

AWARENESS AS A DETERMINANT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGERS' SUPPORT FOR DISTANCE LEARNING MODE OF DELIVERY: THE CASE OF WESTERN REGION, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

In many countries distance learning has been adopted and has had significant success in terms of accommodating large number of students at the same time. Despite Distance Education (DE) mode of learning having been introduced in Kenya in the 1960's at the University of Nairobi, only a few students are reported to have completed various courses through the mode. This study seeks to establish how level of awareness of educational managers about DE mode of learning in Western Region of Kenya determine their support for the DE mode of learning. The objective of this paper is to examine the extent to which the level of awareness of educational managers about ODL mode of delivery determines their support for the mode of leaning in the western region of Kenya. The data collected was analyzed using both qualitative and qualitative techniques. A hypothesis was also tested at 0.05 level of significance using Chi-square statistical test to address the phenomenon. The findings showed that educational managers' support for DE mode of learning was determined by their level of awareness about DE mode of learning. The study recommended that teacher training institutions should revise their syllabi to include DE units in their new courses. This would expose students undergoing educational courses to appreciate Distance Education mode of delivery, that is, its strengths, weaknesses and suitability in various situations. Further a major campaign also needs to be organized to sensitize existing educational managers of the effectiveness and efficiency of DE mode of learning. A good number of educational managers are still not fully exposed to distance education mode of learning despite their background in education and their work experiences in the education sector. More research also needs to be conducted to establish the situational effectiveness of various modes of learning. This would allow stakeholders to make informed decisions regarding appropriate mode of learning, taking cognizance of prevailing circumstances. It is further recommended that the government should review its policy on education to provide an enabling environment for employees / students undergoing DE programmes while working.

KEYWORDS: Distance Learning, Distance Mode of Delivery, Education Managers, Distance Education Support