Learning Materials and Trend of Using Internet as Reference of Additional Reading in Self-Directed Learning among Distance Learners in Addis Ababa

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Abstract

Learning and teaching materials with reference materials aid learning outcomes. The major objective of this research was the analysis of learning resource availability for learners and learners' tendency to use reference materials beyond the modules. 124 participants were recruited by using multistage sampling from five private and public higher educational institutions. In addition to 124 questionnaires administered and 122 were given back and interview were used for data gathering. Most distance learners collect learning materials late. It is found that many of distance learners begin studying as the tutorial and exam approach. It is very few distance learners use reference materials as additional reading to modules. Using internet for academic purpose is so limited. Module language usage, "verbosity", exemplification restraint and frivolous were raised as gaps for creating better attachment with them. So to make and take better advantage from open and distance education, learners should be encouraged to read more, making the modules o be concise and consideration of learners level are supposed to be focal areas. The habit of internet should be using to back up the shift to e-learning.

Key words: Module, internet, reference books, learner friendly, SDL[1]

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Open and distance learning play a significant role in human learning by contributing to economic development and fulfilling cultural as well as societal goals as well as the individual needs for education. In particular, nowadays, knowledge and learning are becoming increasingly central to work and everyday life, the number of distance learning institutions has recently proliferated in different parts of the world to meet the growing demand of lifelong learning. As evidenced by the increasing number of institutions (public and private providers) and learners, there has been significant amount of resources being invested into the field. Moreover, the globalized economy and the changing technologies play significant parts to influence the way open and distance learning is organized. As Cecilia, Jegede, & Wei-yuan stated: "instead of a supply-led and heavily institutionalized system, the new conditions allow for a demand-led client-driven approach, where learners can shop for education from diverse sources and in ways they themselves plan". In order to ensure 'value for money' and 'fitness for purpose', the design as well as organization of effective, flexible and innovative systems are major challenges for

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[1] SDL- Self Directed Learning

administrators of open and distance learning institutions in a world of change(Cecilia, Jegede, & Wei-yuan, n.d).

According to Oladokun, 2014, information environment is viewed as the type of environment which individuals interact with either for purposes of providing or obtaining information for use in day-to-day living or to perform a task. In this context, distance learning is viewed as the task. Information environment can also refer to the context in which information is sourced, accessed, managed, utilised and generally made available for the use of distance learners in pursuit of their distance learning programmes. The sources and/or channels of information comprise colleagues or friends, mass-media such as radio and television and newspapers, library and electronic mediated devices such as the Internet, among others. Some attempts have been made to explain or substantiate on the information needs of distance learners. The issue is how accessible are all these for learners.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Quality Assurance plays a pivotal role for highlighting the quality of both the learners as well as the teaching process in ODL. The improved access and availability of educational technology has enabled more students to participate in the learning process. New educational technologies have paved the way to a new learning techniques unconstrained by time and space. E-Learning, mobile technologies, communication and information access, and personal learning environments are becoming mainstream and, as a result of the learning process is shifting away from teacher centered to the learner centered. Efficient delivery of such content may be carried out through Internet technology, Satellite or Microwave links as well as fiber optics (Kondapalli, n.d.).

As cited in Oladokun, 2014, Jagannathan categorised distance students information requirements as:

- **Need for materials and facilities**: Distance learners need several kinds of materials such as reference books, texts books, journals, reports, Self-Instructional Materials (SIMs) etc. They require various facilities, viz. library reading room as well as stack room space with proper display of documents.
- **Need for information services:** This refers to needs such as bibliographic instruction for print and non-print materials; information about distance learning agencies, and support services.
- **Need for user services:** Distance learners also need professional guidance and support from the library staff about using library collection, using equipment and facilities available at the library.

In their submission, Kascus and Aguilar said the following requirements constitute the basic information needs of distance learners: access to adequate facilities; core collections; professional library staff; reserve reading collections; and supplementary materials. Singh also

argues that distance learners generally need some of the following types of… information services, namely the loan of a specific book/reference book usually one referred to in their SIMs; a photocopy of a specific journal article or single chapter of a book; a photocopy of previous examination papers for their course; information/material on a particular subject; self instructional materials; viewing and listening to audio-visual materials; using the different type of library collection; and using equipment and facilities available. In a document that details establishing and managing distance librarianship, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL, 2003) notes that the basic information services distance learners need are access to information resources, such as texts, supplementary reading and reference services; learning how to find the information they need from the information that is available and developing ways to apply the information gleaned and to make sound, information-based decisions (Oladokun, 2014).

In open and distance education too much responsibility of the learning activities is embedded on the learner himself or herself. However, for the learners to independently shoulder the tasks learning materials and infrastructures that facilitate independent learning are so crucial.

1.3 Significance

This study yields benefits to distance learners, coordinators, tutorial centres, teachers, those who prepare learning materials and other stakeholders. Learners can be benefitted by looking at the unseen dimension across their dealings in their education. The distance academia can also have research based information up on which intervention can be made further. Those who are engaged in material preparation can have an input for revising difficulties that the learners face and can also be able to have contribution for helping learners use reference and internet as learning aid.

1.4 Research Questions

The research has the under mentioned research questions as hypothesized and attested at the end of the research activities.

- How do students use the module for self direct learning?
- Do students use reference and internet in addition to modules?
- How is the reading habit of distance learners?

1.5 Objectives
1.5.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is assessment of learning materials and trend of using internet as SDL mechanism among distance learners in Addis Ababa center of different universities.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this research are:-

- Identify the self directed learning ways of distance learners.

- Discern how much distance learners use internet and other reference materials.
- Describe the study habit in use of their module.

1.6 Delimitation

The scope of this study is in Addis Ababa. In addition the areas of concern are module use, reference and internet and self directed learning.

1.7 Operational Definition

Distance education: is non-formal education where there is no face-to-face contact with instructors.

Module: refers to the learning material provided to distance learners by the university.

Reference material: learning materials and books used as additional reading material with the module provided by the university. It includes modules of other distance education offering universities.

Self directed learning: is self motivation to learn and read for academic purpose.

University: refers to higher education at tertiary level offering distance education at degree and above level.

II. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Brief Introduction

Self directed learning (SDL) requires intrinsic motivation of the learner to study, do exercises and add skills through managing self. In this review, previous studies and research outcomes/articles are presented in line with the variables understudy. The related issues from reputable journals and other sources are incorporated in a manner that they clarify the research issue on SDL in distance education where there is not face to face interaction with teachers.

2.2 Distance Education

Open and distance learning are the following: correspondence education, home study, independent study, external studies, continuing education, distance teaching, self-instruction, adult education, technology-based or mediated education, learner-centered education, open learning, open access, flexible learning and distributed learning.

According to the Commonwealth *of* Learning, 2000, in defining distance education we must pay attention to the following characteristics: separation of teacher and learner in time or place, or in both time and place and institutional accreditation, that is, learning is accredited or certified by some institution or agency. This type of learning is distinct from learning through your own effort without the official recognition of a learning institution; use of mixed-media courseware, including print, radio and television broadcasts, video and audio cassettes, computer-based learning and telecommunications. Courseware tends to be pre-tested and validated before use; two-way communication allows learners and tutors to interact as distinguished from the passive

receipt of broadcast signals. Communication can be synchronous or asynchronous; possibility of face-to-face meetings for tutorials, learner–learner interaction, library study and laboratory or practice sessions; and use of industrialized processes; that is, in large-scale open and distance learning operations, labor is divided and tasks are assigned to various staff who works together in course development teams.

In open and distance learning the language and terms used to describe distance learning activities can still be confusing, and geographical differences in usage — for example, between North America and Europe — can add to the confusion. Among the more commonly used terms related to open and distance learning are the following: correspondence education, home study, independent study, external studies, continuing education, distance teaching, self-instruction, adult education, technology-based or mediated education, learner-centred education, open learning, open access, flexible learning and distributed learning.

The term *self-instruction* refers to a process in which: · materials take learners step-by-step through an instructional process; · self-assessment exercises are a central feature; and · instruction can be paper-based or computer-based. Many language schools offer self-instructional packages that consist of print materials and audio cassettes. Computer-assisted and web-based learning are often purely self-instructional.

Open and distance learning programmes fall somewhere along two continua: the continuum of time and the continuum of place. The place continuum has at one end all learners and their tutor or instructors gathered at the same place, and at the other end all learners and their tutor or instructor in different places. The time continuum has at one end all learners and their tutor or instructor interacting in 'real time', that is, at the same time, and at the other end all learners and their tutor or instructor interacting at different times.

2.3 Advantages of Open and Distance Learning
Open and distance learning offers a number of advantages to both learners and to providers of opportunities for learning. Problems such as distance and time, which are barriers to conventional learning, are overcome in open and distance learning.
- **Overcoming physical distance:** Open and distance learning can overcome problems of physical distance for: · learners in remote locations who are unable or unwilling to physically attend a campus; and · learners and teachers geographically separated in that teachers in urban settings instruct learners in rural settings.
- **Solving time or scheduling problems:** Open and distance learning can solve time or scheduling for: · client groups unwilling or unable to assemble together frequently; · learners engaged in full-time or part-time work, both waged and volunteer; and · family and community commitments.

- **Expanding the limited number of places available:** Open and distance learning can expand the limited number of places available for: · campus-based institutions few in number; and · stringent entrance requirements.
- **Accommodating low or dispersed enrolments:** Open and distance learning can accommodate: · low enrolments over a long period of time; and · low enrolments in one geographic region but additional enrolments elsewhere.
- **Making best use of the limited number of teachers available:** Open and distance learning can make the best use of the few teachers available when: · there is a lack of trained teaching personnel relative to demand; · teachers are geographically concentrated; and teachers with certain expertise are in short supply.
- **Dealing with cultural, religious and political considerations:** Open and distance learning can deal with differences, and consequently: · widens women's opportunities to learn; · meets the needs of populations affected by violence, war or displacement; and · makes learning possible even when group assemblies are proscribed.

2.4 Functions of Open and Distance Learning

Regardless of the size of the programme, unit or institution undertaking development and implementation of an open and distance learning system, the following functions must occur at some level. Some valuable considerations in relation to each open and distance learning task are listed in the following.

- **Obtaining and managing money and other resources:** grant-sustained, cost recovery (self-financing); higher development and start-up costs; and human support relatively expensive component.
- **Developing or acquiring programmes and courses:** considerable development time required for full-scale development and production; buying or leasing (or franchising) courses from other open and distance learning providers may be more effective use of resources; and continuum of approaches, from single author to large teams of specialists.
- **Recruiting and promoting:** · analyse and assess the needs of your prospective learner populations; · make information available at right place and time; · provide sufficient accurate information about time, cost, effort required; · provide sufficient accurate information about when, where and how to get involved; and · reassure potential learners about legitimacy and credibility.
- **Physically producing, reproducing, storing and disseminating materials:** course materials requirements may demand print, audio, video or computer software; dissemination may require post, courier, transport companies, telecommunications, broadcasts or satellites; · physical production and reproduction can be time consuming; and · specialised equipment and personnel may be required for storage, handling, packaging, dispatch and inventory.

- **Enrolling and registering:** process varies from simple manual lists to complex electronic systems; fixed or rolling entrance dates; and range of delivery options available.
- **Delivering programmes and courses:** two-way communication required; · evaluation and feedback; · collaboration with other agencies; · library services; and · record systems.
- **Providing learner support** · personal support such as advice or counselling; · academic support such as tutoring, grading and examining; and · face-to-face or mediated support.
- **Examining, crediting and granting credentials:** range of credit options available; · exam taking and credit evaluation requirements; and · involvement of professional associations and external agencies.
- **Evaluating and revising processes, procedures, programmes and courses:** learner performance; · learner satisfaction; · meeting goals and objectives; and · resistance to change.
- **Training and developing staff:** orientation and adjustment to new technologies and approaches; and · awareness of advantages and limitations of open and distance learning operations.

2.5   Learning Styles

Developing self-directed learning (SDL) among students

Self-directed learning occurs when the student has some freedom to choose the sequence of learning and the ways in which the learning will take place. This form of learning has been shown to be increasingly important in contemporary VET learning environments. It is also important in helping people to be successful in modern and rapidly changing work environments.

The current research has further shown that there is broad recognition among VET teachers of the need for self-directed learning among students, but that students are generally not well equipped for it. The research also indicated that at lower Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) levels there may be a need for more attention to be paid to the development of self-directed learning so that engagement with higher Australian Qualification Framework levels is more successful.

Ways to develop self-directed learning among students:

- Acknowledge the need for teachers to build a platform for self-directed learning. Teachers at different Australian Qualification Framework or year levels within a course could profitably plan for the gradual development of self-directed learning skills in students across the entire duration of a course.
- Include (as an overt and articulated aspect of the program) the discussion of learning styles and the value of becoming self-directed learners.

- Allow for the uneven development of self-directed learning within a group, by gradually introducing more individualised or small group projects and assignments with decreasing levels of teacher direction.

- Recognise the signs when students want to pursue their own interests within a topic or course and allow space for that to occur.

- Encourage and facilitate honest self-assessment by students of their self-directed learning capacities and their success in managing and monitoring their own learning.

- Allow time within the planned schedule for students' reflection and exploration of new ideas and areas of interest.

Enhancing learner motivation and capacity to develop lifelong learning mindset is so vital for enabling autonomy through enhancing meta-cognition via facilitating learning how to learn. The strong relationship between intrinsic motivation and the students' capacity for self-directed learning is well known. Motivation can be increased by bringing course delivery more in line with students' interests, learning styles and preferences. As teachers we use a range of strategies which, while not necessarily intentionally directed to this end, may have the effect of enhancing learner motivation. This in turn enhances their capacity for self-directed learning and helps them in the journey to becoming lifelong learners. These include:

- Teachers working with students to identify what motivates them, and using this to help students set learning goals. This could involve a short quiz or questionnaire, a semi-formal interview or might be more easily discovered through informal conversation.

- Enabling students to participate in decisions about course delivery and assessment. This might involve a flexible response with different strategies available for different learners within the group, or might be better handled by having the group reach consensus about an approach that suits the whole class.

- Encouraging students to engage in ongoing self-evaluation, perhaps providing checklists that incorporate the learning goals or outcomes for each aspect or unit in the course. These could include suggestions for additional reading or practice for those whose levels of motivation/self-direction will be responsive to the opportunity to go further.

Teachers using their own current workplace experience to increase the relevance of course content and the levels of student engagement with it, by making clear connections between what is being learned and how it will be applicable to the workplace. This may involve workplace visits and other forms of workplace experience for students, acknowledging students' life stages and adjusting delivery strategies accordingly. For example, the literature and the research indicate that students with greater maturity will often have more intrinsic motivation, be clearer about their goals and hence more self-directed. However, some students who have been away from study for some time, or who left school early, or who had negative learning experiences at school, may initially lack self-direction and be resistant to teachers' efforts to develop it.

In self directing learning, absorbing involves the learner in 'non-discriminating' activities including reading and writing and is generally the first learning activity undertaken by the student. There are five learning strategies associated with absorbing: preliminary reading, in depth reading, identifying the key points, alternative reading, and ageing.

The first is preliminary reading through the study guide is a recommended study practice at both universities, but the majority did not do this for their chemistry units. However, most claimed that it was a waste of time.

Secondly, an in-depth reading was where the 'serious' study began. This phase needs critical skill to make reading and note taking to get the concept of the content. However, most students face challenge to do so.

The third is identifying the key points of the topic which is an important strategy for most. This appeared to be an inductive process since they could not describe how it was done. Some key words were already highlighted in the study guide and textbook.

Fourthly, alternative reading refers to the use of textbooks other than the prescribed text. There were two main reasons for doing this. The first is to obtain different explanations for content that the student found difficult. The other is as an adjunct to the study guide in order to expand the material used for studying.

Finally, ageing is a passive learning tool referring to the process of leaving content that is causing difficulty and coming back to it after a period of time. In some ways it is forced on the learner since the instructors seldom be contacted at the time needed, but several used it as a positive learning strategy.

Note taking was possibly the most important strategy for most students. The content and detail varied considerably but their main function is to put descriptions and explanations 'into their own words'. (Lyall,2005).

There are generally two reasons for making notes. First, several of the students thought that the mere act of translating and writing it down helps them in remembering the content. The other reason is to ensure that when the student revisde the material, especially for examinations, he or she would have it in words that could be understood more easily. Most used the notes for further study and revision, particularly around examination time.

Memorizing in distance learning has two dimensions. One is as a part of the preferred studying routine where the information is expected to be retained for a long period. The other is used as a short-term strategy to pass examinations, which is called swatting. Most learners made use of swatting at some time or another, but regarded it as undesirable and claimed that they used it as a last resort, usually because of a lack of time to 'study properly'.

There are four major learning strategies associated with memorizing: listing, repetitive writing, practicing recall, and repetitive observation.

1. **Listing** is a learning strategy for memorizing and is often inter-related to the 'understanding' strategy of grouping, in which the learner groups together different topics that appear to have some common characteristics. Once grouping is used to gain an understanding of the underlying concepts, it often then becomes a list, which is more easily memorized.
2. **Repetitive writing** was regarded as an important strategy for learning, with about half claiming to use it regularly. Most students would try to use different words when rewriting, which introduced a further level of activity in that it required the student to think about alternative wording for the material.
3. **Practicing recall** is a well-known technique for memorizing, but surprisingly, less than half the students acknowledged using it as a learning strategy. It was, however, commonly used for 'testing'.
4. **Repetitive observation** by putting up lists, such as the structures and names of organic functional groups and polyatomic ions, in a place where they would be constantly seen, was used by a few students, often for swatting just before the examinations.

Understanding was one of the more difficult sub-categories to assess since many of the phenomena associated with understanding are mental processes, and as such an in-depth explanation of them is outside the context of this study. What was important was to identify the strategies the students used to aid their understanding. Seven such strategies were used: objectives, linking, finding alternative explanations, applying theory to the solving of practice exercises, grouping highlighting material, and revisiting study material.

Objectives were regarded as a useful learning tool. Most of interviewees did not rely on the objectives given in their study guides but defined their own from assignments and past examination papers. The majority of students regarded these as a more reliable guide to what they were expected to know.

Linking is finding how the newly learned content fitted in and connected with already acquired knowledge. Most distance learners assume that what they have been studying immediately prior would provide that starting point or base.

Applying the theory to the solving of practice exercises was considered to be a very important learning technique for most interviewees and most used practice exercises of some kind to gain an understanding of concepts. Assignments and, less commonly, examination papers were also used as a source of practice exercises.

Grouping (mentioned previously in memorising) is a learning strategy for concepts where related information is formed into small groups in order to learn it more efficiently. It is a strategy most of the students used, although many did not recognise it as such, as only a few

deliberately went looking for patterns between content, most thinking that associations were obvious or would be referred to in the study material. The act of summarizing their notes, which was mentioned previously under note taking, was an example of grouping. This was not a passive activity, as the students needed to make decisions about what to include in their summary, that is, what keywords and concepts were important, and to make links between the topics.

Highlighting material in their own notes, and less frequently in their study guides or textbooks, was used by most students to identify important passages or words that would act as a trigger for their memory. Generally, learners wanted to be able to do these themselves as, when it is suggested that a list of key words at the beginning of each chapter would be useful, most felt that it would not really help them learn.

Revisiting or looking back over study material had two dimensions. Most interviewees mentioned reviewing the material at regular intervals during the semester, and recognized that this was beneficial to their learning and should be done. Nearly all revised their material just before the exam.

## 2.6 Usage of Module, Internet and Reference Materials

Open Learning has an important role to play by exploring new frontiers and developments in Open and Distance Education. The predominant availability of sources through the emerging technology and internet changes have taken place in the practice of ODE, mainly driven by changes in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The revolution in ICT coupled with the social demand for education for all and the need for lifelong and continuing education have resulted in the new vistas of open learning for knowledge society. Learner-centric approach plays a pivotal role in ODE. Learners' are heterogeneous group and their level of understanding differs from individual to individual and they are from different segments of the population from different places. To teach and learn, ICT facilitated in different ways; Print based learning is being supplemented by Electronic Media- based, Satellite net work multimedia digital learning. It is a multi-model, multilevel process and learns to cope up with the new technology innovations.

Learner is now able to obtain information quickly and efficiently to understand the subject matter at any time and at place and anywhere. ODL system with its flexibility, cost effectiveness and time-tested methodologies, has passed through a long history resulting in democratizing of the educational opportunities. To provide access, quality and quality education to meet the growing needs of the Learners. . These Open and Distance Education Institutions play a crucial role in promoting the education in a knowledge society by leveraging different methodologies.

Learners' effort takes the lion's share for better learning and upgrading by using available resources (books, internet and other modules) matters most (Kondapalli, n.d.).

According to Kondapalli, Quality Educational inputs such as Self Learning Material, Audio, Video, Radio, Television and Computers i.e., W.W.W. e-mail, and e-learning, Virtual Education through virtual class rooms etc.

2.7 Conceptual Framework
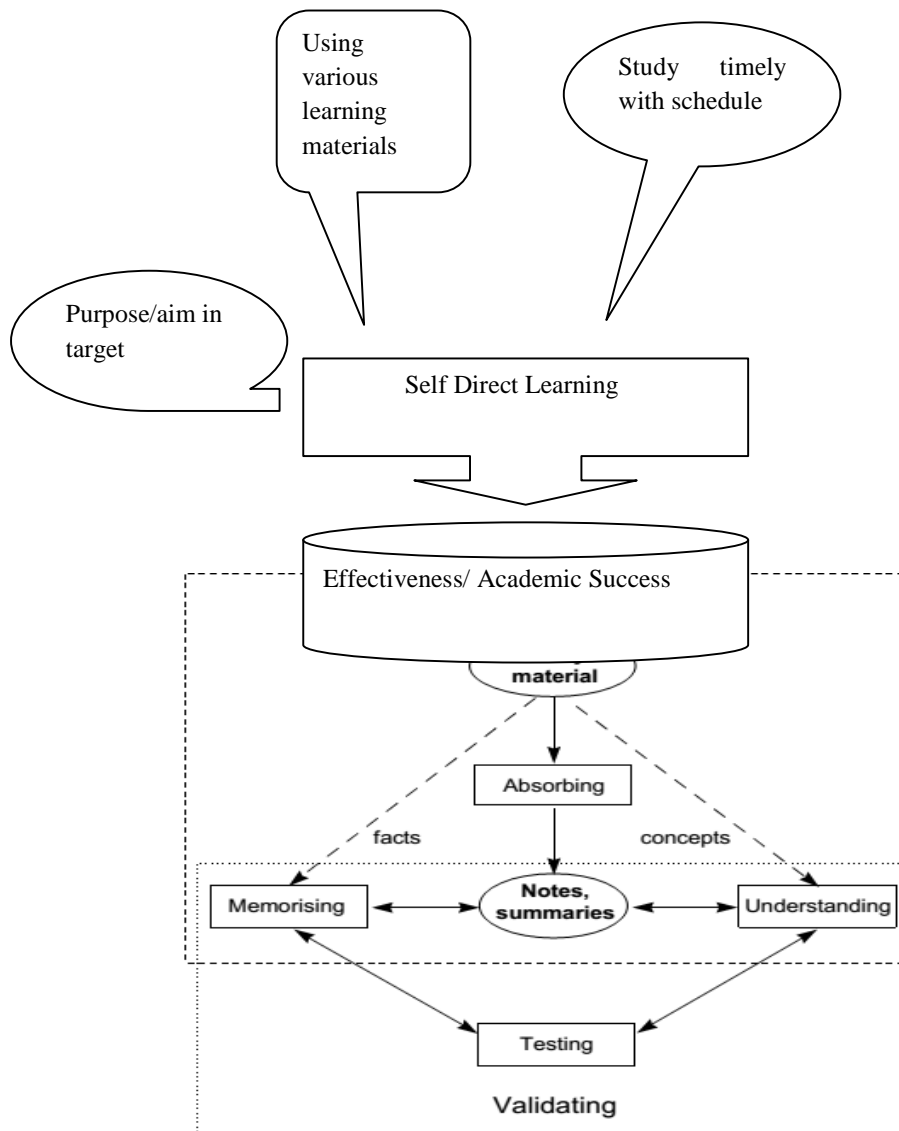
2.8 Implication of Literature

The reviewed related literatures affirm that self motivating and rewarding self have paramount relevance for self direct learning. As to the reading scope of the researcher, there is gap in dealing with the work and family related factors influencing self direct learning among distance

learners in the Ethiopian context. How do distance learners manage their education with other daily life affairs? This study has purported to show the trend of studying materials, using other reference materials in addition to the module.

III. Research Methods
3.1 Design and Population

The study is descriptive design type of research. The population of this study refers to all distance learners in Addis Ababa admitted and learning in different distance providing universities.

3.2 Sample and Sampling

Multistage sampling technique was employed to recruit participants. This is with the assumption that there are heterogeneous learner types in terms of department, working and family condition that could intervene on self direct learning and academic success among distance learners. So university to faculty and then faculty to departmental including year level were the stages followed for selecting respondents in a probabilistic sampling technique that is multistage. The sample size is determined using the aforementioned criteria and other sample size determining formula (Glenn, 2013)[2]. Participant distance learners were selected from Admas University, St. Mary's University, Bahr Dar University and Haramaya University. These universities are selected based on the number of students are students' availability in a relatively coordinated way for access.

3.3 Instrument/s

Likert-type questionnaire and interview guide were used to gather data.

3.3.1 Construction

The five scale Likert-type questionnaire was constructed and pilot tested by the researcher. In addition, interview guide questions were also constructed ahead of the interview day.

3.3.2 Validating

The face and content validity of the tools used were checked by other colleagues who are professionals in education and psychology.

3.3.3 Administration

Data gathering instruments, questionnaire and semi-structured interview are administered in a face to face manner.

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[2] $n = N/(1+N(e)^2)$ with $e = 0.05$

3.3.4 Assembling and Coding

From the returned 122 questionnaires, responses are recorded on excel by taking the assigned number for the alternative. The semi-structured interview was backed with note taking at the field work.

3.4 Data Analysis Mechanisms

After rigorous gathering procedure data were analyzed using SPSS 20 to come up with inferential presentation on correlation and short notes were also qualitatively analyzed as gathered through interview.

IV. Data Analysis, Results and Discussion
4.1 Overview of Data Presentation and Analysis

This chapter presents the data collected through questionnaire and interview, and the analysis made based on the data. The questionnaires are used to collect primary data from distance learners. The questionnaires were distributed for 124 learners whom the sampling embedded. From the total of 122 respondents filled the questionnaires and they returned it back. The focus group interview was made in a face to face manner with 11 respondents. The data collection is presented in tabular form showing that the frequency distribution of questions, percents numbers and analyzed by using descriptive technique. The qualitative data are presented in narrative form with few quotations that are very special and informative.

4.2 Background of the Respondents

In any research endeavor, the researcher needs to assess the relevance of it respondents with respect to the data needed to be obtained for making certain findings. Accordingly the researcher collected the following data about age, sex, academic status and work experience of selected distance learners.

4.2.1. Age Composition

The table below indicates the age of respondents with their numbers and percentages of composition.

Table: 1- Age composition

Age	Number	Percents (%)
Below 24	3	23.08%
25-35	7	53.85%
36-55	2	15.38%
Above 55	1	7.69%
Total	122	100

As it is shown in table:1, from the total respondents of 13, the age range was found to be; below24 23.08% (3), between 25-35 are 53.85%(7), range between the age 36-55, are 15.38 %(2) and above 55 was 7.69% (1). This implies that most employees are well matured in terms of age.

4.1.2 Sex Composition

The table below presents the sex composition of respondent's in terms of numbers and percentages as shown.

Table: 2- Sex Composition

Sex	Number	Percentage
Male	65	53.28%
Female	57	46.72%
Total	122	100%

Table 2 indicates that, from the total of 65 respondents 53.28% (65) are males and the rest 46.72% (57) are females. Male respondents outweigh in number as per the access that the researcher had while sampling the frame.

Table: 3- Age of the respondents

Age in Years	Frequency	Percent
<20	6	4.9
21-30	57	46.7
31-40	41	33.6
41-50	16	13.1
>51	2	1.6
Total	122	100.0

Table 4: Primary source –Questionnaire

Work/Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Government Sector	78	63.93%
NGO Worker	25	20.49%

Private Business	13	10.66%	
Other	6	4.92%	
Total	122	100.0	

Descriptive Statistics

SR	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Easiness/portability of module to handle	2.17	.86
2	Receiving the module very timely	2.14	.71
3	Starts reading at the moment from receive it?	2.05	.73
4	The module is based learners' level	1.94	.72
5	Difficulty of the language used in the module	1.98	.71
6	The examples used in the module are local	1.84	.67
7	Use internet to enrich source of knowledge	1.98	.69
8	Read other reference materials from library	2.1	.67
9	Internet is easy to communicate with teachers	1.87	.69
10	Often read "modules" of other similar universities	1.99	.72
11	Readiness to read more books additional if you get	1.98	.70
12	I read reference books if I cannot understand the concept	2.08	.69
13	The module is sufficient so no need of other book	2.09	.69
14	I prefer to have simple short note than references	2.02	.69
15	I do my assignment through reading other books than the module	2.01	.71
16	I am able to understand by reading alone	2.01	.71
17	Learning in group is best for me	3.98	.72

18	I have no time to read due to work load	4.23	1.02
19	Mostly I do not study because I am responsible to take care my family	3.47	.87
20	I have no interest to read before exam	1.98	.71

N = 122

Table 5:

The level of choice of response shown by mean refers to rating that lasting from 1 to 5 as 1= Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree; so the average shows the extent that the respondents' response approaches to level of agreement. In addition the variations in response among respondents are also shown in the column next to mean by using standard deviation.

I find the module easy to handle 21.3% Strongly Disagree, 46.7% Disagree, 27% Neutral, 3.3% Agree, 1.6% strongly Agree.

I receive the module very timely 18.9% Strongly Disagree, 48.4% Disagree, 32.8% Neutral.
I start reading at the moment I receive it 23.8% Strongly Disagree, 47.5% Disagree, 28.7% Neutral.

The module is based on my level 27.9% Strongly Disagree, 50.8% Disagree, 20.5% Neutral, and 0.8% Agree

The language used in the module is so difficult for me 26.2% Strongly Disagree, 50.0% Disagree, 23.8% Neutral.
The examples used in the module are local 32% Strongly Disagree, 52.5% Disagree, and 15.6% Neutral.
I use internet to enrich my source of knowledge 24.6 %(30) Strongly Disagree, 52.5 %(64) Disagree, 23 %(28) Neutral.
I read other reference materials from library 18 %(22) Strongly Disagree, 54.1(66) Disagree, 27.9 %(34) Neutral.
Internet is easy to communicate with my university 31.1 %(38) Strongly Disagree, 50.8% (62) Disagree, 18 %(22) Neutral.
Often I read "modules" of other similar universities 25.4 %(31) Strongly Disagree, 50.8 %(62) Disagree, 23 %(28) Neutral, 0.8 %(1) Agree.
I am ready to read more books additional if I get 25.4 %(31) Strongly Disagree, 50.8 %(62) Disagree, 23.8 %(29) Neutral.

I read reference books if I cannot understand the concept 19.7 %(24) Strongly Disagree, 52.5 %(64) Disagree, 27.9 %(34) Neutral.

The module is sufficient so no need of other book 19.7 %(24) Strongly Disagree, 50.8 %(62) Disagree, 29.5 %(36) Neutral.

I prefer to have simple short note than references 23 %(28) Strongly Disagree, 51.6 %(63) Disagree, 25.4 %(31) Neutral.

I do my assignment through reading other books than the module 24.6 %(30) Strongly Disagree, 50 %(61) Disagree, 25.4 %(31) Neutral.

I am able to understand by reading alone 24.6 %(30) Strongly Disagree, 50 %(61) Disagree, 25.4 %(31) Neutral.

Learning in group is best for me 26.2 %(32) strongly agree, 49.2 %(60) agree, 24.6% (30) Neutral.

I have no time to read due to work load 10.7%(13) Disagree, 33.6%(41) Neutral, 23.8%(29) Agree, 32%(39) Strongly Agree.

Mostly I do not study because I am responsible to take care my family 12.3%(15) Disagree, 41.8%(51) Neutral, 32.8%(40) Agree, 13.1%(16) Strongly Agree.

I have no interest to read before exam 26.2 %(32) Strongly Disagree, 50 %(61) Disagree, 23.8% (29) Neutral.

4.3 Reading Habit

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Self Direct Learning	3.36	.69	122
Work Load	1.63	.48	122
Learning Material Provided by the university	3.15	.85	122
Reference and Information Technology Use	2.02	.31	122

4.3.1 Module

From the interview it has been also found that learners use "modules" of other universities as additional learning material.

> *"My friend and I use 'modules' of other universities if we need additional material to read. We do so if we think that our module is hardly enough to grasp the concepts. Unlike the learning materials of distance teaching universities, we never use books to acquire the points of interest."*

One of the female respondents

Language barrier and gap of the learner is also raised as factor for deterioration of motivation and interest for reading.

> *"I am not good at English but it is mandatory to try to understand because 'one cannot reject sleeping for fear of dream'. However, we-distance learners wish to have discussion so that the language impediment can be reduced."*

One of the Focus Group Interview Participants

4.3.2 Reference, internet and other media

Very few respondents respond as they use other reference materials for course work and exam.

Correlations

		SDL	Work Load	Learning Material Provided by the university	Reference and Information Technology Use	Marriage and Children
SDL	Pearson Correlation	1	-.604**	.267**	.009	-.372**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.003	.919	.000
	N	122	122	122	122	122
Work Load	Pearson Correlation	-.604**	1	-.101	.190*	.207*

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.268	.036	.022
	N	122	122	122	122	122
Learning Material Provided by the university	Pearson Correlation	.267**	-.101	1	.077	-.373**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.268		.399	.000
	N	122	122	122	122	122
Reference and Information Technology Use	Pearson Correlation	.009	.190*	.077	1	-.029
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.919	.036	.399		.753
	N	122	122	122	122	122
Marriage and Children	Pearson Correlation	-.372**	.207*	-.373**	-.029	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.022	.000	.753	
	N	122	122	122	122	122

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.4 Self Directed Learning/SDL

I study for exam and assignment	We learn to get knowledge beyond the degree	Tutorials are my best sources for conceptual understanding	We read and discuss in informal tutorial group	Generally, learning in distance made me to feel more responsible

Mean	3.8033	3.4426	3.8033	3.6311	3.6803
Std. Deviation	.85898	.94519	.84930	.78415	.83583

N = 122

It is noted that learners study for exam and assignment as shown with 2.5% (3) disagree, 41 %(50) neutral, 30.3% (37) agree, and 26.2 %(32) strongly agree.

13.1 %(16) of the respondents disagree, 48.4 %(59) no comment, 19.7 %(24) agree and 18.9 %(23) strongly agree for the item on "learning to get knowledge beyond the degree".

27.9 %(34) of the participants strongly agree, 24.6 %(30) agree, 47.5 %(58) chose neutral on the item as "tutorials are best sources for conceptual understanding".

On the construct asked whether they read and discuss in informal tutorial group; 55.7 %(68) of the respondents chose neutral; 25.4 %(31) agree; and 18.9 %(23) strongly agree.

23.8% (29) of the respondents strongly agree; 20.5 %(25) agree; 55.7 %(68) are neutral for the question whether learning in distance made them to feel more responsible.

4.5 Discussion

Purposeful self directed learning is found in this study. This analysis has outlined only a few learning styles out of many that are well documented elsewhere. Unfortunately, it would be a long and complicated task to study and implement strategies for all learning styles which goes beyond the brief of this project (Messo, 2014). Furthermore, I do not recommend the use of one learning style over another. This is purely a personal decision and should be determined by the individual.

It should also be noted that learning styles do not have strengths or weaknesses – they are preferences. Work load, family and social responsibilities are impediments against self direct learning.

Material availability and previous reading habit had been mentioned as barrier against SDL. As Keremidchieva and Yankov, 2001, stated finding a learning style to complement how a particular course is being taken and how the learner absorbs information requires the learner to practice a degree of self awareness and possibly adopt the use of an evaluative learning styles diagnostic tool to first identify their preferred learning style and then apply a strategy to suit.

The majority of the respondents described the level of difficulty of course modules and corresponding assignments as "moderate" with the mean value of (3.87) and St Dev. (0.48) and the mean of (3.79) St D of (0.49) respectively with the significance level of (0.51. However,

some of the respondents rated them as "difficult" with the mean value of (3.43) and St. Dev of (1.07) and the mean of (3.26) St D of (1.23) respectively with the significance level of (0.958). The ability levels of the majority of distance learners should be taken into consideration during the preparation of the course modules and assignments. This fact was also highlighted an interview with coordinators and FGD groups from Distance learners (Mulatu, 2014).

The finding in this study are similar with Yilfashewa Seyoum, 2008, as the results indicate that the nature of the tutorial services provided by tutors does not follow the fundamental principles of distance education. The tutorial programs were devoted largely to teachers' verbal explanation of descriptive facts which is the typical feature of conventional face-to-face instruction. The late arrival of course modules to the students; the distribution of modules very close to the actual dates of the tutorial sessions; tutors' reliance on the conventional face-to-face mode of instruction; large class size and the heavy workloads imposed upon tutors in some tutorial centers were some of the major constraints that caused the program to be implemented in an unsatisfactory way. In addition, the oral narration is not good enough for the learners.

V.   Conclusions and Recommendations
5.1   Conclusion

Many respondents claimed that there is no other short cut to study except their module though they put a mark that due to lack of time, work load and social responsibilities, they read even the module when exam approaches and to do assignment.

Distance learners who are full time workers do not read references and they rarely use internet as source of academic knowledge. However, their SDL is better.

Most of the respondents have shown that they receive modules later after registration. In addition, they added that they began reading as the exam approaches. They append that assignments are useful predictors of exam questions so they enable learners to study harder in attempt to work out them.

Learners who have family-children and social responsibility with work pressure study neither other modules/references nor internet sources. However, they respond as they seldom try to take the module to work area to study.

SDL is good among distance learners except the repeat claim on difficulty of language and computation. This shows the interest for autonomous learning and intrinsic motivation can enable them to learn further if tutors support them even beyond the formal schedule.

5.2   Recommendations
- User friendly, concise, timely, hard-wearing and referenced modules should be provided to distance learners by open and distance education institutions.

- As tutorial plays a paramount role for motivating learners to read and solve difficulties at the time of reading, it is advisable if the institutions conduct tutorials for four weekend days (2 Saturdays and 2 Sundays).
- Language intervention should be provided by the institutions with consideration at the time of module revision.
- Based on their consents, students should be helped by their study centers to learn and study in groups in their free time.
- Students should also be provided with modules immediately after following registration.
- Students should be advised to read and study rigorously to have base, to talk to advisors who can help them in time management, to form informal groups with fellows in the same center, batch and department so that they can work together.

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