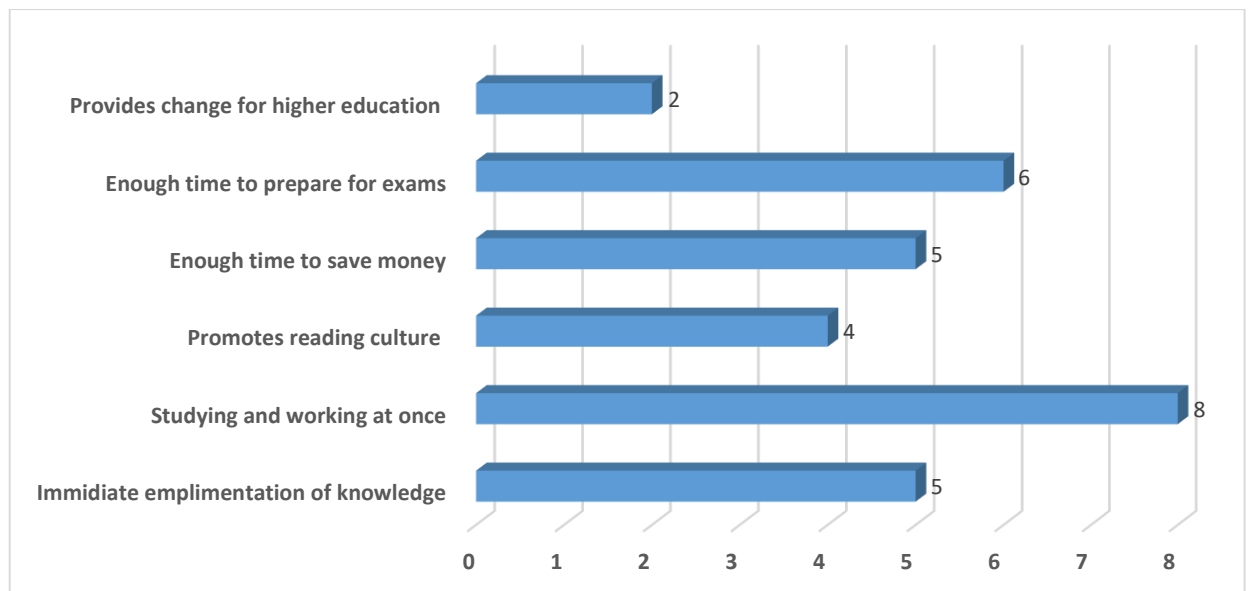


Figure 16 shows that 8 participants to the research indicated that distance education was helpful in the sense that it offered an opportunity for them to study while working, 6 said distance education provided enough time for one to prepare for exams, 8 said distance learning provided enough time to raise funds, 5 indicated that learning by distance ensured an immediate implementation of the knowledge acquired in the process of learning, 2 stated that distance learning provided opportunities or chances for many people to access higher education and 4 respondents indicated that distance education promoted reading culture among students.

One of the participants from Eastern Province said;

“The greatest benefit I have seen by studying through distance is that I am able to do my studies and continue working at the same time. By this it is clear that distance education offers an opportunity to people to acquire

higher education which could have, otherwise, been difficult.”

Another respondent from Livingstone said;

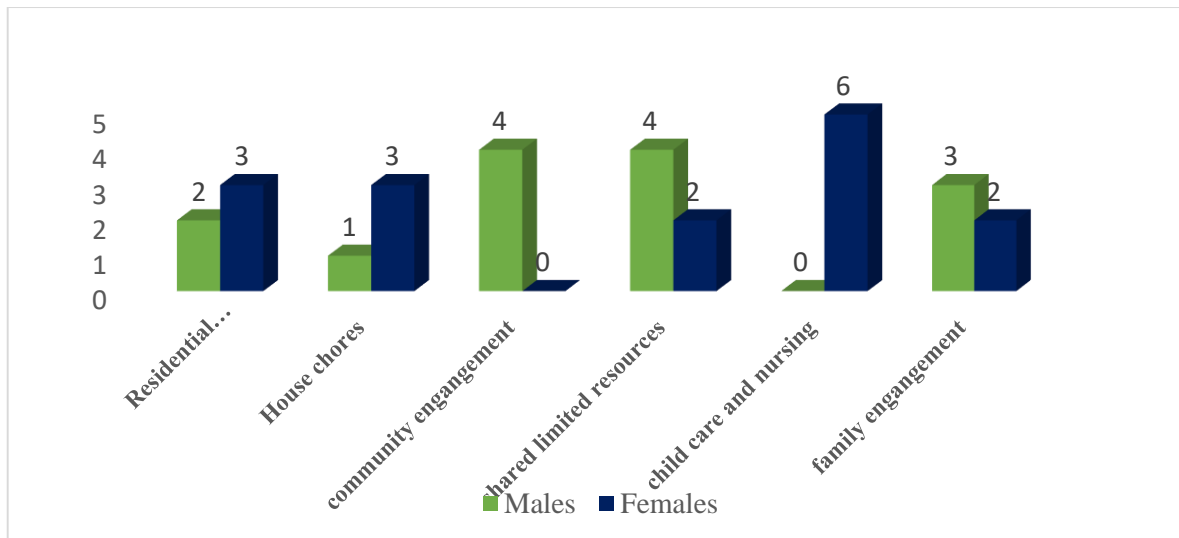
“Studying by distance is beneficial in the sense that it provides an opportunity for a person to raise money for fees. The period from registration to examination is adequate enough to prepare oneself. Distance learning also gives ample time to prepare for examinations”.

5.4.3 Gendered Experiences of Students on Distance Learning Programs

To start with, it is important to note that the 30 participants to this research were purposively chosen to include 15 females and 15 males who had graduated and, or were learning through distance education. This was due to the fact that the study took a gender perspective. However, there were more female students reached out to than male students. This was due to the fact that the IDE had registered more female students in the period from 2010 to 2016.

The graduates were asked how their experiences were with regards to whether they were male or female. Their responses were summarised as follows:

Figure 17: Gendered experiences



Source: Fieldwork 2016

From figure 17 it can be observed that out of the total of 30 participants to the study, 3 males and 2 females had challenges with dividing resources and time between school and family engagement, 6 females had challenges in terms of child care and nursing with school engagement, 4 males and 2 females had challenges with sharing the limited resources between school and home needs, 4 males and none of the females had challenges in managing time between school and community engagement, 1 males and 3 females had challenges regarding house chores and school work and 2 males and 3 females complained of challenges of accommodation during residential school.

One of the female respondents from southern province said;

“The greatest challenge for us women is that, we are mostly overwhelmed with so much work such as looking after the children and doing other household chores. This affects our studies so much.”

Another male respondent from the same Southern province had this to say when asked on challenges

“For us men the challenge comes in when we try to balance the resources to be shared between the home and school requirements. You find that everything is competing against the limited income. That is why most of us who are studying

suffer a lot of loan deductions on our salaries,” said another male respondent from Eastern Province.

Duration of completing Programs under Distance Education by Males and Females

The participants were asked to state whether they agreed or not with the notion that distance programmes could be completed in good time or not. In their response 12 males and 8 females agreed that distance programmes could be completed on time while 3 males and 7 females disagreed.

5.5 Identified Challenges to Distance Learning

The third objective of this study was to identify the challenges which the distance students faced in the course of their study. Students pursuing this programme face numerous challenges ranging from institutional, social to personal. To enable the institution plan effectively to sustain the students on the programme and also to reduce the burden on the students, these challenges ought to be known and addressed.

5.5.1 General Challenges

Distance graduates were asked to explain some of the challenges they encountered during the course of their study. The following were the most common challenges which were brought out:

Figure 18: Challenges Associated with Distance Education

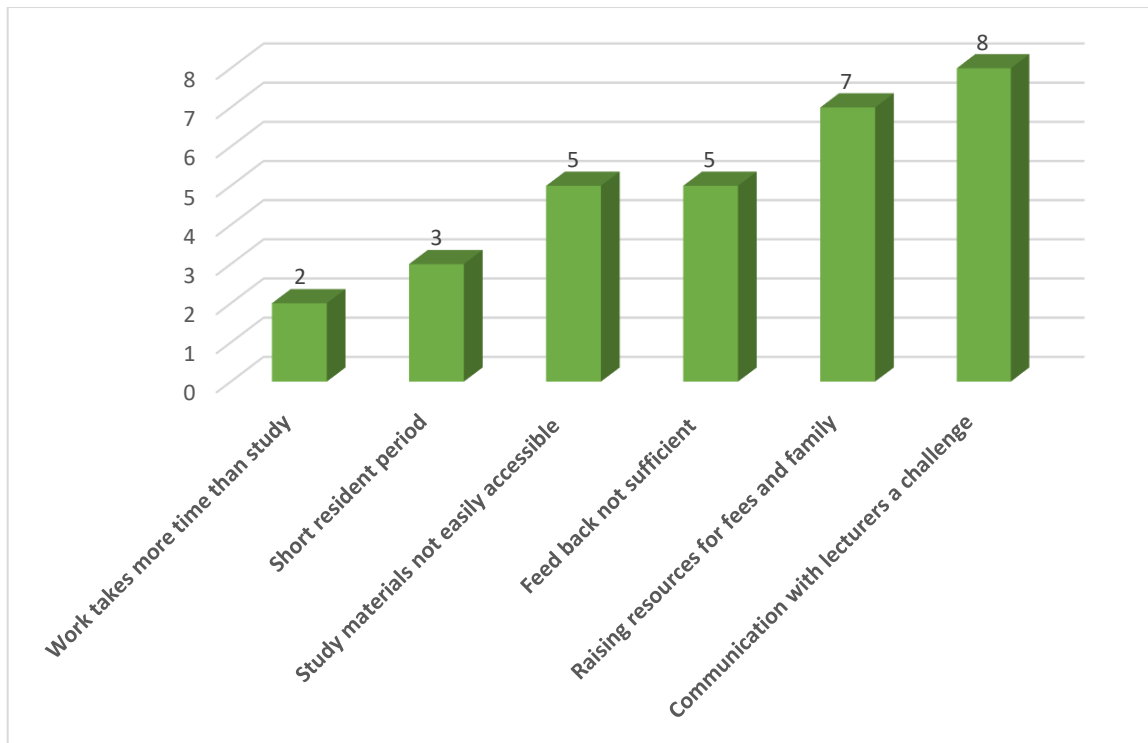


Figure 19 shows that 9 respondents indicated that communication with lecturers when they needed assistance was a challenge, 8 respondents indicated that they had challenges of raising resources to be shared between family and school fees, 5 respondents indicated that they had challenges in getting feedback from lecturers, 5 respondents indicated the challenge of accessing study materials, 3 said the residential period was too short and 2 said they had challenges balancing their time between study and work.

“I found it hard to communicate with our lecturers to consult on the assignments. And it was difficult to access the required materials from the rural areas” said one of the respondents.

“Distance education had become so expensive such that raising money for fees and family needs was a great challenge” said another respondent.

“Some courses have readily available materials while others do not. For those courses with limited study material, lecturers make recommendations for text books and other relevant materials to be accessed online apart from the modules,”

Said one of the student support staff from the Institute of Distance Education at the University of Zambia.

A student support staff said;

“Some students have been complaining of missing assignments. Lecturers claim they do not receive some assignments. As such we make lecturers sign for all the assignments they receive. The only challenge is that most lecturers wait for residential school to mark or give feedback to students.”

In many universities, including University of Zambia (UNZA), a substantial proportion of adult distance education students are women, who often enter higher education after long absence from any formal education and balance a variety of complex commitments in their lives (Anyona, 2009). About half of those students entering university have come directly from high school, and mature aged entry has consistently been the largest sector of growth in many universities (MoE, 2005). Their multiple responsibilities or physical circumstances prevents women from attending regular programs. Many public and private educational institutions in Zambia are currently running Distance Education programs which have also become very popular among people who want to advance themselves with education. The Commonwealth of Learning defines distance education as that which refers to” situations where learners are physically separated from the educational provider, communicating in writing, verbally or in face-to-face tutorial sessions”, (COL, 2003:13). Distance students from rural areas face several challenges. . Thus, a challenge is something that limits someone’s action and requires a lot more effort to resolve (Barney, 2008). These challenges can be grouped in different categories. Cross, (1981) categorized the challenges faced by distance students into four groups, namely situational, dispositional, institutional, and epistemological.

Table 6: Categories of Challenges Faced by Distance Students from Rural Areas

1.SITUATIONA L CHALLENGES	2.DISPOSITIONAL CHALLENGES	3.INSTITUTIONA L CHALLENGES	4.EPISTEMOLOGIC AL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial strain. • Support from partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolation and not belonging in an academic community. • Support services. • Lack of proper guidance and advice. Availability and timeliness of appropriate learning support. • Psychological needs. • Geographical distance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Materials. • Ease of Contact. • Approachability of academic Staff. • Accommodation issues. • Cooperation between the support staff and the distance students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge on information, technology and communication. • Lack of feedback. • Ability to comprehend and deal with assessment requirements.

Source: Cross, 1981

5.5.2 Situational Challenges

Situational challenges are challenges associated with a student's own life circumstances.

These may include changing employment situations or family obligations. Galusha (2012) points out that students' age, type of work and marital status constitute an important aspect of situational challenge. Therefore, situational challenges faced by students can be as follow:

5.5.2.1 Financial Strain

Distance learning program is offered at a cost by educational institutions. There is nothing that is done for free. However, many students pursuing this program through distance lack adequate money to cover the costs. For example there are some women who are in employment and are married to non-working men who are unable to support them financially. And these women want to upgrade their educational levels through distance mode. But they are failing due to family obligations. They are the family bread winners. The salaries they earn are too little to meet all the needs, hence failing to pursue their courses in specified period of time. The level of one's salary, access to loan and the desire to improve one's self for a better future may determine the urge to go for a loan to pursue further education (Barney, 2008). Unfortunately most students are not at a level that they can access loans to upgrade themselves. Family problems have gone past their educational needs. Therefore, financial problems due to family obligations are affecting the progression of students learning through distance.

5.5.2.2 Support from Partners

Anyona (2009:33) states that “One’s success as a distance learner is often predicated on the support of a partner who is prepared to take a greater share of domestic and financial responsibility during the often long period of study.” However, evidence suggests that support is more likely to be forthcoming to males within the partnership than to females, which highlights the particular plight of women returning to study while maintaining a heavy domestic burden (Anyona, 2009). Female distance students always get disturbed a lot from their children .Therefore they find it difficult to study and concentrate on their education at their homes. Furthermore, family responsibilities such as taking care of children and husbands are the women’s major problems. They spend much of their times taking care of house related chores. In most cases their husbands do not spare sometime to assist women with other house chores so that they can have a breathing space to concentrate on educational matters. The lack of support from partners in this poses a greater challenge to women pursuing studies through distance learning.

5.5.3 Dispositional Challenges

Dispositional challenges are challenges that deal with personal problems that influence the student's persistence behaviour such as motivation. This challenge is commonly associated with the following:

5.5.3.1 Isolation and not belonging in an Academic Community

This is a challenge faced by most distance student in rural areas of Zambia. The potential for isolation in distance learning is a well-documented phenomenon, and may be both a geographical and psychological construct (Kinley, 2001). For example some older adult

learners of a particular sex, studying through distance, may encounter the generational problem of insufficient peer support and simply 'not belonging' in a younger person's world. The isolation makes the older students to miss on certain discussions with the younger students. Hence, it becomes a challenge as they fail to socialize with young students. Lack of socialization makes them miss on certain course information which can be shared with other students.

5.5.3.2 Support Services

Cosmas and Mbwette, (2009) considered learner support services as being measures that go beyond the production of study materials and support the learning process. Support and services required by distance students are in the form of social and technology. Learner support generally refers to interactive activities and services that are meant to support and facilitate the learning process (Keegan, 1986). Student support is essential because of the separation between the learner and the educational provider. Broadly, such services include teaching, tutoring, counselling, advising and administrative services. The fact that the bulk of distance education students are workers from the various sectors and regions of the country, which are in different levels of development in terms of infrastructure, makes it a challenge. In the education institutions distance students do not receive the support they deserve. For example in the institutions sometimes women are not attended to properly by their fellow women responsible to attend to them on course matters. There is usually a rift between women even on straight forward matters. And this affects the students in many ways as they are not attended to as expected.

In work places where the students usually come from the scenario is similar. Some supervisors do not support the program being done by their subordinates despite the government encouraging people to go for further studies. For example women or men pursuing distance learning are not supported by their immediate supervisors. They are troubled when getting permission to go for residential. In most some cases supervisors allow the students at the last minute. And this affects the students' preparedness. Women with families are expected to put things in place before leaving for residential at their homes. But issues to do with permissions at their places of work add to their home burdens and in the long run affects their preparedness.

5.5.3.3 Lack of Proper Guidance and Advice

People intending to take on distance programs lack guidance and proper advice. For example female teachers wanting to pursue degree courses in mathematics and science are usually discouraged from doing so. They are told that through distance mode such courses are not friendly to the female folk. But the ministry of education is encouraging girls and women to take on courses in mathematics and science education (MoE, 1996). Instead they are advised to take on courses like home economics yet they can do better in mathematics and science. This blocks women from taking the male dominated courses through the distance mode.

5.5.3.4 Availability and Timeliness of Appropriate Learning Support

Learning support is usually offered in a variety of forms, including preparatory programmes and semester-based support or term-based (Galusha, 2012). Yet the level of learning support available to distance students is highly variable and often non-existent in

many institutions offering distance education. Distance Students are commonly left to develop academic skills such as essay writing by trial-and-error. Those who fail to develop the skills quickly enough may become dispirited, perhaps confirming their suspicions that they do not have the ability to succeed (Galusha, 2012). This makes female students especially to engage other people to write academic essays on their behalf. And this causes students to face a lot of plagiarism and copying cases as the people who do the work on their behalf keeps on reproducing the same work. Plagiarism and copying cases leads students to failing their courses. Failure discourages the students from continuing with the courses. Hence, it is a challenge when distance students are left to develop academic skills such as essay writing by trial-and-error.

5.5.3.5 Psychological Needs

Most students' psychological needs are not addressed. It is a well-known fact that many distance learners are in some of employment and at the same time taking care of their families. As such, balancing their time and other roles and responsibilities with the course work needs real support from providers (Galusha, 2012). There are some female students for instance who are marriage. And their men do not support and encourage them when they are doing their distance education. Some women suffer gender based violence at the hands of their spouses. Some of their spouses remain misbehaving with other women when their wives are out for residential. And this affects negatively the psyche preparedness of the female students doing distance education. Instead of concentrating on course, they are usually disturbed by the actions of their husbands. However, not all women are so fortunate. Anyona (2009: 34) says: "It is hard to underestimate the immense difficulties

some women will face with their partners.” Therefore, the aspect of psychological needs should be looked into seriously.

5.5.3.6 Geographical Distance

Educational institutions offering distance education are usually not near to some students. Kamau (2007:41) explains that “With learners being geographically distant from tutors, they are most times saddled with studying problems and need encouragement to meet their learning needs.” Some students do not attach any seriousness to the programme and distance makes it worse for some students who can be either male or female. Due to the distance students fail to have face to face interactions with lecturers and tutors who advise them on course issues. The students fail to have access to facilities like libraries in universities due to distance. Some students live in rural areas where facilities like internet cafes and library are not available. Therefore, distance to such facilities poses big challenges to students and their studies.

5.5.3.7 Attending Face-to-Face and Laboratory Practical

Distance students take on practical subjects that need experiments. However, students face challenges in having contact with the lecturers who are expected to demonstrate with their students in science laboratories for instance. This is due to distance and other reasons. For example due to family obligations women may fail to make it to the laboratories for practical and experiments. The only chance they have is when they go for residential. Residential days also are not enough for students to have meaningful laboratory interactions. The failure affects the students in their skills acquisition.

5.5.4 Institutional Challenges

Institutional challenges deal with the difficulties those students encounter with the institution and are caused by organizational set-up. These challenges may be both physical and non-physical. The physical challenges may include such things as nearness to classroom, road net-work and other academic resources such as the library. Stringent admission requirements, high tuition fees and the mode of paying these fees constitute some of the non-physical barriers (Cross, 1981). Therefore, this type of a challenge is commonly associated with the following:

5.5.4.1 Studying Materials

Studying materials are some of the challenges which come under this category, including non-interesting courses, inadequate text-books, poor library facilities and poor organization of class and examination (Cross, 1981). Instructional materials come to students late; in some cases students do not get the books at all. Even the times when distance students are collecting the course materials, they are exposed to a tedious process. Students subjected to queuing for study materials for a long period of time. This poses a challenge for example to students who are pregnant to be exposed to such harsh conditions. Therefore, in most cases they fail to collect the materials due to their conditions and the failure affects the studying.

5.5.4.2 Ease of Contact and Approachability of both the Academic Staff and all the Support Staff

For distance students, establishing satisfactory contact with academic staff is one of the major afflictions of life as a distance student (Bullen, 2003). When Distance learners go for their residential they usually have little time but exposed to a lot of work. This makes it

impossible for the students to meet their lecturers when clarifications are needed on certain matters that cannot be addressed during normal lectures. Similarly, members of staff at the educational institutions who work for both regular and distance students do not show up on weekends so that distance students attend tutorials. This calls for a better arrangement to be made for the use of the facility as it poses challenges to distance learners.

5.5.4.3 Accommodation Issues

Accommodation is another notable challenge among the distance students especially during residential schools. When students go for residential they are accommodated by schools or indeed universities. However, students who happen to be mothers are not allowed to be in hostels when they have babies. Therefore such students are left with no option but to look for accommodation elsewhere. And usually boarding houses charge exorbitant accommodation fees which become a big burden on the side of the student who is already struggling to pay the tuition fees. The accommodation they pick on, lack certain facilities like WIFI which are found in the institutional hostel. In the boarding houses students' property are lost through theft and this causes students to suffer more.

5.5.5 Epistemological Challenges

Epistemological challenges are challenges that deal with the difficulties faced by students while apprehending course content (Cross, 1981). Some of the Epistemological challenges are as explained below.

5.5.5.1 Lack of Feedback

Keegan (1986) believe that the lack of feedback on performance or contact with teachers also constitute a challenge to distance students. Keegan (1986) further argues that the link between the teacher and the student constitutes a vital link in teaching-learning transaction and that the link, which is broken by distance, must be restored in one way or the other. This challenge of lack of feedback affects all students pursuing distance education. This means either female or male ones are all affected. Distance students in most cases do not receive feedback from their lecturers. Therefore, they find it difficult to evaluate their performance.

5.5.5.2 Lack of Knowledge on Information, Technology and Communication

Some of the distance students have no knowledge about information communication technology. The use of Information Communication and Technology in distance education poses a lot of challenges due to uneven and unequal access to computers and the internet (Bullen, 2003). For example some of the male and female older distance students have no computer literacy skills. This prevents them from accessing the internet and use computers for assignments on their own. Nowadays, a student in a higher institution cannot do without basic knowledge in information communication technology. But it is a challenge to some students because they have no basic knowledge in information communication technology.

5.5.5.3 Ability to Comprehend and Deal with Assessment Requirements

Assessment is the engine that drives learning. It is also a focal point around which students' concerns and fears coalesce. Kinley (2001) explains that for adult students with fears regarding their abilities to succeed, assessment tasks become major 'hot spots' in their

progress. For example when distance students are given group task, female students do not contribute fully in the work. They usually leave work to their male folk to do things on their behalf. And this affects their credentials as they come out of institution half baked. They lack commitment to course work. They lack confidence in themselves. They feel they cannot do the work on their own. And this creates challenges when men are not there to work with them in groups.

5.6 Coping Strategies to the Challenges Faced by Distance Education Students

The main objective of this study was to identify the coping strategies to challenges faced by distance students from rural areas in Zambia. A number of challenges were brought out in the preceding section of the study. However, the study was to further find out and recommend these coping strategies to cope with the challenges identified. This section of the study, therefore, has presented the solutions to the challenges. That is, how distance education students from rural areas cope with the challenges identified above.

To do this, some graduates and undergraduates were interviewed who had different experiences in the manner in which they handled different challenges they faced during the course of their studies. Other strategies were employed by the Institute of distance Education (IDE) at the University of Zambia as they assisted the students cope with the various challenges that came with studying by distance. All these solutions were combined to give appropriate solutions to the challenges identified above.

The following table summarizes the challenges or the problems identified in the preceding section of the study.

Table 7: Problems/challenges faced by distance students from rural areas of Zambia

Problems/challenges faced by distance students from rural areas of Zambia	
Challenge	Its meaning
1. Nature of study material	Study materials were to take into account the significant proportion of students who enrolled with little or no experience of distance study.
2. Lack of orientation at the beginning of the program	Never underwent any kind of orientation while the other sixty-one indicated that they had undergone an orientation of some kind.
3. Feedback from lecturers as well as learners	There was lack of feedback from learners as well as lecturers. That is, communication breakdown.
4. Presence of colleagues in localities	There was lack of fellow distance students in the rural areas that were nearby so that one could consult or study together.
5. Student assessment	Assessing student performance was a problem area in distance learning. It was a commonly held belief that distance students performed more poorly in assessment than did internal students because of the additional pressures and burdens of distance study.

Source: 2016 Field work

The table above shows the challenges as well as their meaning. However, this section as already stated above, has suggested the solutions to the problems and challenges identified above.

5.6.1 Coping strategies to the problems and challenges

5.6.1.1 Lack of good nature of study material

If the University of Zambia is to provide equity of education opportunity to all, then careful consideration must be given to the special needs of students undertaking distance education for the first time. Of particular importance is the design of study materials for distance students. No doubt at particular level one has to attain similar learning experiences so content for all learners should be the same, but examples, activities and experiences should be included in learning materials according to their needs, learning experiences and expectations.

5.6.1.2 Lack of orientation at the beginning of the programme

Orientation, support and services such as providing tutors, academic planners and schedulers, and technical assistance for distance learners should not be neglected when planning distance programs. Students need to be oriented as well as to be given tutors and academic planners to help the students to complete courses on time and to act as a support system when stress becomes a problem. Most students in the study had indicated that their beginning of their study programmes was not very good as they did not know whom to consult as they started their studies. One student from Lundazi study area had this to say;

After I had received my acceptance letter, I actually did not know what to do next. This is because I have never done distance learning before. I wish they can be calling us to the campus to orient us in a special way and show us how to prepare even for the Residential School. They can start by calling us to UNZA first so that they can orient us to the way they want us to do all things about distance learning. It is just my friends in the locality who keeps helping me with my school work. I look like I cannot do university work on my

own without my friends who were once at UNZA. These guys have also guided me on how to write the assignments. I don't know how my performance would have been without these former UNZA students.

(A second year distance education student from Lundazi District, 2016)

5.6.1.3 Lack of Feedback from lecturers as well as learners

The first and the foremost critic of the system of distance education is that it lacks the presence of a teacher. It is said that education is a Tripler Process- teacher, students and curriculum, out of which the important pole, thus the teacher is almost missing or behind the scene. Therefore, the solution to such a problem was to Feedback on the part of distance educators and authority regarding admission, and thus, assignments, examination and projects should be provided to the distance learners time to time.

One of the respondents said,

“The main mode of communicating with the university management and lecturers is by post. We send and receive assignments and other communication such as examination time tables through the post office.”

Even though most distance students from the rural areas said that they had used, mostly, the Post Office for communication, the posted materials did not reach their lecturers in good time. In some cases the materials in question did not reach the Lecturers at all. But according the DLs themselves from the said rural areas found the Post Offices to be the most useful mode of communication. The Post Office services appeared to be the only mode of delivery for the assignments. This meant that the DLs from rural areas in Zambia did not have much choice when it came to sending their assignments unless they travelled to Lusaka to hand in their assignments in person.

Some of the female students who came for residential school with babies had experienced another kind of a challenge. They were not allowed to stay in the same hostels on campus. This was a university policy. These mothers were made to look for an alternative accommodation which was outside the campus. In some cases, such an arrangements proved to be very expensive for such students as they had come from the rural areas and had already used some money for travel to UNZA. Further, these female students had to come along with another person to help them take care of their babies while they were in classes for residential school. This also meant that these students had to spend extra money for this extra person for food, transport to UNZA as well as lodging.

Some students said they used to hire group tutors to help with some courses in which they had problems. This, they said, helped them to compensate for the short period they stayed at the residential school.

5.6.1.4 Lack of presence of colleagues in localities

One of the ways of curbing the problem of not having colleagues in the same locality was to moderate it by providing a sense of personal involvement between the student and the institution. The other way was through the use of tutors that communicate with students electronically by phone or personally at personal contract programme. Students believed that having a good tutor was vitally important in helping them get the most out of a course and to achieve a credit. Most of the students interviewed said that they had learnt a lot from the former UNZA distance students who offered a lot of help as they did their school work.

5.6.1.5 Poor performance in the assessments

The solution to this problem was to maintain the same course content, learning objectives, standards, and credits for all sections, regardless of method of delivery. More research into

instructional methods and models is needed to identify those that work well in distance learning. Participatory and active learning models are preferred by distance learning students. The course content affects student persistence.

5.6.2 Coping Strategies by the University of Zambia

This study had reviewed that the University of Zambia under the Institute of Distance Education had also put in place some strategies aimed at helping distance students cope with the challenges which they faced. The main strategies by the Institution as stated by one of the Student Support Staff were as follows.

- *Provision of modules to all students and encouraging the use of internet to help in making the study materials available.*
- *The use of multi-media technologies such as the use of Television in the delivery of lessons*
- *Improving communication through the use of e-mail, telecommunication and postal services.*
- *Use of provincial centres as a link between the institution and the students.*
- *The other strategy was the re-organisation of the Administration and the Functional reporting lines.*

(Student Support Staff , 2017)

5.6.3 Key points to the challenges and coping strategies faced by distance education students from rural areas.

The three basic factors which are distance, communication and infrastructure can give solutions as coping strategies to all challenges faced by distance students, from rural areas in Zambia, if properly dealt with. Perhaps the main problem with the term ‘distance’ is that it tends to make the fact that many students in distance systems are metropolitan residents and that it is the distance between the teaching acts and the learning acts that is crucial, not the

magnitude of the geographical separation of teacher and learner. Innovations and experiments can give a better solution to all these challenges in the Zambian context.

5.7 Summary

This chapter has shown the statistics graphically and through verbalism on the responses the researcher was getting during the oral interviews and focus group discussions for this study. Some of the information was obtained through the questionnaires, for the participants who were in some research areas which were very far from the line of rail for this study.

The next chapter presents a discussion of the findings of this study.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

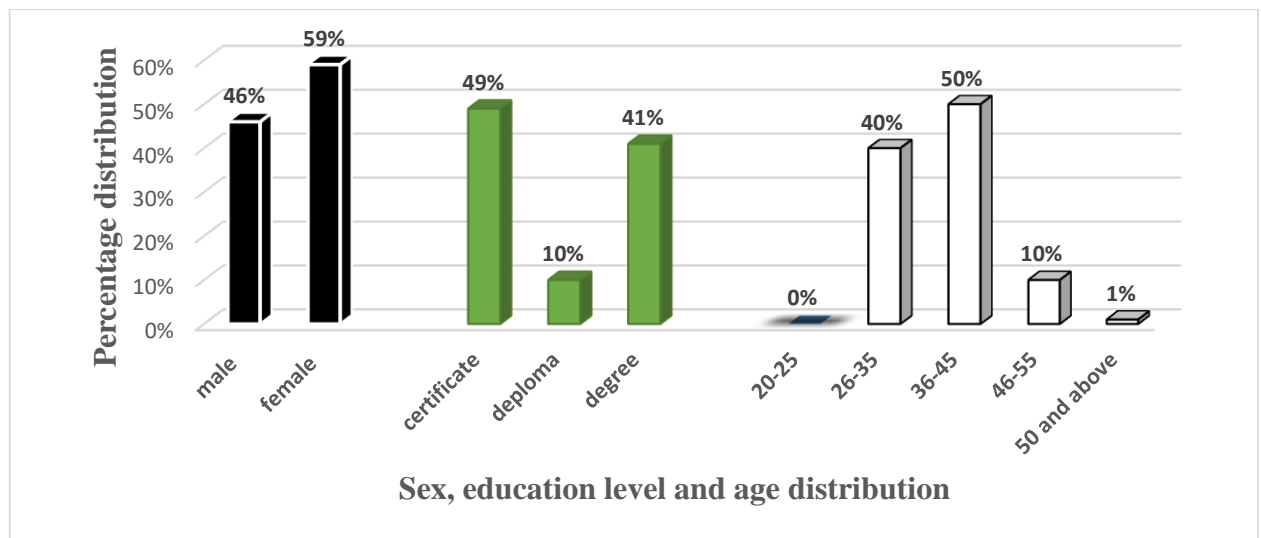
6.0 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to discussing the findings as outlined in the previous chapter. All the findings presented in Chapter 5 are discussed in Chapter 6 by stating the implications of those findings.

6.1 Discussion on the Background Information

The background information discusses the various aspects concerning the participants in the study. These aspects include the gender of the participants, their qualifications on entry into distance programmes, their ages and their years of study.

Figure 19: Summary of the background information



Source: Field work 2017

6.1.1 Sex of Participants

Out of the 30 distance students who were purposively selected out of 140 distance student population from the rural areas from the selected research areas in rural Zambia, who participated in this study, 59% were females while 41% were males.

However, there has been a steady increase in female enrolment under distance education at The University of Zambia. Latest statistics obtained from the Institute of Distance Education shows the following trend by sex from 2010 to 2015:

Table 8: Distance Students Statistics by sex from 2010 to 2015

YEAR	MALES	FEMALES
2010	2,040	1,775
2011	2,478	2,201
2012	2,719	2,815
2013	2,933	3,328
2014	2,964	3,843
2015	2,626	3,651
TOTAL	15,760	17, 613

Source: IDE, 2016

This finding shows that there were more female than male students pursuing distance studies from 2012 to 2015. The total figure of all the female students registered from 2010 to 2015 was 17, 613 and that for the male students was 15, 760. This could be due to a number of reasons. One reason this study has reviewed is that many females did not want to stay away from their families for longer periods. As such many of them opted to study

by distance which provided them less time for being absent from home for school purposes and more time at home. The other reason, according to one of the respondents was that distance education costed less money compared to the regular and full-time education at the University of Zambia.

6.1.2 Qualifications on Entry into University

Before entering university for distance education, 49% of the participants had diplomas, 41% had certificates and 10% had degrees. This information shows that most students who pursued distance education were those who wished to upgrade their qualifications and those who had come straight from school were very few.

It is clear from this finding that it was those who had diplomas and certificates who were undergoing distance studies because they were upgrading to degree level. The 10% who had degrees were mostly those who wished to study something different from their present qualification mostly due to employment demands.

6.1.3 Age Ranges of Distance Students

From the findings, out of 30 students who participated in the study none was aged between 20 –25, 40% were aged between 26 – 35, 50% were aged between 36 – 45, and 10% were aged between 46 – 50 and none was aged 51 years and above.

From these percentages, it can be seen that distance students are mostly concentrated between the 26 and 45 years age group. This is an indication that most of the people pursuing distance studies are generally adults. These are the people, most of whom are married with families to look after. These findings indicate that distance education provides an opportunity for adults to further their education and upgrade their

qualifications. This is in line with what Ehene et al (2014) stated that typically in the past, audiences for distance education opportunities were adults often seeking advanced education and training at home, on the job or in the military. It is clear from the literature that many distance learners are working class students and at the same time taking care of their families. As such, balancing their time and other roles and responsibilities with the course work needs real support from providers.

6.1.4 Years of Study

Out of the 30 students who participated in the study, 29% were in the first year, 21% were doing their second year, 30% were in third year, 16% were in fourth year and 4% were doing their fifth year.

High numbers in the preliminary years (1st and 2nd) indicate that there was an increase in the number of people accessing distance education. This is as a result of the fact that many people seem to have seen the need to further their education. There is competition in the job market hence the need for higher qualification by many people.

6.2 Description of Distance Education by students

Distance education is thought to be an effective way of educating people of all sections in society. The delivery system in distance education is different than that in the conventional on-campus teaching. However, distance education is considered as close substitute for the conventional on-campus teaching keeping in mind the premises that different types of media (print, audio, video, telephone, and computer-based communication system, to mention but a few.) are synchronized in the delivery process in distance education and open learning system. Of course, in this age of information super high-way, nobody can challenge the possibility that effective and quality education can be

offered through different types of modern media which can be done without any real class room. Real class room can be substituted by virtual class room environment.

Findings showed that out of the 30 respondents, 10 described distance education as the type of education that involves less contact time, 8 said distance education is that which involves learning while one is doing his or her own work, 6 described it as learning that takes place from one's home, 3 stated that distance education is learning by oneself and the other 3 indicated that distance education was that which helped people to further their studies.

The term 'distance education' has been used interchangeably with a number of affiliated terms, for example: independent study, home study, open learning and correspondence education (Keegan, 1986). Holmberg,(1977) has described distance education and says that it;

Includes the various forms of study at all levels which are not under the continuous, immediate supervision of tutors present with their students in lecture rooms or on the same premises, but which, nevertheless, benefit from the planning, guidance and tuition of a tutorial organization.

(Holmberg, 1977: 9)

This definition, therefore, signals that distance education takes place in an arena that is less well supervised than a university campus, and in a situation where students are separated from their tutors. This signifies that distance education is related to what is not on campus (Bayne et al, 2013: 2). Distance education is also viewed as:

The family of instructional methods in which the teaching behaviours are executed apart from learning behaviours, including those that in a contiguous situation would be performed in the learner's presence, so that communication between the teacher and the learner must be facilitated by

print, electronic, mechanical or other devices (Moore, 1973: 664).

This particular definition considers that media act as a tool to unify students, tutors and their universities, and explains that teaching takes place in a different place from learning. The media emphasised in this context include print, audio and audio visual components (Sharma, 2011, Moore and Kearsley, 2012), the use of which, it is argued, facilitates active interaction, engagement and participation in learning (Holmberg, 1989; Moore, 1989).

The instructional methods emphasised by Moore (above) include methods that are used in conventional systems, as well as in distance education. This means that there are times when distance students can gather together so that personal and/or group tutoring can take place. Such a system can be organised through arranged face-toface sessions or through tele-conferencing (Simpson, 2000; Rumble, 2000). The purpose of engaging various instructional methods is to help provide real-time learning to the physically separated students.

Similarly, Moore and Kearsley (2005) defined distance education as:

A planned learning that normally occurs in a different place from teaching, requiring special course design and instruction techniques, communication through various technologies, and special organization and administrative arrangement.

This definition emphasises the aspect of management and organization in teaching and learning. The similarity in the definitions of distance education above allowed Keegan (1996) to summarize the main features of distance education, as follows:

- a) The quasi-permanent separation of teacher and learner throughout the length of the learning process.
- b) The influence of educational organization, both in the planning and preparation of learning materials, and in the provision of student support services.
- c) The use of technical media, namely: print, audio, video and computer to unite teacher and learner, and thus help carry the content of the course.
- d) The provision of two-way communication so that students can benefit from dialogue, and in some cases, initiate it.
- e) The quasi-permanent absence of a learning group throughout the length of the learning process so that students are usually taught as individuals, rather than in groups; however, there exists the possibility of occasional meetings, either on a face-to-face basis or by electronic means, for both didactic and socialization purposes.

The above characteristics provide a comprehensive picture of the circumstances that distance students face, and the need for educational institutions to organise and structure

good teaching and learning practices for them. For example, the emphasis on the use of interactive media is critical for dialogic purposes. In addition, the art of designing courses to suit the requirements of distance students, and to ensure the adequate availability of support services are among the key roles of distance educators, and are central to the enhancement of effective learning strategies.

However, the last characteristic detailed in the summary indicates that group learning is not common practice in distance education. This is contrary to the recommended practice which emphasises that a number of different forms of interactions (such as one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-many) are preferable (Bates, 2005; Borokhovski et al, 2012; Moore and Kearsley, 2012). Students must have the opportunity to communicate with their tutors, peers and administrative staff synchronously and asynchronously, regardless of their locations (Bates, 2005; Owens et al 2009; Nihuka, 2011; Sharma, 2011; Moore and Kearsley, 2012).

In summary, this study regards distance education as a mediated form of teaching and learning which separates tutors, students and peers in space, while its success depends on sound institutional support services and successful course material development. It should also be understood that although distance students have a distinctive independent status, and are able to benefit from the learning opportunities described above, they also have to accept the rules, regulations and limitations that this form of education involves.

Nevertheless, it is the case that no individual student can claim to be fully independent without support of one form or another from people and from the context within which they live (Merriam and Cafarella, 1991). Therefore, independence in learning needs to be

adequately facilitated and supported among students. Successful distance education systems involve interactivity between teacher and students, between students and the learning environment, and among students themselves, as well as active learning in the classroom. McNabb (1994) noted that, though students felt that the accessibility of distance learning courses far outweighs the lack of dialogue, there is still a considerable lack of dialogue in tele courses when compared to face-to-face classes.

6.3 Support services available for distance students

There is no single way of defining support services; however, a common goal attributed to them is to sustain and assist students to learn within their geographical locations (Dzakiria, 2008; Sharma, 2011; Krishnan, 2012). In fact, support services are often aligned with guidance, advice and counselling (Simpson, 2000; 2012). However, this to some extent distorts and narrows the meaning of what support services constitute in students learning. It is, therefore, important to clarify what I mean by ‘support services’ for the purposes of this study. Support services have been defined by Simpson (2002) as constituting all activities beyond the production and delivery of course materials that assist in the progress of students in their studies.

The separation of course production and distribution from support services is an important move because often institutions fail to strike a balance between these two activities (Simpson, 2000, 2002), over-emphasising issues of course design, development and materials distribution.

Another definition is provided by Melofi (1998) who considers support services as being organised, purposeful activities that influence the smooth facilitation of teaching and

learning in distance education, while Krishnan (2012: 460) viewed support services as being inclusive of facilities and activities that are provided to make the learning process easier and more interesting to the learner. These two definitions go further than just the production of materials and teaching. Instead, they add aspects of pre-arranged activities and facilities that assist effective teaching and learning, while ensuring that learning is simplified and made more interesting for students. I think this is significant, especially when we consider the multiple roles that students have and how far away they are from their universities. However, other factors such as students' characteristics, their needs, geographical locations and the use of technology also need to be considered in order to effectively facilitate learning at a distance (Tait, 1995, 2000).

Garrison and Baynton (1987) describe support services as services that include all the resources that enable students to learn effectively. The authors contend that both human and non-human resources are important in enhancing learning at a distance. This definition comprises aspects of human, physical and material resources which are central to any educational system. Indeed, adequate access to relevant resources may be a decisive factor in improving the learning experiences of distance students.

It can be said, therefore, that despite the variation in definition of support services among scholars, there is a common agreement that support services exist to enhance effective teaching and learning among students. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, 'support services' are defined as a set of comprehensive strategies, activities and resources which enable students to learn, and succeed in learning at a distance, despite students experiencing many challenges as mentioned in the earlier chapters, while still being able to manage their usual social and economic activities.

The support services emphasised in this study are divided into two categories, namely: academic and non-academic support (Simpson, 2000, 2002, 2012; Mills, 2003). These forms of support are provided through a range of media and by a range of people, and they are also accessible to individuals and groups (Mills and Tait, 1996; Rumble, 2000; Mills, 2003). It is also understood that academic and non-academic support services from an institutional context may be incomplete without support from employers, friends, peers and family (Lockwood, 1995; Asbee and Simpson, 1998; Simpson, 2000, 2012).

By nature, distance learning requires that the institutions responsible should assist the students in one way or the other, to enable them cope with the challenges that come with the distance learning process. This research established a number of support services provided by the University of Zambia through the Institute of Distance Education and its provincial centres; and the Ministry of Education from which most of the students who study by distance come. The Ministry of Education provided its support through the provincial and district education offices.

6.3.1 Support Services for Distance Students from IDE

Lack of support and services to distance students also constitute a major barrier. Learner support generally refers to interactive activities and services that are meant to support and facilitate the learning process. As already indicated support is essential because of the separation between the learner and the educational provider. Broadly, such services include teaching, tutoring, counselling, advising and administrative services. Simpson (2003) considered learner support services as being measures that go beyond the production of study materials and support the learning process. He further identified and differentiated between academic and non-academic support.

Support and services required by distance students are in the form of social and technology. The fact that the bulk of distance education students are workers from the various sectors and regions of the country, which are in different levels of development in terms of infrastructure, makes the challenges and solutions varied. Institutional support in this context refers to the counselling services, study centre locations and learning facilities available at those centres. On campus, regular students seem to have all that they need for their studies around them whilst DE students would have to travel to access them.

The Institute of Distance Education, being the custodian of distance education at the University of Zambia, provided a number of support services to provide an enabling environment for the distance students in their quest to acquire education by distance learning. Some of these support services included the provision of study materials in form of modules, organising of the residential school programmes, creation of a website for communication and organising the multi-media Technology for distance learning.

The following Student support services and activities should be integrated into the distance learning journey of a student according to the UNZA IDE policy of 2016;

- Student enquiry about the program.
- Registration, admission and pre-study advisory services
- Assessment of prior learning and credit transfer
- Counselling and guidance
- In-text support in the study material
- Student-centered feedback on assignments

- Face-to-face facilitation of learning
- Practical and laboratory work
- Work-based placements and internships
- Study and examination centers
- Library services
- Record-keeping, information management, and other administrative systems
- Materials that support the development of study skills, program planning or career development

Study Modules helped students to have the background information on the courses they were studying. These modules were prepared by the concerned lecturers and developed by IDE. These were of great assistance to the students as they gave them an opportunity to understand what the various courses they were undertaking were all about and had contained most of the content and instructional works for the student for any learning program.

To enhance the linkage between the IDE and the distance students, the University of Zambia makes use of the provincial centres. Through these offices students are assisted in terms of sending and receiving of assignments. It is through these centres that the venues for distance examinations are organised. This is to try and ensure that distance students get access to somewhat similar services as regular students.

Further support services came from the employers of these students. It was observed that a number of students under distance students were actually teachers. The Provincial and district education offices provided a number of support services to enable teachers access higher education through distance learning. The support services ranged from giving permission to the teachers to go and study, providing study materials through the district and provincial resource centres and sometimes even financial assistance to help them pay their fees.

6.4 Gendered experiences of female distance students from rural areas

This study considered a gender perspective as well. As such equal numbers of male and female respondents were purposively selected for interviews. Responses on their experiences revealed varying trends.

In the preceding chapter on the presentation of findings above, it has been discovered that out of the total of 30 participants to the study, 3 males and 2 females had challenges with dividing resources and time between school and family engagement, 5 females had challenges in terms of child care and nursing with school engagement, 4 males and 2 females had challenges with sharing the limited resources between school and home needs, 4 males and none of the females had challenges in managing time between school and community engagement, 1 males and 3 females had challenges regarding house chores and school work and 2 males and 3 females complained of challenges of accommodation during residential school.

From the discussion of findings on the gendered experiences of students being compared by sex and experiences with regard to distance education, it has been discovered that more females had a challenge of caring for house chores than males. It also shows that they had more responsibility of child caring and nursing than males. The other challenge faced by females is lack of accommodation during residential school. This was mainly due to the fact that the nursing female students were not allowed to stay in the hostels, on campus because they brought along their babies. Males had experienced challenges with regard to sharing limited resources between school and family, community engagement as well as family engagement compared to females.

Commenting on the experiences, one of the female participants said that the most challenging experience for women was being overwhelmed with much work such as caring for children and house chores which affected their studies negatively.

Males only experienced serious challenges when it came to sharing resources between school and other family requirements.

6.5 General Experiences of Distance Students from Rural Zambia

Out of the 30 participants, 7 indicated that through distance education they were able to learn while working in their various stations, 5 said they were able to learn while doing other things at home, 4 said distance learning calls for more commitment, 5 said distance learning provided more time for study, 4 said distance learning gave enough time to

mobilise resources in terms of money, 5 said distance learning helped them to manage time well.

6.5.1 Studying and Working

From these findings, it is clear that distance education provides an opportunity to workers to access higher education without worrying about going on study leave. A good number of those interviewed indicated that distance education enabled to study and, at the same time, be present for work. This is because most of the distance students are actually teachers who take advantage of holidays to attend their residential programmes.

6.5.2 Studying while at Home

Some respondents said distance education gave them an experience of what it feels to study while at home. They could study and continue doing their projects at home and be with their families. Being away from home, pursuing studies on full time basis would not make it possible for them to undertake other important family projects.

6.5.3 Distance Learning Calls for more Commitment

Some of the distance graduates interviewed indicated that, through their experience, they discovered that studying by distance called for more commitment from the students. This was because, distance education does not provide students with adequate time to be with their lecturers and tutors forcing them to do most of the work with less supervision.

6.5.4 More time for Study

It was also found out that distance graduates felt that distance education provided more time for study. The whole period from residential to examination was for students to concentrate on their studies. This was despite the fact that most of them had other commitments from their work places and homes which forced some to work under gun point or panic as they prepared for their Examinations which mostly came at the end of the academic year.

6.5.5 More Time for Resource Mobilisation

Other respondents indicated that distance education enabled them to mobilise resources because the mode of payment under distance education was quite flexible enabling students to stagger the payment of fees throughout the academic year.

6.5.6 Time Management

Time management for distance students was another aspect which was brought out as an experience by the graduates of distance programs. Studying by distance accorded students ample time to plan their study well throughout the year. Although some students had challenges regarding meeting the due dates for their written assignments, it was generally clear that those who were committed easily met due date and could sometimes just be delayed by the postage systems which were not very efficient in most parts of rural Zambia.

6.5.7 Time Taken to Graduate

From the graduate respondents who had gone through distance education, 35 percent said they graduated in less than 5 years while 65 per cent said they graduated after 5 years but between 6 and 10 years. This shows that, depending on how committed a student is, he or she can graduate within the required time of 4 years. Most of those who said they graduated after five years, are those who were on the earlier program at the University of Zambia which required that they transfer to full time in third year.

6.5.8 Did Students learn all they wanted

Participants were asked to state whether they learnt what they really wanted to learn when they started their various programs thereby meeting all their expectations. 18 of them agreed that they had learnt all that which they wanted to learn while 12 disagreed saying they felt much was not covered in their programmes.

Distance programs are generally tailored in such a manner that most of the work is done by the student by studying the required materials. If students did not study as advised by their lecturers, they were likely not to learn all that which they wanted to learn when they were starting the program. However, this study has established that it is up to the distance learners themselves to learn as much as they wanted.

6.5.9 Approach and Purpose of Lesson Delivery

Out of the 30 participants in the study, 12 indicated that courses were taught using ordinary and general approaches, 9 indicated that courses were taught for the transformation of society, 9 indicated that courses were taught for examination purposes. The approach and

purpose for which distance education is delivered plays a major role in determining what students learn in their various programs.

From the findings it was clear that most students felt that lecturers used ordinary and general approaches in delivering the lessons. Others felt that what they learnt was good for the positive transformation of society while others felt that what they learnt was just for examination purposes.

Thus, computer technologies which has continued to increase around the world has not been mentioned to actively been used due to the fact that it could be difficult to access in rural areas of Zambia. Computer technologies are becoming more commonplace in the delivery of distance education. Online learning does not necessarily imply distance learning as many traditional higher education courses now utilize internet-based course management software to aide in the learning process. Nonetheless, much research has gone into establishing best practices and guidelines for internet-based distance education courses and programs. E-mail, online collaborations, and Web-based education have been identified as the primary computer technologies used for distance education. Obviously, only students that have reliable computer and internet access will be able to enroll in courses that utilize these technologies.

E-mail messages are a relatively simple and inexpensive way for instructors and students to communicate throughout course implementation. Occasionally, designers plan an entire course around e-mail communication. This works particularly well for students that prefer asynchronous instruction and allows students that may be too shy to speak up in a

traditional face-to-face course to interact with the instructor. More often, e-mail is best used to supplement print, audio, or video technologies.

In addition to conventional e-mail communication, bulletin boards and list serves can also be used to improve the quality of a distance course. Bulletin boards are online discussion groups or newsgroups where students and instructors can post messages that everyone subscribed to the group can read and reply to. However, this method too was not mentioned by distance education students to have been used. Most instructors will be familiar with list serve, which can similarly be used to send an e-mail message to a list or group of students. Bulletin boards and list serves can be an effective way of facilitating interaction among students and with the instructor.

6.5.10 Benefits of Distance Education

A number of benefits of studying by distance were brought out by the participants to the research. Some indicated that distance education was helpful in the sense that it offered an opportunity for them to study while working. Others said distance education provided enough time for one to prepare for examinations and to raise funds. Others indicated that learning by distance ensured an immediate implementation of the knowledge acquired in the process of learning while others stated that distance learning provided opportunities or chances for many people to access higher education. Other respondents indicated that distance education promoted reading culture among students.

From these benefits it is clear that distance education is helping a lot of people in one way or another which could not have been possible if it was to be done under the full time mode.

6.5.11 Varying Experiences between Male and Female Distance Students

Out of the total of 30 participants to the study, 3 males and 2 females had challenges with dividing resources and time between school and family engagement, 5 females had challenges in terms of child care and nursing with school engagement, 4 males and 2 females had challenges with sharing the limited resources between school and home needs, 4 males and none of the females had challenges in managing time between school and community engagement, 1 males and 3 females had challenges regarding house chores and school work and 2 males and 3 females complained of challenges of accommodation during residential school.

Both males and females had challenges regarding the sharing of financial resources between family and school needs. This is because family engagement is a responsibility of both males and females. Most distance students used their salaries to pay for their education and at the same time support their families.

A female distance student studying while performing other chores in one of the rural areas in Eastern Province.



Source: Field work, 2015

On the other hand, more females were involved in child care and home chores than males. This is because ladies have, for a long time been associated with child care as mothers. This, however, should not be the case because child care is a gender role and not a sex role to be a preserve for women.

A male student fetching water for domestic use in one of the study areas in Central Province



Source: Field work, 2015

Female distance students also faced more challenges in accessing residential accommodation than male students. This may be due to the fact that there are more female students accessing distance education than males.

In many universities, including UNZA, a substantial proportion of adult distance education students are women, who often enter higher education after long absence from any formal education and balance a variety of complex commitments in their lives (Anyona, 2009). About half of those students entering university have come directly from high school, and mature aged entry has consistently been the largest sector of growth in many universities (MoE, 2005). Their multiple responsibilities or physical circumstances prevents women from attending regular programs.

Distance learning program is offered at a cost by educational institutions. There is nothing that is done for free. However, many students pursuing this program through distance lack adequate money to cover the costs. For example there are some women who are in employment and are married to non-working men who are unable to support them financially. And these women want to upgrade their educational levels through distance mode. But they are failing due to family obligations. They are the family bread winners. The salaries they earn are too little to meet all the needs, hence failing to pursue their courses in specified period of time. The level of one's salary, access to loan and the desire to improve one's self for a better future may determine the urge to go for a loan to pursue further education (Barney, 2008). Unfortunately most students are not at a level that they can access loans to upgrade themselves. Family problems have gone past their educational needs. Therefore, financial problems due to family obligations are affecting the progression of students learning through distance.

6.5.12 How the Males and Females Desired to Learn by Distance

Distance graduates were asked whether learning by distance was the most desired mode of study before they started the programme. In their response 6 of the males and 9 females agreed that they wanted to study by distance while 9 males and 6 females disagreed.

From the findings, it is clear that more females than males had desired to study by distance. This is mostly because, ladies seem more concerned about the welfare of their families than their male counterparts. They felt, studying by distance provided them with an opportunity to remain with their families as opposed to spending more time away in school.

On the other hand, more males said they never desired to study by distance, but they did so due to circumstances beyond their control. They could otherwise have loved to study by full time. This explains why there were more females than males studying by distance mode.

6.5.13 Duration of completing Programs under Distance Education by Males and Females

The participants were asked to state whether they agreed or not with the notion that distance programs could be completed in good time or not. In their response 12 males and 8 females agreed that distance programs could be completed on time while 3 males and 7 females disagreed.

From the finding it is clear that more males than females felt distance studies could be completed on time.

6.6 Challenges to Distance Education

As already mentioned in chapter five of this study, and like any other undertaking, distance education had some challenges. Galusha cited in Dabaj (2011), points out that there are many barriers in teaching and learning process of distance education. He argues that the most common being the unawareness of the roles as teachers and students. Further he asserts that studies show that the barriers of distance education fall into such categories as cost, motivators, feedback and teacher contact, student support and services, alienation, lack of experience and training. In addition, course content on the other hand constitutes another barrier and should be modified in distance education. Therefore, to create effective and qualified distance education all barriers must be identified so that they can also be eliminated.

But it is worth noting that these challenges usually overlap and merge together at some point. Lehman (1998) writing about barriers to distance education, categorizes the teacher related barriers as philosophical, logistical, administrative, technological, including existing telecommunication systems, ergonomic concerns and lack of funds for new devices; and the student related barriers as lack of interaction with instructor and classmates, lack of support services, resistance to change and lack of training in technical issues.

In this study, it was observed that from the distance graduates interviewed, most DLs indicated that communication with lecturers when they needed assistance was a challenge. A good number too of the respondents indicated that they had challenges of raising resources to be shared between family and school fees. Other respondents indicated that

they had challenges in getting feedback from lecturers until they wrote their examinations. Some of the respondents indicated the challenge of accessing study materials, while some said the residential period was too short for them to get all the needed help from their lecturers during the residential school period. A few of the respondents said they had challenges balancing their time between study and work.

6.6.1 Communication

Communication is an important aspect in distance education. It is the only way by which students and lecturers can interact. From the findings, it was clear that communication still remained a challenge in rural areas where post offices were only found in town centres. Post offices was the main mode by which students could send and receive communication to and from their lecturers and university management accordingly.

According to Ohene et al (2014), it is worth noting that due to the distance between the tutor and the learner, there is the need to keep the line of communication and interaction always open. More importantly, learners' assignment feedback, other learning needs and motivation, all have to be addressed at this unit. With learners being geographically distant from tutors, they are most times saddled with studying problems and need encouragement to meet their learning needs.

The advancement in technology such as the use of emails and cell phone seem not to have assisted the students from rural parts of Zambia where network connection still proved a challenge. The issue of communication also concerns with the issue of receiving feedback from lecturers. Students mostly sent their assignments through the post offices and expected to receive feedback the same way, but often times, marked assignments could

only be accessed during residential school. Some assignments could even miss thereby disadvantaging the students. Findings revealed that out of the 30 participants, 60% of the respondents disagreed that there was timely feedback from lecturers, 20% held a neutral view while the other 20% agreed that there was timely feedback to the assignments they submitted.

Keegan (1986) and Tinto (1975) believe that the lack of feedback on performance or contact with teachers also constitute a barrier to distance students. Keegan (1986) argues that the link between the teacher and the student constitutes a vital link in teaching-learning transaction and that the link, which is broken by distance, must be restored one way or the other. This particular barrier creates the problem of evaluation for the student. It is suggested that the barrier created by the absence of a teacher could be mitigated through technological methods. However, Braimoh and Osiki (2008) raise concern about this approach of restoring the teaching learning transaction in Africa because of the low development of the ICT sector. It is further argued that the use of ICT in distance education poses a lot of challenges due to uneven and unequal access to computers and the internet and most importantly the fact that power supply is unstable.

Institutional barriers are those barriers caused by organisational set-up. These barriers may be both physical and non-physical. The physical barriers may include such things as nearness to classroom, road net-work and other academic resources such as the library. Stringent admission requirements, high tuition fees and the mode of paying these fees constitute some of the non-physical barriers. Other barriers, which come under this category, are non-interesting courses, inadequate text-books, poor library facilities and poor organization of class and examination (Cross, 1981).

6.6.2 Raising Resources for fees and Family use

Although distance education fees were much less than the fees for full-time education in comparison, some graduates stated that distance education was quite expensive as tuition fees were paid per course giving them a challenge to raise adequate funds to share between family and school needs. It is however, important to note that distance education is cheaper when compared to full time studies where students are required to pay tuition and accommodation fees among other expenses all at once. Distance studies only prove to be expensive because of the fact that students share the limited resources with their families and are never sponsored by the Government of The Republic of Zambia. This also applies to all distance learners regardless of age and the level of learning.

“The individual's situational barrier may refer to his or her responsibilities at home, place of work or community. Many distance learners are within the working class bracket and are married adult learners taking care of the family,” (Ohene et al, 2014:160). As such, they need to possess the ability to balance their time for the different roles and responsibilities. In addition, Galusha (2012) asserts that students' age, type of work and marital status constitute an important aspect of situational barrier. Lack of adequate money to cover the cost of the program constitutes yet another aspect of situational barrier and the financial barrier. The level of one's salary, access to loan and the desire to improve one's self for a better future may determine the urge to go for a loan to pursue further education. Some respondents actually stated that distance education provided enough time for them to raise the necessary resources for their education. This was agreed by Galusha (2012) that most distance students from rural areas had difficulties in raising their school fees generally.

6.6.3 Access to Study Materials

Education is only possible when students have easy access to study materials. The findings revealed that distance students from rural areas in Zambia had challenges accessing study materials for their various programmes. They only relied on modules and residential school notes which are not adequate for university students. Distance students only access the library during residential school which was too short for them to access all the materials they required.

Online documents also proved a challenge for rural distance students to access because of lack of internet facilities. It was also clear from the findings that most distance students from rural areas had challenges downloading online documents due to limited computer knowledge. Lecturers also did not make the required materials available to students.

From the perspective of the students, out of all the 30 participants 60%, indicated that materials for distance learning were available, 30%, indicated that materials for distance learning were not available while 10% indicated that materials for distance learning were slightly available. This information proves an improvement in the availability of materials for distance learning.

Access to study materials in rural areas also proved a challenge due to absence of other graduates who could have done similar programmes to assist the current students. Findings showed that out of the 30 distance students 70% said there were no other

colleagues who were either doing the similar programme as theirs while 30% said they had friends doing the same programme or had already graduated from their area. This is because, in most cases, when students graduate in their various programmes, they are transferred from rural areas.

6.6.4 Time Management

Time is an important factor in education. Students required enough time to interact with the lecturers. They complained that the residential school period was too short for them to cover a lot of work with the lecturers. Residential period was mostly only two weeks.

Although distance education should be understood to be a learning which require less time with lecturers and more time for students to work alone in their various location, by interacting more with study materials, this study has revealed that most participants wanted more time for residential school as the students needed to interact more with their lecturers for a further guidance.

Some students complained of the challenge of balancing their time between work and studies. Students needed to be able to plan their programs well to accommodate studies without compromising their work requirements.

6.7 Coping strategies to the problems/challenges experienced by distance education students

From the findings discussed in chapter five of this study, it was clear that distance students from rural areas faced a number of challenges in pursuit of their education which were more serious compared to their counterparts who had come from urban areas. Despite these challenges many of them were still graduating on time. This means that some students had employed some strategies which made it easy for them to cope with these challenges, and manage to learn successfully.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) such as cell phones was one way by which some students managed to deal with the challenge of communication and access to study materials. The use of ICT made distance education easy. The challenge, however, was that in most rural areas network was not readily available forcing students to move some distances from their localities to access the mobile services such as internet to download materials and communicate with lecturers when necessary. This had helped them greatly although it also posed another challenge of financial resources for such a movement to be made.

Most rural students relied much on the postal services. Before the use of ICT became popular, distance education made use of postal services to send and receive information between students and lecturers. The challenge with the postal services, however, was delays which led to some students failing to meet deadlines on their assignments and examinations. Those who stayed closer to colleagues who had graduated, could consult

them on issues they needed assistance. As earlier mentioned distance education relies much more on consultation either electronically or by way of verbal consultations.

Some coping strategies were employed by the institutions of learning to assist distance students. Ideally the University of Zambia under the Institute of Distance Education had also put in place some strategies aimed at helping distance students cope with the challenges which they faced as they studied by distance. The main strategies by the institution as stated by the student support staff were as follows;

6.7.1 Provision of modules and encouraging the use of internet to help in making the study materials available:

Provision of necessary study materials is the corner stone of any form of education. According to Kumar (2012), if distance learning institutions are serious about providing equity of educational opportunity to all, then careful consideration must be given to the special needs of students undertaking distance education for the first time. Of particular importance is the design of study materials for distance students. No doubt at particular level we have to attain similar learning experiences for all students. As such, the content for all learners should be same in terms of activities and experiences to be included in learning materials according to their needs, learning experiences and expectations.

6.7.2 The use of multi-media technologies in the delivery of lessons:

Distance students normally face the challenge of not interacting with the lecturers or tutors directly. As such alternative modes of interaction, such as the use of video records of lectures, can provide distance students with an opportunity to interact with their lectures. This move was started by the IDE in collaboration with MUVI Television and had

progressed very well and some DE students had said that they benefited a great deal from the lessons which were broadcasted in that way.

6.7.3 Improving communication:

Communication is generally the most vital means of enhancing smooth delivery of distance education. The improvement of communication through the use of e-mail, telecommunication and postal services would go a long way in helping the students from rural areas in Zambia.

For communication to be complete, feedback is essential or very important for the distance education students because Feedback is central to the learning process. The concept of feedback was often linked to assessment. This was usually given after the assessment has taken place and was summative in nature. However feedback was not necessarily related to assessment. Interaction and communication with students within the learning process prior to assessment (often referred to as teaching), and the completion of activities that required students to engage with and synthesise the teaching material (often referred to as learning) also produced information for students that allowed them to see or evaluate how well they were doing. This was called formative feedback. It was the most powerful and valuable form of feedback. Students rated it highly.

6.7.4 Introduction of Counseling Centre to Deal with Cases of Psychological Needs

Counseling consists of one of the major non-academic support for distance education students where advising, exploring problems and offering directions take place (Anyona, 2009). Therefore, students learning through distance can suggest calling for the establishment of counselling centres in all the provincial study centres. Furthermore

students can propose to the engagement on the issue of engaging professional counsellors to attend to the needs of the students. If this is done psychological needs of students suffering in various issues can be dealt with. Eventually the performance can be good and this would result in the nation being developed. This will be so because the country will have the qualified people in offices doing the right things.

6.7.5 Geographical Distance

The geographical distance aspect of distance learning takes away much of the social interactions that would be present in traditional learning environments (Kamau, 2007). Due to distance, students face practical problems of contacting academic and administrative staff, obtaining study materials and borrowing library books. Furthermore distance students suffer from the disadvantage of being unable to interact with other students and are often denied the perception that they belong to a scholarly community. This may lead to feelings of inadequacy and insecurity, and a lack of confidence in their own abilities (Wood, 1996). This problem must be moderated by institutions providing a sense of personal involvement between the student and the institution. One way to solve this problem is through the use of tutors that communicate with students electronically, by phone or personally at personal contract program (Bullen, 2003). Students feel that having a good rapport with tutors is very important during the course. It can assist their progression.

Some places may have poor telephone network. And this can once again pose a challenge for students to be contacted by phone. In most cases distance students are parents with responsibilities of sponsoring their children and dependents. Personal problems for students on distance education programs require that institutions offering distance education courses are flexible, not flexible in giving those free passes but flexible in providing

flexible learning opportunities (Saint, 1999). Therefore students can suggest the use of Audio Compact Discs. Telephone and other communication infrastructures outside of major cities remain inadequate. Connectivity beyond major capital cities poses a potential problem in creating a national distance education strategy. Audio recorded lectures can sort out this problem and enhance effective learning. Audio recorded lectures can be written on Compact Discs and distributed to students through the post office for example. This can cut short the hustles of distance covered by students. Sometimes even during residential there is no need to ask all students to attend all contact sessions. Instead they should just package some of the lecturers on audio Compact Discs. And students can use various gadgets to listen to the lectures at their own time. This can assist the mothers taking care of babies in school as they cannot remain behind.

6.7.6 Construction of Flats at UNZA to Resolve Accommodation Problems

Accommodation is another notable challenge among the distance students especially during residential schools. Students who happen to be mothers are not allowed to reside in hostels with their babies. Therefore, such students face accommodation challenges. In order to resolve this matter student once again students can suggest through their unions to the institutions offering distance education to put up some flats specifically designed to accommodate mothers with babies. This can give chance mothers to engage maids when they are attending lecturers during residential school.

6.7.7 Introduction of Research and Writing Skills Mandatory Courses to Enhance Ability to Comprehend and Deal with Assessment Requirements

Assessment is the most important aspect of the learning process. UNESCO (2004) explains that for adult students with fears regarding their abilities to succeed, assessment tasks become major ‘hot spots’ in their progress. Something can be done to get rid of the

fears. One thing students can do is to suggest to the institutions to introduce mandatory courses for students to equip them with research and writing skills before they tackle any other course work or assignments. This is what can assist students for example to know what APA style of writing is. This can save our female folk from falling prey to those people who write assignments for them (Lipinski, 2005). And this can bring down cheating and copying amongst students. Introduction of research and writing skills amongst students can make them become confident and develop commitment to course work.

6.8. Summary of the coping strategies to specific problems

This section has summarised the main objective of this study, as it has mentioned specific challenges to distance learning and the coping strategies that can be deployed by distance students from rural areas of Zambia.

6.8.1 Lack of good nature of study material

If the University of Zambia is to provide equity of education opportunity to all the Learners, then careful consideration must be given to the specific needs of students undertaking distance education for the first time. Of particular importance is the design of study materials for distance students. Most rural distance students at UNZA indicated that they depended on photocopying most of the much needed materials for their school work. This was done mostly during their residential school at UNZA. This had helped the distance students from rural areas in Zambia cope with the challenge of lack of appropriate learning materials, regardless of the geographical standing. Similar learning experiences must always be attained for all the learners. Additionally, content for all learners should

be equivalent to all other modes of education as Simonson (2011) has indicated as he explains the main expectations for his equivalent theory.

6.8.2 Lack of orientation at the beginning of the program

Orientation, support and services such as providing tutors, academic planners and schedulers, and technical assistance for distance learners should not be neglected when planning distance programs. Students need to be oriented as well as be given tutors and academic planners to help those complete courses on time and to act as a support system when stress becomes a problem.

6.8.3 Lack of Feedback from lecturers as well as learners

The first and the foremost critic of the system of distance education is that it lacks the presence of a teacher (Keegan, 1996). According to Keegan (1996), education is a Tripler Process- teacher, students and curriculum, out of which the important pole, that is, the teacher is almost missing or behind the scene. Therefore the solution to such a problem was to Feedback on the part of distance educators and authority regarding admission, and thus, assignments, examination and projects should be provided to the distance learners time to time.

One of the male respondents said,

The main mode of communicating with the university management and lecturers is by post. We send and receive assignments and other communication such as examination time tables through the post office.

Female students with babies used to take the maids along with them to help them look after the babies when attending classes during residential school. Some students said they

used to hire group tutors to help with some courses in which they had problems. This, they said, helped them to compensate for the short period they stayed at the residential school.

6.8.4 Lack of presence of colleagues in localities

One of the ways of curbing the problem was to moderate it by providing a sense of personal involvement between the student and the institution. The other way was through the use of tutors that communicate with students electronically by phone or personally at personal contract program. Students believe that having a good tutor is vitally important in helping them get the most out of a course and to achieve a better grade.

6.8.5 Poor performance in the assessments

The solution to this problem was to maintain the same course content, learning objectives, standards, and credits for all sections, regardless of method of delivery. More research into instructional methods and models is needed to identify those that work well in distance learning. Participatory and active learning models were a more preferred mode of study by distance students than the actual distance learning itself. The course content affects student persistence.

6.8.6 The Adopted Coping Strategies and Students' Possession of Capital

After reflecting on the challenges presented in chapter 5 and part of chapter 6 of this study, I wish to answer the pertinent question for this study which is; how do rural students cope with and manage their studies? The findings in this study show that the strategies adopted by students were mostly related to the use of cultural, economic and social capital. These forms of capital were at risk and were not equally accessible among the rural students but were influential in their studies and in their relationships in the domestic and rural fields.

This study's analysis has indicated that some students had more access to these forms of capital than others and this led to continuing inequalities and marginalisation in accessing support among students.

According to Mahai (2014), students often used social capital in the form of networking, friendship and interaction in order to exchange knowledge, and in the sharing of social and learning resources. This interaction took place among students, tutors and available graduates in the rural fields. Such interactions relieved students' feelings of isolation, frustration and distance from their tutors and institutions.

Students also used their economic capital (money) to access physical and human support systems that were inadequate or unavailable in their fields. The ability to access and use such capital enabled students to position themselves in the field and to accommodate the practices they required.

The use of cultural capital was also apparent among students. I would say students invested or exchanged all forms of capital that were available in the fields in order to look for the required cultural capital. According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital is available in three forms: embodied, objectified and institutionalised. Knowing how to access and apply these forms of capital influences their possession. For instance, the findings in this study have shown that students shared their embodied capital (knowledge) with others in group discussions. They also accessed information from their private tutors and graduates in the rural field. This contributed to the broadening of their knowledge base, and helped them to develop confidence in understanding the course materials.

Moreover, students applied objectified capital in the form of laptops, computers, library resources, personal books, printed study materials and modems to search for knowledge. Students require exposure to material searching skills, reading and understanding. Students also looked forward to obtaining institutionalised capital towards the end of their studies in the form of a degree certificate. The forms of capital that students use and access in fields seem to operate in a circular form, as first one form is accessed, and then its application leads to the accessing of another. Indeed, the acquisitions of skills that can gain access to these forms of capital are essential components if students are to achieve successful outcomes.

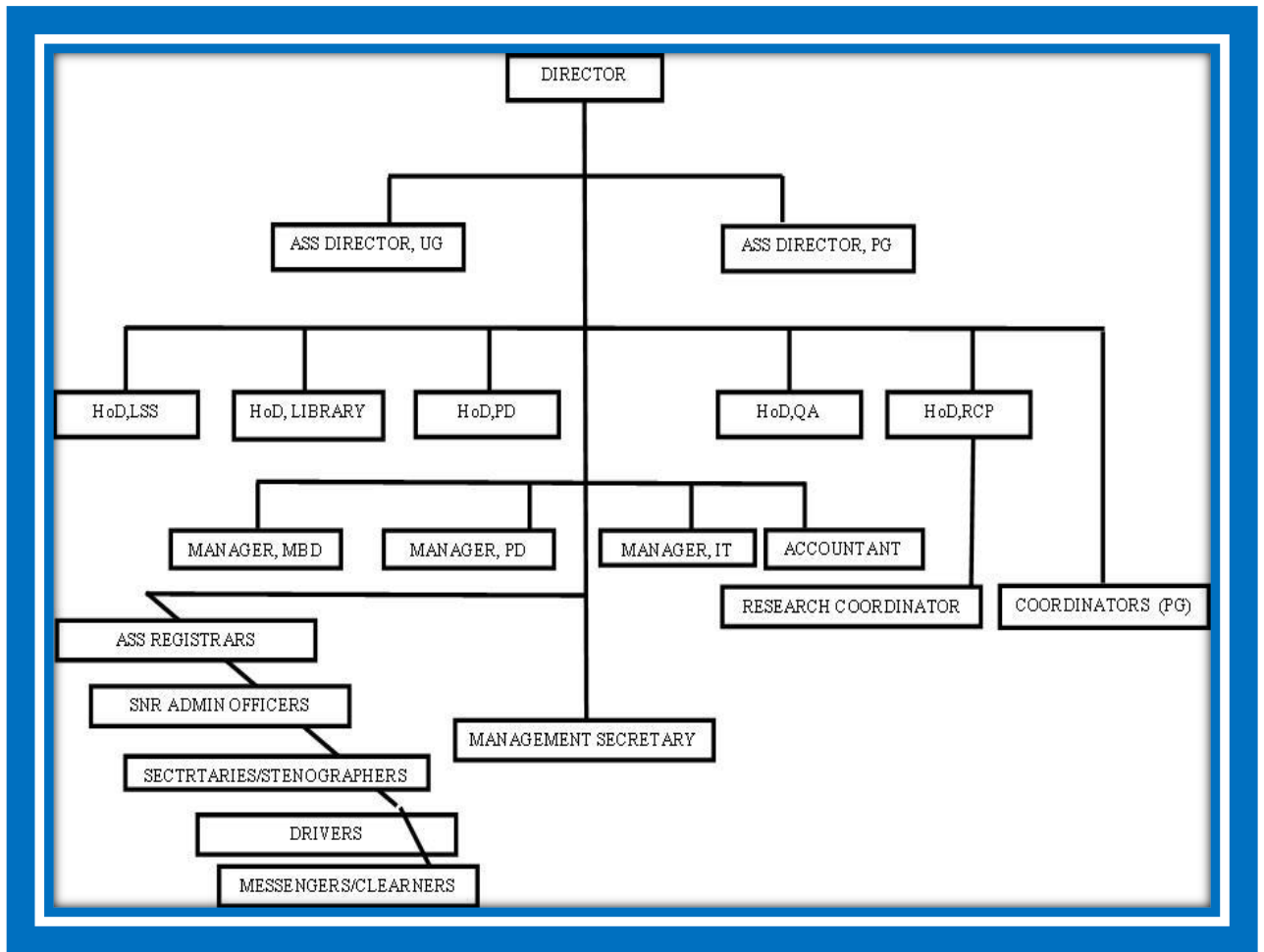
The coping strategies adopted by these students were largely successful in enabling students to learn within their localities. However, the strategies were unevenly applied among students, limiting the extent to which these students were able to develop the relevant competencies, knowledge and skills suitable to fulfil their socioeconomic goals.

Research indicates that good learning is achieved when students are effectively supported in their learning (Lentell, 1994). If this is really the case, it is necessary to properly integrate support services such as academic and non-academic provision within the teaching and learning practices of the IDE's academic field. This would help to improve the learning experiences of rural students in Zambia.

6.9 The Institute of Distance Education (IDE)

The Institute of Distance Education (IDE) is responsible for planning, coordinating and facilitating the processes of curriculum design, material development, material distribution , online tutoring and counselling, assessment management and student database administration. The IDE works collaboratively with servicing schools and departments to convert their study materials and programs into the distance and online mode. The IDE also identifies and provides demand- driven programs, and is responsible for providing expertise in curriculum design and material development for DL and online provision. The IDE also provides administrative support for all. The following Organograms show the structure of the IDE and what makes it possible to make the provision of quality education.

Figure 20: IDE main organogram : Showing the Management Structure of the IDE

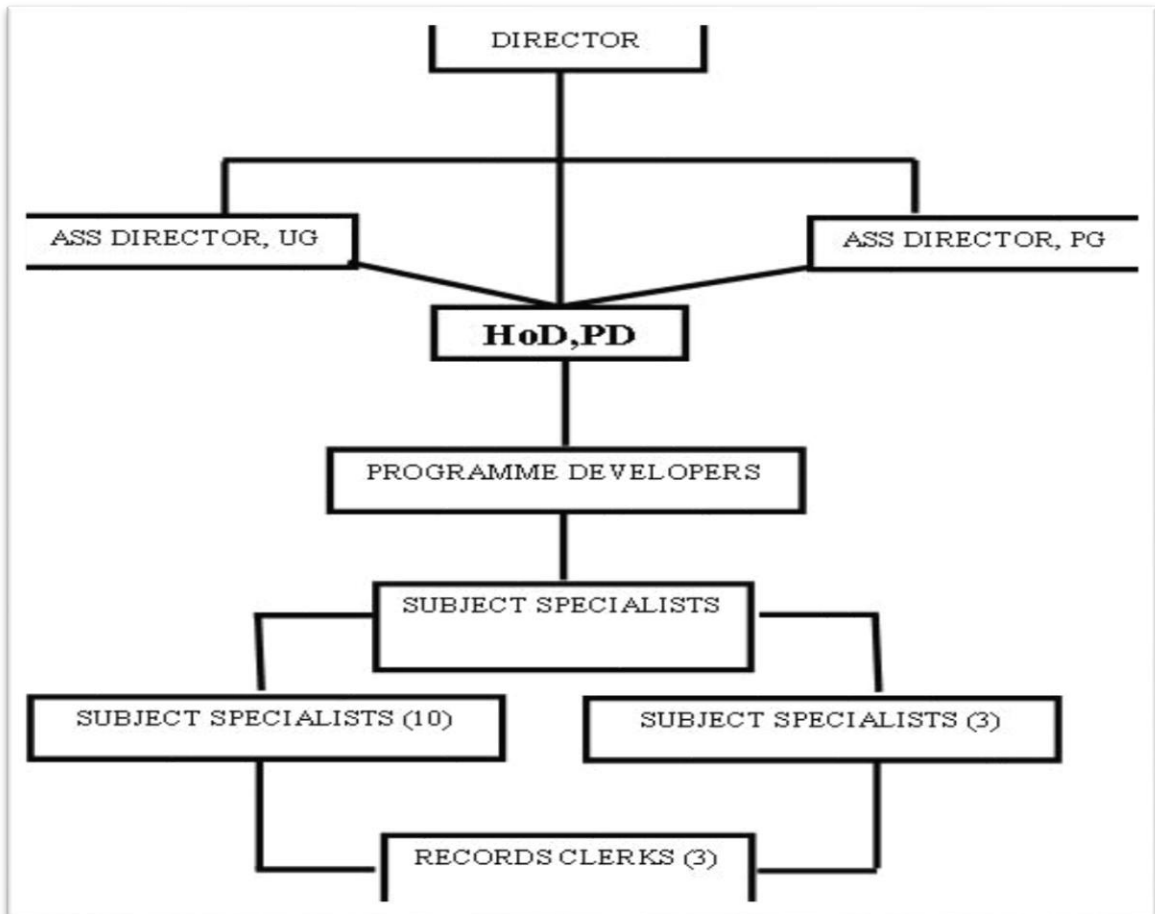


Source: IDE 2016

It is important to note the Administrative and Functional reporting lines at the IDE - Assistant Directors report directly to the Director who also has a functional responsibility to all departments and units. Heads of departments and units administratively report directly to the Assistant Directors and functionally to the Director for functional support and guidance. Information thus flows from bottom to top, that is, from the lower offices in hierarch such as senior registrars through to the assistant directors and finally to the director himself or herself functionally. All this was arrived at after considering the challenges as well as the needs that distance education students faced both from rural areas and other areas that were just far away from the University of Zambia. This is the main

organogram and the proceeding graphs shows the departmental organisation as well as flow of information and administrative communication to best help the students.

Figure 21: Organisation of program development department

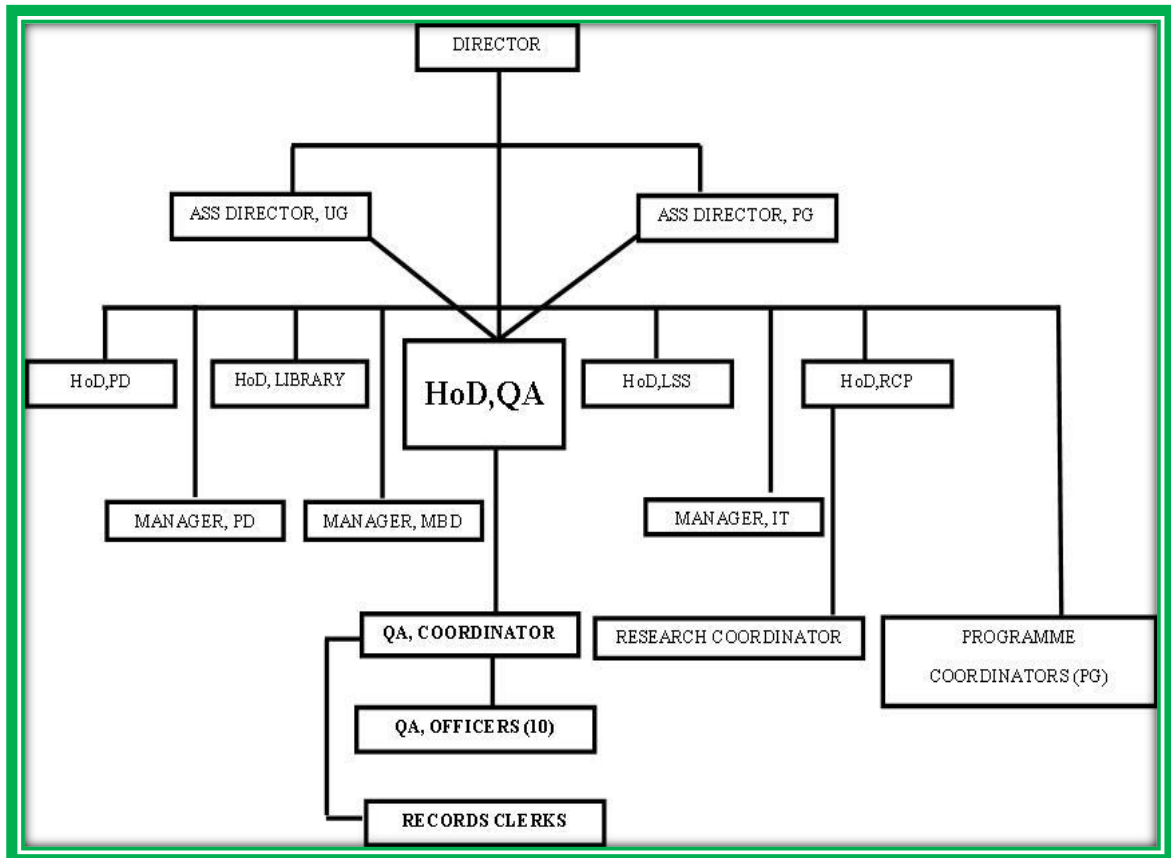


Source: IDE 2016

The organisation of the program development has specialists in subjects as well as the records clerks who report to the program developers at large and these functionally report the heard of departments. The head of department reports to the assistant directors and ultimately to the director just as was shown on the figure 1 above. Therefore, the subject specialists for distance education consider the challenges that distance students face were course contents are concerned and to make sure that the contents are not different from that of the full time students so that distance students can benefit fully from education.

Thus, all the discussions on the quality of education being offered go through the channels that are mentioned either going up or down for reference sake. The department of quality assurance also reports to the director as shown below.

Figure 22 Department of quality assurance



Source: IDE 2016

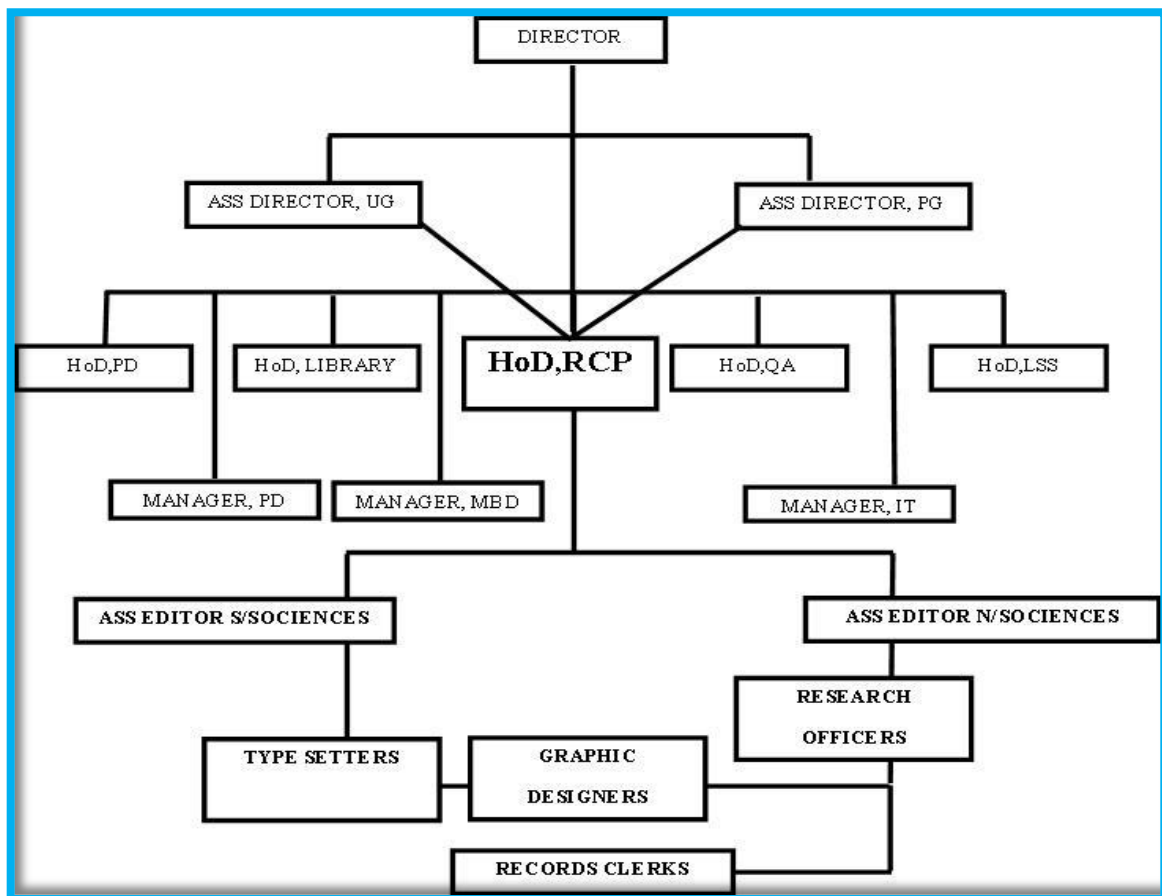
Distance education has faced many challenges including varied quality of course materials, lack of relevant knowledge and skills in all aspects of distance education among lecturers, limited use of ICT and a largely centralized learner support system.

These and other challenges are being addressed and there is hope that distance education at UNZA will play a prominent role in achieving the institutions strategic objectives of enhancing the quality and relevance of undergraduate education and training, providing

opportunities for life-long learning and strengthening the services the University provides to the economy and to the whole *Zambian* society.

Thus, the department of quality assurance for the distance education program has three coordinators and these include the program coordinator, research coordinator as well as quality assurance coordinator and all the three report to the head of department for quality assurance. The head of department for quality assurance then reports to the assistant directors and functionally reports to the director.

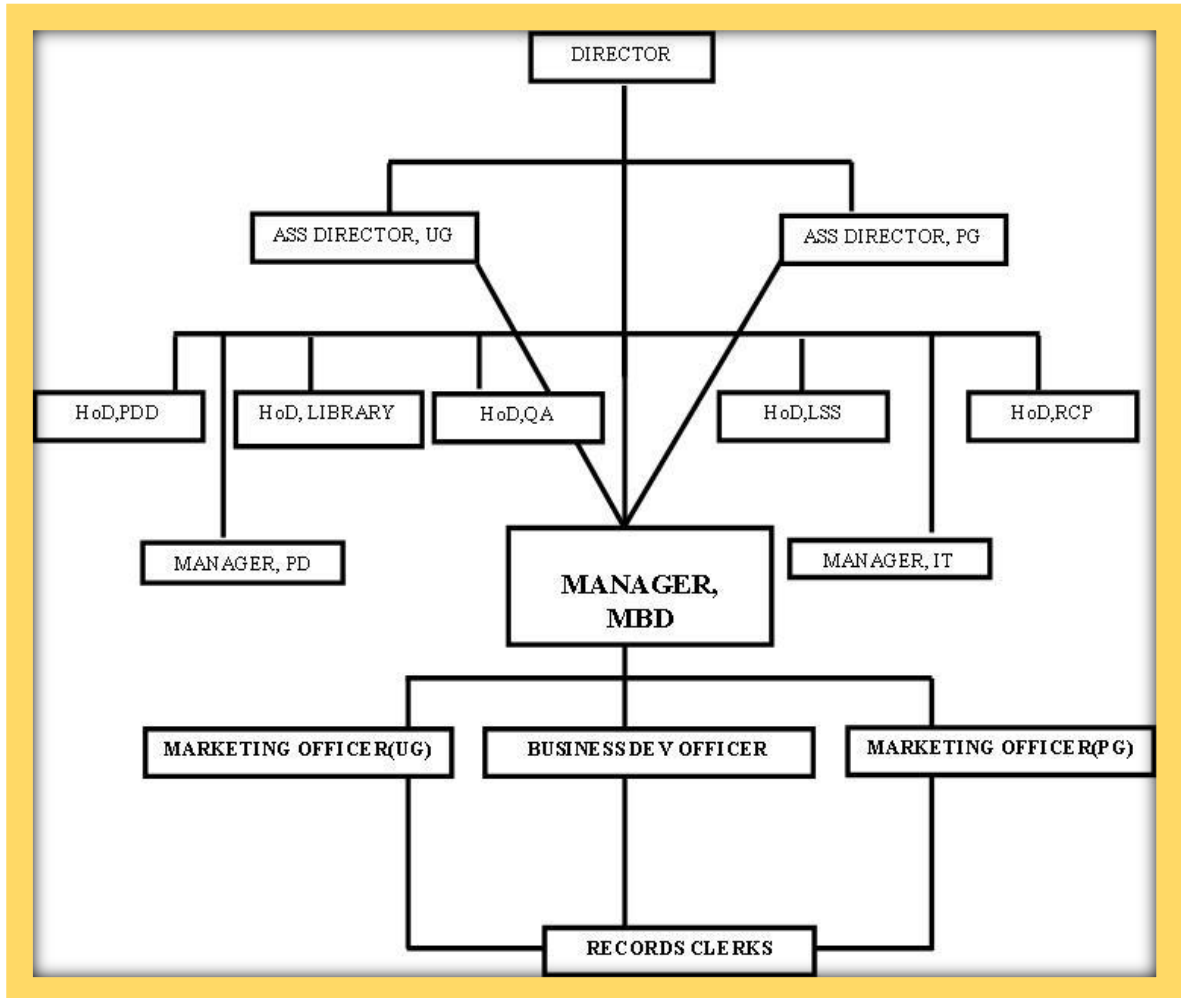
Figure 23: Department of research consultancy and publication



Source: IDE 2016

The figure above also showed the organisation of the department of research consultancy and publication. It shows that from the records clerk, research officers, graphic designer, assistant editor information or reports flow to the head of department who then reports to the assistant directors. These assistant directors report to the director directly.

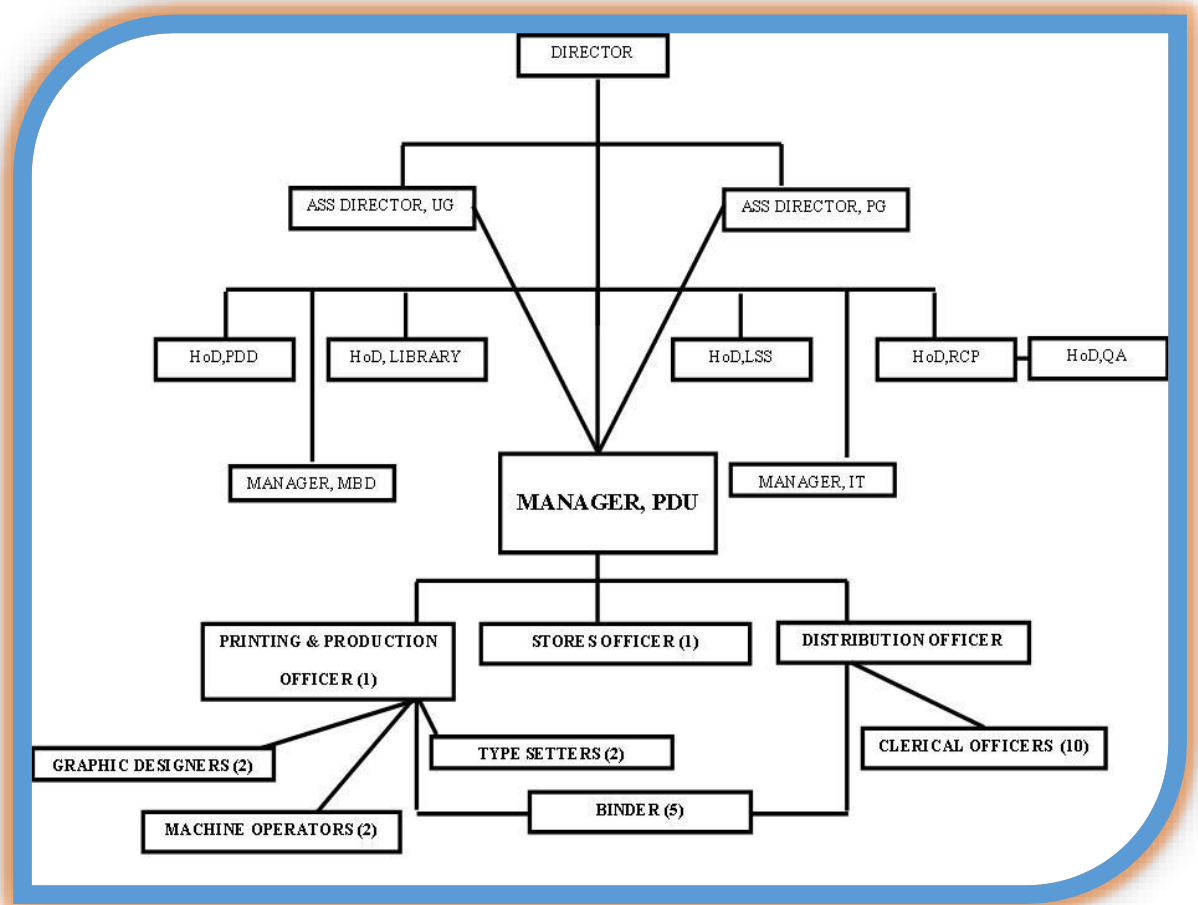
Figure 24: Marketing & business development unit



Source: IDE 2016

For this unit, there are marketing officers involved, who work with the business developing officer. The business development officers then reports to the manager for marketing and business development. From this point, the manager reports to the assistant directors who then report directly to the director like in all the departments.

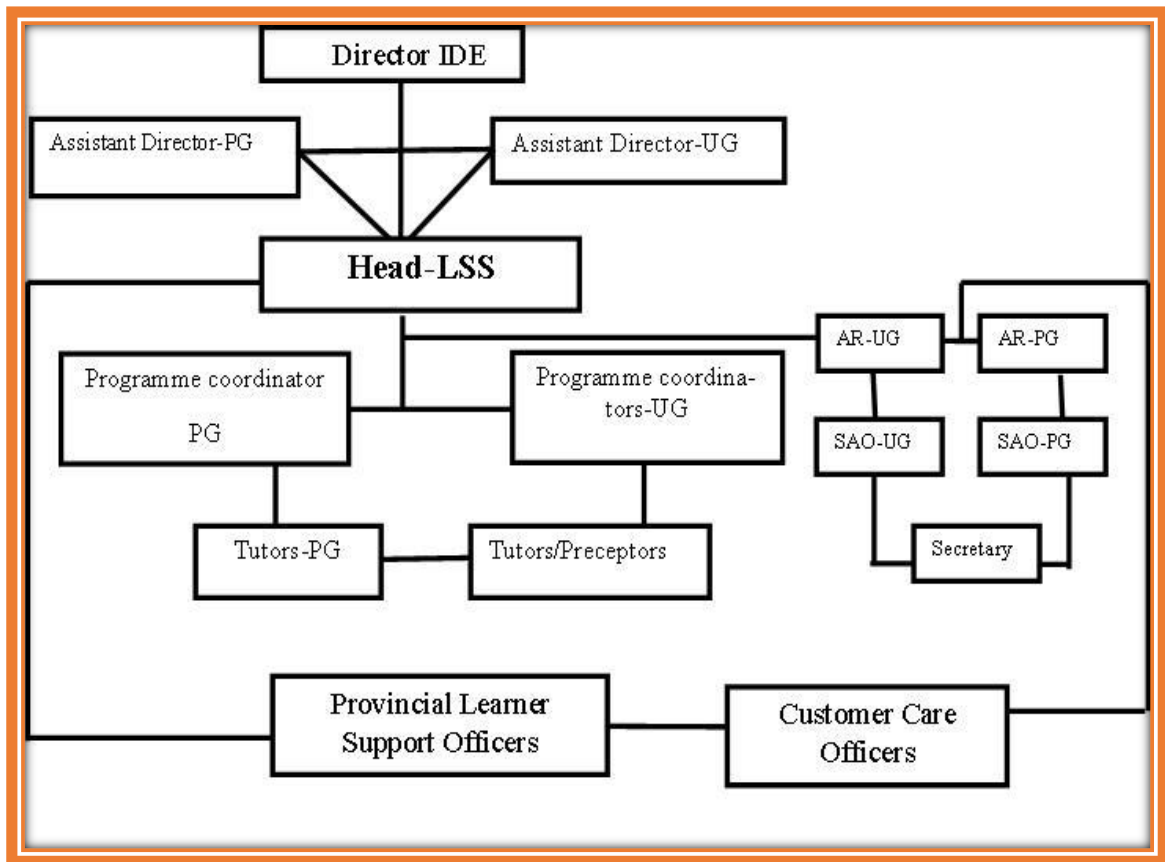
Figure 25: Production and distribution unit (PD)



Source: IDE 2016

This is where printing and production as well as distribution of materials are done. The printing and production officer works along with the machine operator and graphic designer. These two report to the printing and production officer and on the other side as shown on the diagram is the clerical officer who reports to the distribution officer through to the production manager who reports directly to the assistant directors. The assistant director reports to the director.

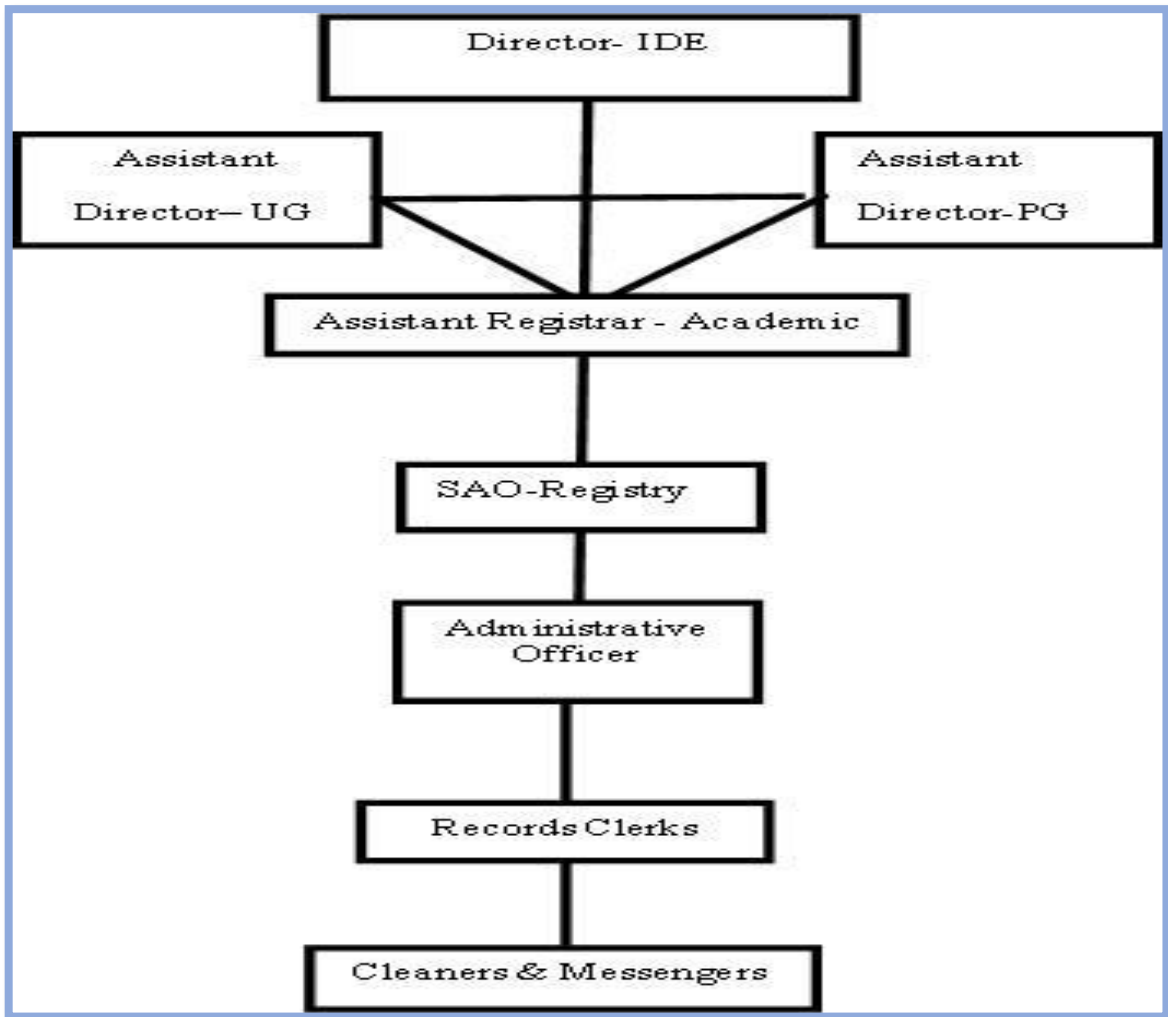
Figure 26: Support services



Source: IDE 2016

The distance students are supposed to be in touch with the school the school and in constant communication. They are also supposed to be supported by the school and this summarises how the learners are supported. The system has the customer care officers, provincial learner support services who report to the head of learners support services. The others who report to the head of learners support services are the tutors through the coordinators. The head of learners support services reports to the assistant directors who then report directly to the director.

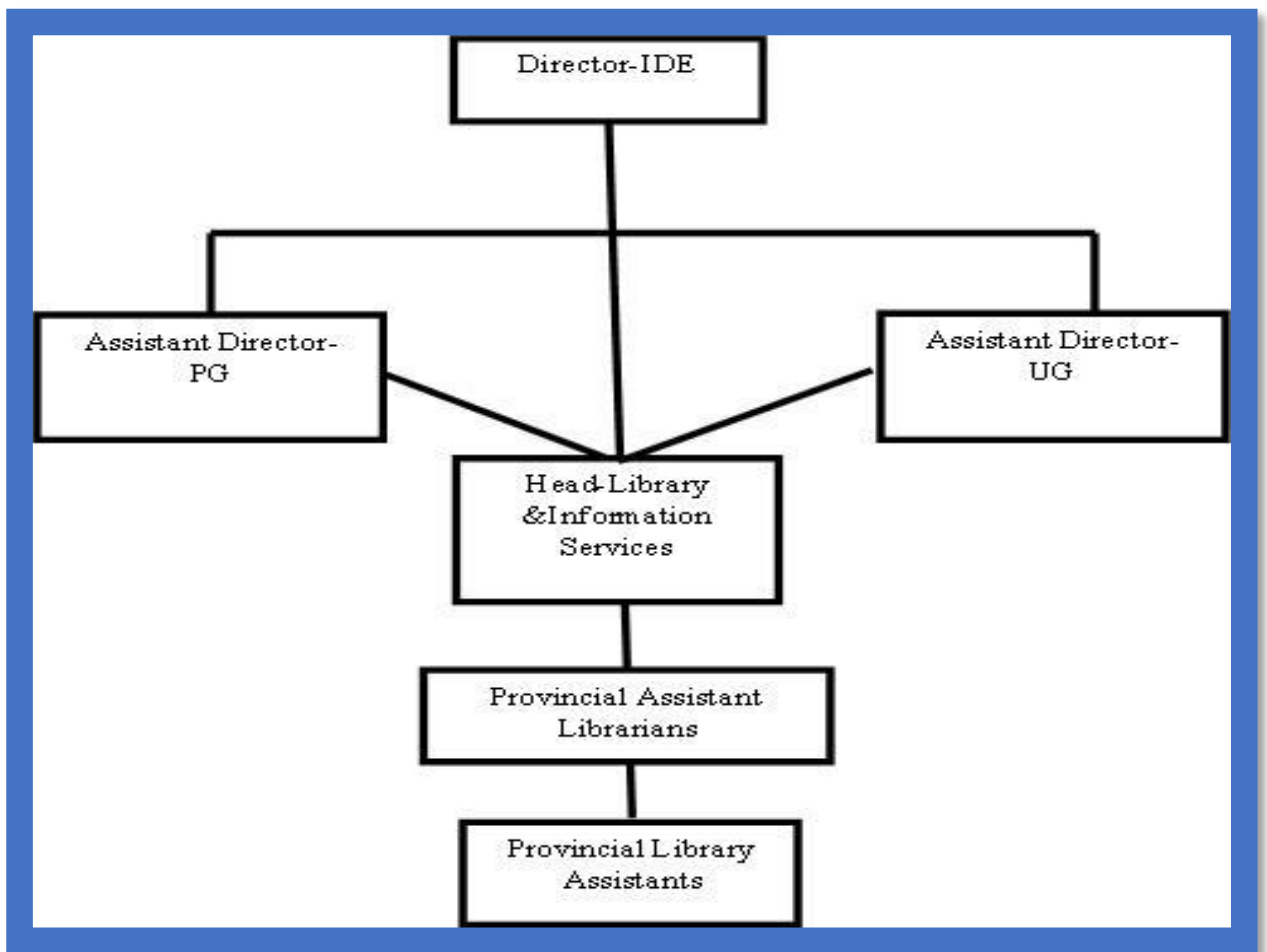
Figure 27: Registry unit



Source: IDE 2016

This is where the records are kept for registration and information moves from cleaners and messengers, records clerks through the administrative officer, registry and the assistant registrar for academic who then reports directly to the assistant directors. The assistant directors report to the director directly.

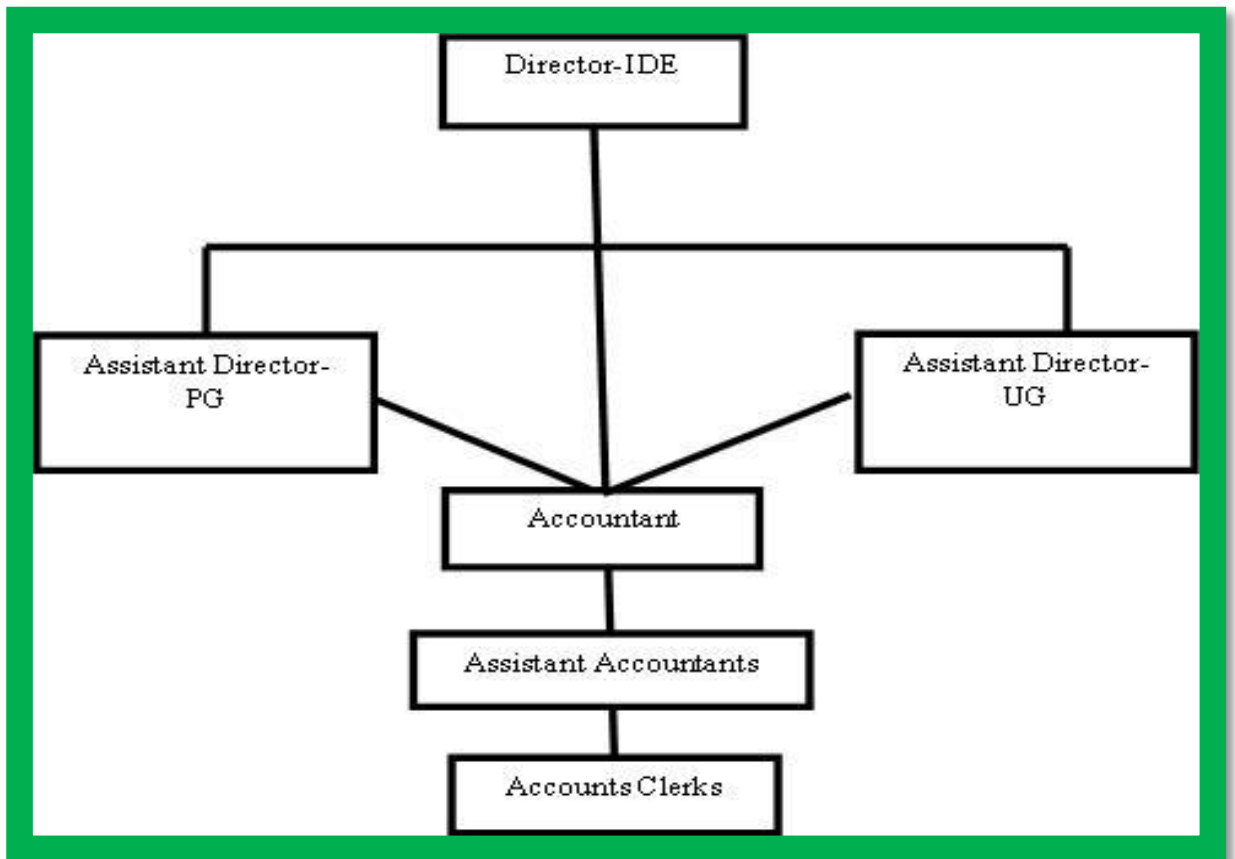
Figure 28: Library and information services department



Source: IDE 2016

Library and information are one of the key departments for distance education and even for full time students because it allows the student to access information that gives the student success as far as learning is concerned. Thus the system as shown in the diagram has the provincial library assistants who reports to the provincial assistant librarian. The provincial assistant librarian then reports to the head of library and information services who then reports to the assistant directors. The assistant director then report directly to the director who is functionally responsible at all levels.

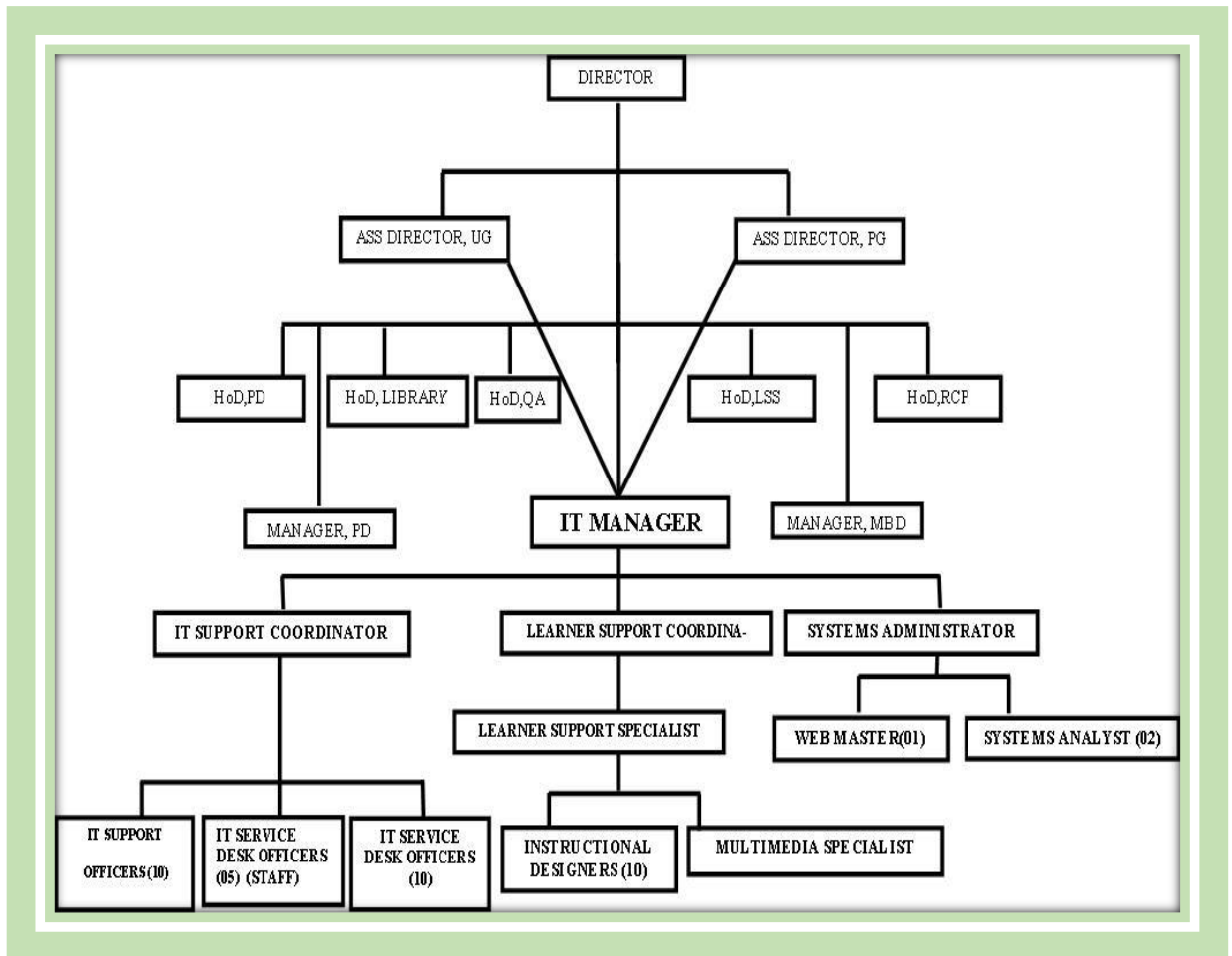
Figure 29: Accounts unit



Source: IDE 2016

The accounts unit is responsible for all the financial transactions between the school and the students. Thus, the accounts clerk reports to the assistant accountants who then report to the accountant. The accountant reports to the assistant director who then reports directly to the director. The accounts unit is also responsible for all the financial needs for the institution so that it keeps running and the best services are offered to the students.

Figure 30: IT manager



Source: IDE 2016

The IT management has three divisions that report to the IT manager and these include: the IT support coordinator, learner support coordinator and system administrator. The IT support services, IT service desk officers work under the IT support coordinator. Whereas the learner support IT services gets reports from the instructional designer and the multimedia specialist report work under the learner support coordinator. The system coordinator has the web master and system analyst. Thus, the three coordinators report to the IT manager effectively who then reports to the assistant director. The assistant directors then report directly to the director.

6.10 Policy for Open and Distance Learning

Open Distance Learning (ODL) was defined in the 2016 policy document for open distance learning for the University of Zambia as “a way of providing learning opportunities that is characterized by the separation of teacher and learner in time or place, or both time and place; learning that is certified in some way by an institution or agency; the use of a variety of media, including print and electronic; two-way communications that allow learners and tutors to interact; the possibility of occasional face-to-face meetings; and a specialized division of labor in the production and delivery of courses.” (Policy for Open and Distance Learning 2016: 7)

The policy for open and distance learning also defined different ways in which distance education was offered. This included what the University of Zambia offered as shown in the proceeding paragraphs.

6.10.1 Contact Institutions

Contact institutions are institutions that offer higher-education programs in a face-to-face classroom-based setting. These institutions are a widely accepted traditional form of teaching and learning and have a rigid format of set dates and place.

6.10.2 Dedicated ODL Institutions or Single-Mode Institutions

Dedicated ODL institutions or single-mode institutions are institutions set up to offer programs of study at a distance. Therefore, their teaching and learning is mediated by print, by audio (radio, CDs, telephone or audio conference), by video conferences, television and computers and, in some cases, by face-to-face teaching and learning. These institutions have been set up almost exclusively to offer distance education or ODL programs. They usually have a high degree of control over their own curricula, management and

administrative structures, staffing policies and choice of programs. Dedicated ODL institutions depend on economies of scale for their survival. Prime examples of the models are open universities and the colloquially called mega universities, some with more than 100,000 students.

6.10.3 Virtual Universities

Virtual universities are institutions based on an electronic network with no campuses and are capable of performing the same functions as higher-education institutions. They offer instructional programs using information and communication technologies (ICTs) to connect students, teachers, researchers, funders and administrators in a flexible way. This allows students the opportunity to learn at their own pace, space and place. Virtual universities do not have campuses. Some are strictly a university that offers programs online or a department that offers a program online, while others are a broker-type organization obtaining and offering online programs for other institutions, or an organization that awards credentials or provides other services.

6.10.4 Dual Mode Institutions

Dual mode institutions are institutions that offer the same programs in both distance education and face-to-face formats. In dual-mode provision, an existing contact institution such as UNZA also has an Institute for Distance Education (IDE) in line with its traditional learning programs to provide support for ODL programs or to offer programs taught at a distance. Dual-mode programs are usually tailor-made for two kinds of students: the ones who attend regular classes and the ones who study by distance. Sometimes they do allow cross-over registrations.

6.10.5 Mixed-Mode (or Blended) Institutions

Mixed-mode (or blended) institutions are institutions in which the curriculum, including study materials and activities, are often divided into online and face-to-face components according to the relevant strength of the available resources. For example, students can go online to engage conceptual learning at a pace that suits them, and attend face-to-face classes for practical lessons. In this setting, face-to-face learning and technology-mediated learning can be leveraged to optimize the learning experience using mixed mode. Students can therefore choose the learning mode that they consider most favorable for their learning needs and lifestyle. It is in this mode that most combinations of delivery formats such as face to face, online and distance learning are possible.

The policy also stipulated that Open Distance Learning was very important despite all the identified challenges faced by rural students in that it is a type of education that is cost effective because it reaches many students at low cost. Thus, just as shown above, the policy also showed the role of ODL which included enabling access to higher education by students who may not have the opportunity to attend full time classes, offer programs for students who are located far from the campus and to free up time, place, methods and pace of teaching and learning (the IDE 2016).

And just like the equivalency policy in the theoretical framework of this study, the policy also showed that the benefits of distance learning in contract institutions was that learning programs that offered face to face could also be offered through distance learning and the qualifications were the same. Thus, UNZA is a contract institution with distance learning institute. This means that teaching and learning also occurred during face to face at a scheduled time in the classroom (in distance education,, learning and teaching happen when students are separate from the teacher). Students have an opportunity of interacting

with their lecturers and other students during the face to face context (in distance education program, the student and lecturer must depend on some kind of media and technology to interact with each other) and a lecturer teaches a group of students in the classroom (in distance education, a whole institution teaches individual students in their homes, offices or even while they might be waiting for a bus).

6.11 Lecturers' Perceptions and the Integrated System of Teaching at UNZA

The University of Zambia operates an integrated system of distance education in which regular teaching staff teach both internal and distance students. Although lecturers are contractually obliged to teach distance students they are mainly recruited to teach internal students. It is important, therefore, to determine their acceptance of distance teaching, especially in a situation of staff shortages which result in high lecturer/student ratio.

Some of the main findings are that lecturers did not have enough time to carry out their distance teaching responsibilities and that distance teaching was an extra burden which was not sufficiently rewarding.

When I asked the opinions of some of the Lecturers at UNZA who were teaching distance students, one lecturer had this to say;

I feel I should not continue to teach the distance students anymore. It is not worthy it. It does not benefit me. Throughout the year I attend to these students and yet I get peanuts for everything that I do. Whatever I get is also heavily taxed. It looks like nobody appreciates what we do as Lecturers. I don't think I am ready to continue with teaching distance students next academic year. I would rather continue teaching the regular students and concentrate on these only.

Similar sentiments were repeated by three more Lecturers as they were packing some end of year examination papers from one of the rooms at the Institute of Distance Education. A female Lecturer, who was also expecting a baby said;

This work is very tiresome. We cannot be doing this all the time when what we are getting is nothing to talk about. Not until I hear the university has increased the payment for this whole work I will not take part next year. Ndefileka ine! (Meaning; I am going to stop). This makes me too busy for nothing. This is also very tiresome.

(Lecturer, UNZA: July, 2017)

As the demand for academic courses offered by distance teaching from traditional university campuses grows, there will be a need to increase the number of faculty members required to teach at a distance (Stinehart (1988)). There is need, therefore, for the distance education Lecturers to be motivated further for them to continue to work for the Institute of Distance Education at the University of Zambia.

In independent African States the University of Zambia was probably the first conventional university to establish a distance teaching wing, at the end of 1966 (Siachiwena,2005). It operates an integrated system of distance education in which identical courses are offered to both internal and distance students by the same regular teaching staff. Thus distance teaching activities are integrated into the normal academic functions of the teaching departments. This model was adopted from the University of New England in Australia.

The above observations derive their significance from the fact that in integrated distance learning systems lecturers are responsible for the entire teaching and assessment processes.

Their attitudes to or acceptance of distance education can be crucial to the success of distance education in a given situation and therefore merit attention.

6.12 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has discussed the findings of the study. It is important to make mention that most distance education students were parents. They ran their own homes and they had to pay from their own pockets the tuition fees in order to upgrade themselves. Government did not help to sponsor distance education students. Most distance education students at UNZA, were in formal employment who could only attend distance education contact sessions for a short period of time. Indeed these students faced several challenges. The challenges they faced were grouped in four categories namely; situational, dispositional, institutional, and epistemological. This section has also suggested some solutions to overcome the challenges faced by students studying by distance.

Organisational structures of the Institute of Distance Education, as stipulated by The University of Zambia has also been discussed. The chapter, as shown on the organograms has indicated that the IDE has improved in the manner in which it manages its affairs as this also has shown an element of decentralisation within the management itself. All this has been done as part of the many ways in which some of the challenges distance students face while studying, could be reduced or curbed, as discussed in the earlier chapters in this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Introduction

This chapter concludes this study. It has also offered some recommendations which can be of beneficial to all the educational planners and indeed the policy makers in the education system to make distance education to benefit all, the distance education providers and the would be beneficiaries of distance education, including those from the remotest areas in Zambia. This chapter has also provided an account of how this study has contributed to the body of knowledge.

7.1 Conclusion

This study has offered research potential regarding learning support in distance education, especially for rural students in Zambia. The challenge however, is to ensure that learning support in DE is sufficiently addressed in striving towards a better distance learning experience for all.

UNZA, like any other dual mode institution, aims to be an effective distance learning provider in Zambia. If UNZA, or for that matter any DE providers and institutions wish to promote distance learning, issues pertaining to learning support must be addressed effectively. Apparent neglect of learning support which clearly link the learning environment, physical and social to student engagement and learning outcomes; inappropriate ways of measuring DLs satisfaction and reassessment of the role of the distance teachers not just as knowledge providers but learning support provider need attention and revision. The task is to design and offer distance educational experience that

encourages learning. DE providers need to understand that its educational products and services are to service the learner and provide an encouraging educational experience to all despite the geographical setting the students are found in. There must be consciously and actively development and maintenance of approaches which enable learners to have their voices heard, and for distance teachers and educators. Further, UNZA itself, should be able to listen and understand the practical implications of what is being said. The learners should never be perceived as the problem, but should be perceived and integrated as part of the solution. Such approach and attitude might benefit all stakeholders in DE in Zambia.

In designing the learning support while looking at some good strategies to challenges rural distance learners experience, this paper wishes to encourage the DE providers to choose appropriate combinations of methods for particular learning contexts. It is important to note that the recommendations that this research proposes for UNZA are certainly not the ideal solution to learning support concerns in distance learning. Nor do they necessarily provide optimal advice pertaining to components within the learning support. They are however made in an earnest effort to, firstly, sensitise distance teachers of the importance of their role in providing learning supports in distance learning and more importantly to stimulate thought, dialogue, and future research in providing learning support to all DLs' and in all programmes and courses.

The most common feature of distance learning programs is that they are predominantly text based. Success in text-based courses is dependent on several skills; one of which is reading skills. Distance learners need to have different levels of reading skill and preferences with online learning materials. The gap between student studying skills and

course requirements will affect student comprehension. So, there has been great responsibility on course designers, subject matter experts and program administrators to ensure that students are prepared with the appropriate studying skills for the distance education programs. Unlike a traditional course, online students cannot passively listen to a lecture while taking notes. Study skills are essential if students are to develop as independent learners in the information age.

As Simonson et al (2011) caution, “teaching must remain flexible and sensitive to learner’s needs” (Simonson et al, 2011:.57). A delicate balance between autonomy and personalized support must be reached if distance education wants to remain loyal to the marketing mantra of school on one’s terms but still deliver a quality education to learners.

To think seriously about the future, it is important to, “first find out what is happening now that has lasting importance” (Cornish, 2004:80). Higher Education is currently at cross roads and technology is expanding at a pace difficult for institutions steeped in tradition and decades of focus on traditional classrooms in brick and mortar institutions to manage the pace. Edwards (1995) claims that the term distance education is no longer relevant instead opting to use the phrase ,“Open Learning.” (Edward, 1995:242). Edwards (1995) claims, “Open Learning shifts from mass production and mass consumption to a focus on local and individual needs and requirements” (Edwards, 1995:.245).

This definition fosters the ideals of student-centred learning and can combat negative images of distance education mass marketing to everyone with no regards to academic program quality. As distance education, or open learning, moves forward into the future, educators will need to recognize how to integrate technology; move away from the

traditional lecture towards self-directed learning; and forecast how emerging technology and globalization will complement the educational experience and be integrated into the mission and vision statements of universities in Zambia. The future of distance education requires personalized services addressing the variety of needs of a diversified population of learners.

Instead of the initially devised low-overhead, high revenue program, the future of distance education will require more fiscal resources as technology costs mount and students require more academic and social support. As Simonson et al (2011) caution, “teaching must remain flexible and sensitive to learner’s needs” (Simonson et al, 2011:57). A delicate balance between autonomy and personalized support must be reached if distance education wants to remain loyal to the marketing mantra of school on one’s terms but still deliver a quality education to learners.

While technology is a necessary component of distance education, faculty still need to appropriately teach and facilitate learning. Schulte (2010). Available distance education technology dictates the way courses are taught” (Schulte, 2010: 9). Distance Education courses rely on discussion boards and chat features to expand on the knowledge presented through course material and required textbooks. This cannot replace the value of an experienced and qualified professor to extend the material and help students apply this material to both professional and personal settings.

7.2 Recommendation

The rising demand for education at all levels of Zambia’s education system necessitates expansion of its open and distance learning provision (Siachiwena, 2008). The Government of Zambia has committed to the development of open and distance learning

in its policies within the context of which structures, systems, and human capacity development programs, to improve the planning and development and delivery of open and distance learning have developed teacher upgrading.

The development of distance education, is constrained by a variety of factors. In general, the design of distance programs at UNZA does not sufficiently provide for effective operational systems such as administrative support, course development, delivery, student support, proper assessment and monitoring of students' progression, and general evaluation of all activities at the Institute.

Therefore, this study is recommending the following ideas to be put in place at the IDE and UNZA itself, urgently, among other things;

- Provide training in all aspects of open and distance learning through short courses especially in ICT to orient all the incoming students to new things regarding distance education. This can be regarded as a pre-requisite to registration.
- Develop human and infrastructure resource capacity to plan, design, develop, manage, and evaluate open and distance learning systems and programs as frequent as possible.
- Periodically evaluate open and distance learning programs to improve their quality and ensure that they are responsive to emerging needs.
- Continually review the organizational arrangement and management of open and distance learning programs in educational institutions to improve coordination, inter-institutional collaboration, operational efficiency and effectiveness.

- Develop quality assurance framework and strategies for open and distance learning at all levels of learning.
- Establish and maintain relationships and partnerships with relevant private and public non-educational institutions involved in open and distance learning and information and communication technology development in order to sharpen the abilities to see things differently.
- Develop human resource and institutional capacity to develop and produce quality open and distance learning materials.
- Establish a national consortium for joint course development and sharing of the national open and distance learning networks and facilitating organization of open and distance learning programs countrywide (Commonwealth of Learning, 2005).

Further, this paper recommends that;

- Government should develop a framework to facilitate national awareness orientation and therefore creating a reliable and equitable environmental avenue for the delivery of distance education to all parts of the country, including rural areas.
- Formulating national policy guidelines for Open Distance Learning is necessary but the problem of providing basic facilities and amenities including electricity, which constitute adverse effects on the program, should be addressed with vigour. Several communities in Zambia and some Sub Saharan countries are yet to have electricity in their rural communities. Meanwhile the urban areas suffer epileptic power supply too. It is therefore recommended that for DE to make

meaningful impact on access to education Government should make adequate provision for power.

- Communities should be encouraged to own and participate in the management of community resources and study centres for the benefit of the male and female students living in rural areas in Zambia.
- Qualified and experienced Educational managers should be appointed and employed to manage Open and Distance Learning programmes.
- Workshops, seminars and conferences should be organized on regular basis to exchange and share ideas on how to improve the management of DE

7.3 Contribution to the Body of Knowledge

This study has established that institutional policy and the role of management is very important in the establishment of an effective learning support to enhance learning by distance. The learning support needs to be as supportive and non-judgmental as possible. Additionally, all teaching staff and the support staff need constant training in all issues regarding education. This is true because the University, through IDE is constantly bringing in new staff to help with the running of the programs. In order to support the distance learners from rural areas ,this study has revealed that it is imperative that distance teachers must not only acquire teaching skills to facilitate learning, but also must have skills and experience to facilitate the learning process through the building and designing a learning support that encourages learning.

The study has revealed that although most distance students had negative experiences while studying at UNZA, it was the female distance students who experienced more challenges than the male students, and that there were more female students than male students that were studying by distance at UNZA.

There were numerous problems with distance learning, which needed to be interpreted as challenges with the necessary exploration of interventions in order for the learning support to be addressed. In order to support the distance learners from rural areas, this study has revealed that it is imperative that distance teachers must not only acquire learning skills to facilitate learning, but also must have skills and experience to facilitate the learning process through building and designing a learning support that encourages learning.

In general the DLs expressed dissatisfaction with their learning experiences at UNZA. However, based on the emerging themes of this study, it can be concluded that distance lecturers at UNZA have not adequately provided adequate learning support to facilitate distance learning. Although numerous efforts have been made, the lecturers needed to adopt a wide variety of initiatives in order to assist distance students from rural areas appropriately. Distance teachers very often become catalysts, and as such are very crucial in enabling learners to liberate their understanding. They have a special role in providing learning support.

REFERENCES

Anyona J, K (2009) *The Status and Challenges of Open and Distance Learning in Kenya's Public Universities*. Kenya: A Dissertation at the Kenyatta University

Barney, N. (2008). *Open and Distance Learning in Africa: Access, Quality and Success*.
Pretoria: Unisa

Batey, A. and Cowel, R.W. (1986). *Distance Education: An Overview*. Office of
Educational Research and Improvement, Washington.

Berge, Z. L., & Mrozowski, S. (2001). *Review of Research in Distance Education, 1990
to 1999*. The American Journal of Distance Education.

Bement, A.L. (2007). *Cyberinfrastructure: The second revolution*. *The Chronicle of
Higher Education*, 53(18), B5-B6. Retrieved from ProQuest.

Bhalalusesa, E. P. (1998) *Experiences of Learning at Distance at University Level in
Tanzania: An Innovation in Learning*, Dissertation (Doctor of Education),
University of Bristol.

Braimah & Osiki, D. J. (2008). *The Impact of Technology on Accessibility and Pedagogy;
the*

Right to Education in Sub- Saharan Africa, Asian Journal of Distance Education, 6, 53-
62.

Chalmers, A. (1982). *What is this called science?* Queensland, Australia: university of
Queenslands

Creswell, J, W and Plano Clark, V.L. (2006). *Design and Conducting mixed methods
research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Creswell, J.W, (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and Quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J.W, (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative approaches and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Davies, R. S et.al (2010). A Review of Trends in Distance Education Scholarship at Research Universities in North America, 1998-2007. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, Retrieved from EBSCOhost.

Deimann. M & Theo. B. (2010). *The Role of Volition in Distance Education: An Exploration of its Capacities. International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*.Vol.11 (1). Retrieved from EBSCOhost

Demiryürek, K. (2000). *The Analysis of Information Systems for Organic and Conventional Hazelnut Producers in Three Villages of the Black Sea Region, Turkey*. PhD Thesis, The University of Reading, UK.

Demiryürek, K. and Köprülü, O. (2005). *The Project of Extensive Farmer Education through Television Programmes (YAYÇEP) in Turkey. International Seminar on the Role of Education in the Process of Transition: From Consumer Society to Knowledge Society*, 20-22 May 2005, Prague, Czech Republic.

Edwards, R. (1995). *Different discourses, discourses of difference: Globalization, distance education and open learning. Distance Education*, Retrieved from EBSCOhost

Eshet-Alkalai, Y., & Chajut, E. (2010). *You Can Teach Old Dogs New Tricks: The Factors that Affect Changes over Time in Digital Literacy*. *Journal of Information Technology Education*, 9(173-181). Retrieved from EBSCOhost.

Garrison, D. R. (2003). *Cognitive presence for effective asynchronous online learning: The role of reflective inquiry, self-direction and metacognition*. In J., & J. C. (Eds.), *Elements of quality online education: Practice and direction* (pp. 47–58). Needham, MA: Sloan - C.

Gayle, D. et.al (2003). *Governance in the Twenty-First-Century University: Approaches to Effective Leadership and Strategic Management: ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report Volume 30, Number 1*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Gokool-Ramdoos, S. (2009). *Policy Deficit in Distance Education: A Transactional Distance*. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*. Vol.10 (4). Retrieved from EBSCOhost

Greene, J. and Caracelli, V. 1997 'Advances in mixed-method evaluation.' *The challenges and benefits of integrating diverse paradigms*; *New Directions for evaluation* 74, San Francisco; Jossey Foss

Greene, J.C., Caracelli, V.J., and Graham, W.F. (1989). *Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs*. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 11 (3), 255-274

Hauser, L.A. (2012). *Qualitative Research in Distance Education: An Analysis of Journal Literature 2005-2012*. *The American Journal of Distance Education*.

Holmberg C. (2013). *The Concept Distance Education: IDEAL project*. International Council for Open and Distance Education

Institute of Distance Education (2016). *Policy for Open and Distance Learning*. Lusaka: UNZA Press.

Johnson, B., and Turner, L.A. (2003). *Data collection strategies in mixed methods research*. In A. Tashakkori and C. Teddlie (eds) *Handbook of Mixed methods in social and Behavioural research* (PP. 297-320). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications O'brien, K. (n.d). *Research Paradigms*. Latrobe University

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

Keegan, D. (1996). *Foundations of distance education (3rd ed.)*. London: Routledge.

Kim, W. and Shih, T. K. (2003), "Distance Education: The Status and Challenges", in *Journal of Object Technology*, vol. 2, no. 6, November-December 2003, pp. 35-43

Krishnan, C. (2012). "Student Support Services in Distance Higher Education in India: A Critical Appraisal", In *International Journal of Research in Economics & Social Sciences* 2 (2) February, 459-472.

Krevotics, M. (2003). *The Role of Student Affairs in Distance Education: Cyber-Services or Virtual Communities*. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*. Fall 2003, Vol.6: Issue 3. Retrieved from <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/fall63/kretovics63.html>

Leeuwis, C. (2004). *Communication for Rural Innovation: Rethinking Agricultural Extension (Third Edition)*. Blackwell Science. Oxford.

Mahai, L. (2008). *Provision of Institutional Support Services to Distance Learners: A Case Study of Mwanza and Kagera Regional Centres for the Open University of Tanzania*, In the Journal of Studies of Adult Education (SAED), Issue No. 64, June. Dar es Salaam: Institute of Adult Education.

Mahai, L. (2012). ICT Based Support for Rural Students of the Open University of Tanzania: Perceptions, Challenges and Prospects. In: Amiel, T & Wilson, B. (Eds.), *Proceedings of World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications*, pp. 694-702.

Melofi, F. (1998). Support Services for Distance Education Students at the Department of Non-Formal Education, *Distance Education Workshop for Setswana Part-Time Writers*, DNFE: Gaborone.

Meyers (2006). *If Higher Education is a right and Distance Education is the Answer, then who will pay?* Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks. Vol.14: Issue 1, 55-78. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.

Merriam, S. B. & Caffarella, R. S. (1991) *Learning in Adulthood*. San Francisco and Oxford: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Mlama, P. (2006). *The Gender Dimensions of Open and Distance Learning*. Jamaica. Ocho Rios. FAWE.

Mills, R. (2003) "The Centrality of Learner Support in Open and Distance Learning". In: Tait, A. & Mills, R. (Eds.) *Rethinking Learner Support in Distance Education: Change and Continuity in an International Context*, London: Routledge Falmer, pp. 102-122.

Ministry of Gender and Child Development (2014). *Zambia National Gender Policy*. Lusaka. Government Printers.

Moore, J. L. (2011) *E-Learning, Online Learning, And Distance Learning Environments: Are They the Same?* University of Missouri, Columbia.

Moore, M.G. & Kearsley, G. (2012) *Distance Education: A Systems View of Online Learning (3rd Edition)*, USA: Wadsworth.

Mwanza, J. (2006). *The Chancellor's Graduation Address, 36th Graduation Ceremony, 9th June, 2006*, The University of Zambia. Lusaka.

Myers, M. (2002), *Qualitative research and the generalizability question: standing firm with proteus*. The Qualitative reports, 4 (3/4)

Niwagila, L. M. (2014). *Rural Students' Experiences at the Open University of Tanzania: The University of Edinburgh*. Edinburgh.

Ohene J. B. and Essuman S. O. (2014). “*Challenges Faced by Distance Education Students of the University of Education, Winneba: Implications for Strategic Planning*”, in the Journal of Education and Training ISSN 2330-9709 2014, Vol. 1, No. 2. Macrothink Institute, University of Education: Winneba, Ghana

Okeke E.A.C (1995) “*Women Empowerment and Rural Development*”. Not published

Olakulein, F.K (2004). *Distance Education as a Women Empowerment Strategy in Africa*: National Open University; Nigeria

Passi, B. K., & Mishra, S. (2004). *Selecting Research Areas and Research Design Approaches in Distance Education: Process Issues. International Review of Research In Open And Distance Learning*. Unpublished

Perraton, H. (1988). *A theory for distance education. In Distance education: International perspectives*, ed. D. Sewart, D. Keegan, and B. Holmberg, 34-45. New York: Routledge.

Simpson, O. (2000) *Supporting Students in Open and Distance Learning*, UK & USA: Kogan Page Limited.

Saba, F. (2000). *Research in distance education: A status report. International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*. Unpublished

Schulte. M (2010). *Faculty Perceptions of Technology Distance Education Transactions: Qualitative Outcomes to Inform Teaching Practices. The Journal of Educators Online*. Retrieved from EBSCOhost

Serpell, R. (2006). Public Accountability of the University Address by the Vice Chancellor, Graduation Ceremony, 9 th June, 2006. Lusaka: University of Zambia.

Radovan, Marko. (2011). *The relation between Distance Students' Motivation, their use of learning strategies and academic success*. The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology. Vol.10: Issue 1. 216-221. Retrieved from ProQuest.

Reichardt, C.S., and Cook, T.D. (1979). *Beyond qualitative versus quantitative methods*. In T.D. Cook, and C.S. Reichardt (eds), *Qualitative and Quantitative methods in evaluation research*. Beverly Hills, CA. Sage

Shelton, K., & Saltsman, G. (2005). *An administrator's guide to online education*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

Sherry, L. (1996). *Issues in Distance Learning. International Journal of Educational Telecommunications*. Unpublished

Simonson, M., et al (2011). *Teaching and learning at a distance: Foundations of distance education* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Solberg, Mariann. (2011). *Educating the Citizen of Academia Online? International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*. 12(4): 77-87. Retrieved from EBSCOhost

Steinman, Debbie. (2007). *Educational Experience and the Online Student*. TechTrends, 51: 5, 46-52. Retrieved from EBSCOHOST

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1990). *Basic of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Newbury Park, Sage

Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (eds) 1998, *Mixed methodology: Combining the qualitative and quantitative* approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA; Sage publications, inc

Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (eds) 2003, *Handbook of Mixed methods in Social and behavioral research*. Thousand oaks, Ca: Sage Publications, Inc
www.oran.gov/cdenenergy/demo/content/phase

The University of Zambia (2002), *Strategic Plan: 2002 -2006*: UNZA, Lusaka.

The University of Zambia (2016) *policy for Open and Distance learning*: UNZA, Lusaka

UNESCO (2002). *Open and Distance Learning: Trends, Policy and Strategy Considerations*. Paris. UNESCO.

Van den Ban, A.W. and Hawkins, H.S. (1996). *Agricultural Extension* (Second Edition), Blackwell Science, Oxford.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Interview Guide: Provincial Student Support Officers
--

Section A : Biographic Data

1. Gender: Male [] Female []
2. Age : []
3. Qualification/Designation.....
4. Course
Studied.....
5. Years of Experience

Section B : Pedagogical questions related to distance education students' experiences from rural areas of Zambia

How long has your institution been in existence?

As a training institution, what type of training do you offer?

What levels of training do you offer?

Who are responsible for the designing of your curricular?

What are the entry points

What is your target group?

Who are more in numbers; students from rural areas or from urban areas? In your opinion why is it so?

What is the total number of students registered this academic year? How many females and males?

Do you have any students that fail to complete their programmes once they have started? If the answer is yes; how many females and how many males have failed to complete the programmes in the past academic year?

In your opinion what do you think is the reason for the delay?

Around what pedagogical and instructional principles is distance education organised at UNZA?

Do you have a system of getting feedback from the students' performance in all programmes? How effective is the system? Any improvements needed?

Have you received any negative/positive comments about the kind of education being offered by the institution?

Any other suggestions, observations and comments from those being interviewed on the subject at hand.

APPENDIX 2

Focus Group Discussion Guide: Distance Education Students from Rural

Areas of Zambia

How do you define distance education

What do you think are the benefits of distance education?

Which programmes are better done by distance education students?

What practical experiences have you learnt so far by learning through distance Education?

What do you think are the benefits or strengths of learning by distance?

What experiences could be used to improve interventions in the rural areas?

What are the major challenges experienced by distance education students from rural areas of Zambia?

In your opinion what do you think can be done to overcome these challenges?

Who assists you, as a distance education student, when faced with challenges during the course of your studies? Have always been satisfied with the assistance?

In your opinion should distance education continue in the manner it is currently being offered? If your answer is no, what do you suggest should be done?

How much support do you receive from your; a) family b) place of work c) spouse?

1. Do you feel that you are treated in the same way as the regular students at UNZA by all stake holders? Explain your answer.

Any other suggestions, observations and comments from those being interviewed on the subject at hand can be factored in

APPENDIX 3

Interview Guide: Provincial Resident Tutors, District Education Boards
Secretary

- a) What in your view is distance education?
- b) What do you think are the benefits or strengths of distance teacher education programmes?
- c) In your opinion, does management of distance teacher education influence the quality of education offered through distance education?
- d) What support services are given to distance students, and in your opinion, how effective are they?
- e) How do you communicate with students from the rural parts of Zambia? In your view, how effective are the communication channels?
- f) Are the lecturers trained in distance education methodology, and are there continuing professional development programmes?
- g) How are the instructional materials prepared, and how suitable are they for distance students, especially those from rural areas?
- h) What challenges do you encounter in managing distance teacher education?

i) In your view, how can management of distance teacher education in Zambia be improved?

j) Is there any special consideration for distance education students from rural areas as they learn in their programmes?

APPENDIX 4

Observation Check list for Student Support Officers

ID	OBSERVATION	YES	NO
1	Do students find challenges when registering for their programmes of study? If the answer is yes, what are the challenges?		
2	Do you have many students dropping-out from school due to various reasons since 2010? If yes, how many females?-----and males?-----		
3	Do female students drop-out more than the males?		
4	Are study materials such as modules and books readily available for students?		
5	Are students able to hand-in the assignments in good time?		
6	If not, have you done something about this?		
7	Are there students that fail to submit the assignments for any reason? If yes, what reasons do they give?		
8	Are there any reported written assignments that have not reached the responsible lecturer for marking?		
9	Do you help students and lecturers find missing assignments? If yes, how?		
10	Do students manage to finish their programmes in time?		
11	Are examination results published for students at the right time? If not, why?		
12	Do you have many appeals by students after publishing results?		
13	Do you have many students complaining about the way the Institution is running?		
14	Are students happy with the feedback they get as they learn? If not, why?		

APPENDIX 5

Questionnaire : Distance Education Graduates

SECTION A : Biographical Information

1. Age?

- 20-25 { }
- 26- 35 { }
- 36- 45 { }
- 46- 55 { }
- 55 and above { }

2. Gender?

- Female { }
- Male { }

3. Number of family members?

- 1-2 { }
- 3-5 { }
- 6-10 { }
- More than 10 { }

4. If tertiary, what is your qualification?

- Certificate { }
- Diploma { }
- Degree { }
- Masters Degree { }

5. Where did you come from as you were studying by distance education?

- Urban area { }
- Peri-urban area { }
- Rural area { }
- Other places { }

SECTION B : The Training Institute

1. What is the name of the institution you trained from?

.....

2. How long did it take you to finish your study programme?

- 1-5 years { }
- 6- 10 years { }
- 11- 15 years { }
- 16- 20 years { }
- 21 and above { }

3. Did your training curriculum include all the aspects you wanted to learn?

- Yes { }
- No { }
- Don't know { }

4. Did your training curriculum satisfy you?

Strongly agree { }

- Agree { }
- Neutral { }
- Disagree { }
- Strongly disagree { }
- { }

5. If your answer is yes to question 4, how was it taught?

- Taught as an independent subject { }
- Taught using ordinary and general approaches { }
- Taught for the purpose of transforming society { }
- Taught for examinations purposes { }

6. Distance education is the right mode of education you desire?

- Agree { }
- Neutral { }
- Disagree { }
- Strongly disagree { }

7. Was your training institution stocked with relevant teaching and learning materials in your subject area?

- Agree { }
- Neutral { }
- Disagree { }
- Strongly disagree { }

SECTION B : The Training Institute

8. What is the name of the institution you trained from?

.....

9. How long did it take you to finish your study programme?

- 1-5 years { }
- 6- 10 years { }
- 11- 15 years { }
- 16- 20 years { }
- 21 and above { }

10. Did your training curriculum include all the aspects you wanted to learn?

- Yes { }
- No { }
- Don't know { }
-

11. Did your training curriculum satisfy you?

Strongly agree { }

▪ Agree { }

▪ Neutral { }

▪ Disagree { }

▪ Strongly disagree { }

12. If your answer is yes to question 4, how was it taught?

▪ Taught as an independent subject { }

▪ Taught using ordinary and general approaches { }

▪ Taught for the purpose of transforming society { }

▪ Taught for examinations purposes { }

13. Distance education is the right mode of education you desire?

▪ Agree { }

▪ Neutral { }

▪ Disagree { }

▪ Strongly disagree { }

14. Was your training institution stocked with relevant teaching and learning materials in your subject area?

▪ Agree { }

▪ Neutral { }

▪ Disagree { }

▪ Strongly disagree { }

SECTION C: Students' Experience of Distance Education.

1. What do you understand by the term distance education?

.....
.....

2. Did you finish studying by distance in good time ?

- Agree { }
- Neutral { }
- Disagree { }
- Strongly disagree { }

3. If you disagree to the statement above, why did you fail to finish in time?

.....
.....

4. Do you practice what you learnt in the programme?

- Agree { }
- Neutral { }
- Disagree { }
- Strongly disagree { }

5. Did you receive feedback in time on most of the times?

- Agree { }
- Neutral { }
- Disagree { }
- Strongly disagree { }

6. Are there many students you were within the same course around your area?

- Agree { }
- Neutral { }

- Disagree { }
- Strongly disagree { }

7. We had proper orientation before we had to start learning

- Agree { }
- Neutral { }
- Disagree { }
- Strongly disagree { }

8. Thinking back to before the course started, what thoughts and expectations did you have about the

course?.....
.....
.....
.....

9. How did the course meet those thoughts and

expectations?.....
.....
.....
.....

10. What three things did you like most about the course you enrolled for?

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

11. What three things did you like least about the course?.....
.....

12. What did you find to be the most effective learning experience in the course?.....
.....
.....

13. . What did you find most challenging about this course related to course content?
.....
.....
.....
.....

14. . What did you find most challenging about this course related to using technology?
.....
.....
.....
.....

15. What do you think would have helped you to be better prepared to take this course via distance learning?.....
.....
.....
.....

16. When comparing a distance learning course with a face-to-face course, what did you find to be the biggest differences? Similarities?

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

17. In terms of time commitments, in what ways is a distance learning course different from a face-to-face course?

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

18. What learning tools did you find to be the most effective in helping you complete this course?

.....
.....

19. What learning tools did you find to be the least effective in helping you complete this course?

.....
.....

20. What would you tell other students who are considering taking a distance learning course?

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

21. What are your thoughts about the learning community? What was done well, what could be improved?

.....

.....

.....

.....

22. . If you were the faculty developer for any distance learning, what things would you do to improve the learning community?

.....

.....

.....

.....

- { }

17. We had proper orientation before we had to start learning

- Agree { }
- Neutral { }
- Disagree { }
- Strongly disagree { }

18. Thinking back to before the course started, what thoughts and expectations did you have about the course?

.....

.....

.....

19. How did the course meet those thoughts and expectations?

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

20. What three things did you like most about the course you enrolled for?

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

21. What three things did you like least about the course?

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

22. What did you find to be the most effective learning experience in the course?

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

23. . What did you find most challenging about this course related to course content?

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

24. . What did you find most challenging about this course related to using technology?

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

25. What do you think would have helped you to be better prepared to take this course via distance learning?.....

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

26. When comparing a distance learning course with a face-to-face course, what did you find to be the biggest differences? Similarities?

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



FORM 1b

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Telephone: +260-211-290258/293937
P. O. Box 32379

Fax: +260-211-290258/293937
Lusaka, Zambia

E-mail drgs@unza.zm

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSENT FORM

(Translated into vernacular if necessary)

TITLE OF RESEARCH: Coping Strategies to Challenges Experienced by Distance Education Students from Rural Areas of Zambia: A Case of University of Zambia.

REFERENCE TO PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET:

1. Make sure that you read the Information Sheet carefully, or that it has been explained to you to your satisfaction.

2. Your permission is required if tape or audio recording is being used.

3. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary, i.e. you do not have to participate if you do not wish to.

4. Refusal to take part will involve no penalty or loss of services to which you are otherwise entitled.

5. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of services and without giving a reason for your withdrawal.

6. You may choose not to answer particular questions that are asked in the study. If there is anything that you would prefer not to discuss, please feel free to say so.

7. The information collected in this interview will be kept strictly confidential.

8. If you choose to participate in this research study, your signed consent is required below before I proceed with the interview with you.

.....

.....

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

I have read (or have had explained to me) the information about this research as contained in the Participant Information Sheet. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I now consent voluntarily to be a participant in this project and understand that I have the right to end the interview at any time, and to choose not to answer particular questions that are asked in the study.

My signature below says that I am willing to participate in this research:

Participant’s name (Printed):

.....
.....

Participant’s signature:

Consent Date:

Researcher Conducting Informed Consent (Printed) ...Margaret Mwale- Mkandawire

.....

Signature of Researcher:

Date:

Signature of parent/guardian:

Date:

APPENDIX 7



HSSREC FORM 1

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

**HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
(HSSREC)**

Telephone: +260-211-290258/293937
Box 32379

P O

Fax: +260-211-290258/293937
Lusaka, Zambia

E-mail drgs@unza.zm

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

**APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR PROPOSED RESEARCH
INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS**

1. **TITLE OF STUDY:** Coping Strategies to Challenges Experienced by Distance Education Students from Rural Areas of Zambia: A Case of University of Zambia.

2. Principal Investigator:

Name: Margaret Mwale-Mkandawire

Qualifications: M.A [Gender Studies]

Present Appointment/Affiliations: Lecturer II - UNZA

3a. OTHER INVESTIGATORS:

Name:

Qualifications:

Present Appointment/Affiliations:

3b. SUPERVISORS:

Name: Prof. Mubiana Macwang'i

Qualifications: Professor, PhD

Present Appointment/Affiliations: Director,

Institute of Economic and Social Research, UNZA.

Name: Prof. Austine Cheyeka

Qualifications: Professor, PhD

Present Appointment/Affiliations: Senior Lecturer, UNZA.

3c. Co-Supervisor/Mentor in Zambia (This section is for all researchers outside Zambia)

Name:

Qualifications:

Present Appointments/Affiliations:

Name:

Qualifications:

Present Appointments/Affiliations:

4. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

A summary of the project proposal should include **background to the study**, aims and objectives, participants to be studied and research methods to be used. Technical terminology should be avoided as much as possible.

(To not more than one additional A4 sheet if necessary)

Background to the Study: Aims:

The aim of this study was to identify and explore coping strategies to challenges experienced by distance students at The University of Zambia from rural parts of Zambia.

5. ARE THE PARTICIPANTS DEPENDENT ON ANY OF THE INVESTIGATORS

✓ As students: Yes No As employees: Yes No

As patients: Yes No In other ways: Yes No

If 'Yes' to any of the above, give details

As students, participants will be distance students and distance students graduates from UNZA .Other participants will be some employees at Institute of Distance Education and some officers in the Ministry of Education at Province and District levels.

6. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS:

Participants may learn the experiences of others and will be able to attain some hope of better delivery of distance mode of learning.

7. POSSIBLE RISKS TO PARTICIPANTS

There are no risks involved.

8. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

More members of the community will be motivated to learn by distance mode at university level.

9. BUDGET

(a) Financial support (requested or granted): Yes No

SPONSOR: University of Zambia

(b) Are there costs which will be carried by other institutions Yes No

(c) Are there costs which will be carried by the participants Yes
involved (e.g. travel, accommodation, meals, treatment)?

APPENDIX 8



HSSREC FORM 1a

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Telephone: +260-211-290258/293937
32379

P O Box

Fax: +260-211-290258/293937
Lusaka, Zambia

E-mail drgs@unza.zm

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

TITLE OF RESEARCH: Coping Strategies to Challenges Experienced by Distance Education Students from Rural Areas of Zambia: A Case of University of Zambia.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: The purpose of this study is to identify and explore coping strategies to experiences of male and female students at The University of Zambia from rural parts of Zambia as they learn by distance mode.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT:

The study is for academic purposes and it intends to add to knowledge as it highlights the experiences of distance education students from rural areas of Zambia. You are required to respond to the interview as outlined.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Please note that information provided will be strictly for academic purposes and will be treated as highly confidential.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL:

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw anytime you wish to do so.

RISKS AND BENEFITS:

There are no foreseen risks. Benefits are that the findings of this study may be of assistance to policy makers and implementers at the Ministry of Education and other Institutes of Distance Education in Zambia, to ensure increased access to, and participation by men and women in the distance learning Programmes.

CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS (Names, addresses and phone numbers of the following):

1. Principal Investigator: Margaret Mwale-Mkandawire

School of Education

University of Zambia

P.O Box 32379.

Lusaka. Email: margaret.mwale@unza.zm Cell: +260 976754580

2. Dr. A. Kapungwe

Chairperson, Humanities and Social Sciences, Research Ethics Committee,

University of Zambia

P O Box 32379

LUSAKA.

1. Prof. I.A. Nyambe

Director, Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies

University of Zambia

P O Box 32379

LUSAKA.

APPENDIX 9

Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies

School of Education

University of Zambia

P.O Box 32379

Lusaka.

12th August, 2015

The Director

Institute of Distance Education

University of Zambia

P.O Box 32379

Lusaka.

Dear Sir,

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FOR DOCTORAL DEGREE
IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

My name is Margaret Mwale-Mkandawire; I am a PhD Research Fellow in Educational Administration Programme at the University of Zambia. The purpose of my study is to identify and explore coping strategies to experiences of male and female distance education students, at university level from rural Zambia.

In accordance with the requirements for this degree, I am conducting a study to assess the experiences of university distance education students from rural areas of Zambia. The views about experiences of students and the coping strategies to these experiences will make a significant contribution both to this research and to the management of distance education in Zambia.

Kindly allow me to conduct this research in the Institute of Distance Education.

Yours faithfully,

Margaret Mwale-Mkandawire [man no. 9937]

Student Number: 514703106

Contact details:

Emails : margaret.mwale@unza.zm

: mloyisom@yahoo.co.uk

Cell No. : +260 976 754 580

APPENDIX 10

A PhD Research Methodology Class and the facilitators at UNZA - 2012

