Governance Challenges in Distance Education: A Case Study at the Centre for Open And Lifelong Learning (Coll) the Namibia University of Science and Technology (Nust)

by

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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

Distance education increasingly acquires popularity as a platform for education delivery as it conduits the education divergence globally. The nature of the learning process poses challenges, unique and different from traditional on-campus learning. The researcher acknowledges the various challenges encountered by distance higher education (HE) centres. More of these challenges emanate from governance-related concerns. As such, the study attempted to investigate governance challenges in distance HE in Namibia, with the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning (COLL) of the Namibian University of Science and Technology (NUST) as the case study. The study adopted the exploratory research design to explore governance challenges at the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning. Questionnaires and interviews were employed to collect quantitative and qualitative data, respectively. The respondents comprised distance education students, student support staff, regional coordinators, and NUST management. Purposive sampling was employed to select the sample to ensure that only knowledgeable individuals were targeted for data collection. The research findings revealed a myriad of challenges encountered by COLL distance students, student support staff, and NUST management. Most identified shortcomings were related to human resources-, infrastructural-, and administrative challenges. Despite the identified challenges at COLL, systems, policies, and strategies remain, aimed at improving quality education delivery to distance students. The study suggests norms and interventions to establish a normative framework and accompanying strategies to address the challenges encountered by COLL.

OPSOMMING

Afstandsonderrig kry toenemende gewildheid as die platform vir onderriglewering, aangesien dit die opvoedingsgaping oorbrug wat wêreldwyd bestaan. Die aard van die leerproses hou egter uitdagings in wat eiesoortig is en verskil van tradisionele kampusonderrig. Die navorser erken dat hoër afstandsonderrigsentrums verskeie uitdagings in die gesig staar. Die meerderheid van hierdie uitdagings is die gevolg van bestuursverwante kwessies. As sulks poog hierdie studie om ondersoek in te stel na die bestuursuitdagings in hoër afstandsonderrig in Namibië, met die Sentrum vir Ope- en Lewenslange Leer (SOLL) van die Namibiese Universiteit van Wetenskap en Tegnologie (NUWT) as die gevallestudie. Hierdie studie het van die verkennende navorsingsontwerp gebruik gemaak om bestuursuitdagings te by SOLL te ondersoek. Vraelyste en onderhoude is gebruik om onderskeidelik kwantitatiewe en kwalitatiewe data te versamel. Die respondente het bestaan uit afstandsonderrigleerders, studente-ondersteuningspersoneel, streekskoördineerders, en NUWT-bestuur. Daar is van doelgerigte steekproefneming gebruik gemaak om die steekproef te kies om te verseker dat slegs kundige individue geteiken is vir data-insameling. Die navorsingsbevindinge het 'n groot aantal uitdagings onthul wat SOLL-afstandsleerders, studente-ondersteuningspersoneel, en NUWT-bestuur in die gesig staar. Die meeste van die tekortkominge wat geïdentifiseer is, hou verband met uitdagings vir menslike hulpbronne, infrastruktuur en administrasie. Ten spyte van die geïdentifiseerde uitdagings by die SOLL, bestaan daar steeds stelsels, beleide en strategieë wat daarop gemik is om die gehalte van onderriglewering vir afstandsleerders te verbeter. Die studie het laastens norme en intervensies voorgestel vir die opstel van 'n normatiewe raamwerk en gepaardgaande strategieë om die uitdagings aan te spreek wat SOLL tans in die gesig staar.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BOSEC	Board of Studies Executive Committee
CCRTU	Chinese Central Radio and Television University
CHESA	Council for Higher Education in South Africa
COLL	Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DE	Distance education
DVCAAR	Deputy vice chancellor for academic affairs and research
HE	Higher education
HEI	Higher education institution
HEQC	High Education Quality Committee
HCI	Human-computer interaction
HOD	Head of department
HR	Human resources
ICT	Information communication technology
IT	Information technology
ITS	Information Technology Services
IUM	International University of Management
LMS	Learning management system
MHE	Ministry of Higher Education
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NHE	National higher education
NPM	New public management

NPS	Namibian public service
NQA	Namibia Qualification Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSFAF	Namibia Student Financial Assistant Fund
NUST	Namibia University of Science and Technology
NUWT	Namibiese Universiteit van Wetenskap en Tegnologie
ODeL	Open Distance and e-Learning
ODL	Open and Distance- Learning
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PON	Polytechnic of Namibia
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
QM	Quality management
RII	Relative Important Index
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAIDE	South Africa Institute of Distance Education
SOE	State-Owned Enterprises
SOLL	Sentrum vir Ope- en Lewenslange Leer
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRC	Student Representatives Council
SRR	Statutes Rules and Regulations
SU	Stellenbosch University
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNAM	University of Namibia

UNISA	University of South Africa
USA	United States of America
WBT	Web-Based Technologies

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Governance is increasingly becoming a broader global concept vital to the study of political, economic, spatial, and social order in general, and the understanding of the dynamics of change of capitalist democracies (Levi-Faur, 2012:3). This research investigated the extent to which distance education relates to governance. This study emerged as a quest for redesigning the governance structures of distance higher education (HE). Governance sustains change images and meanings. Governance focuses on four concepts, indicating 1) structure; 2) process; 3) mechanism; and 4) strategy. Fundamentally, governance can increase the intervention capacity of the government by involving non-actors in the making and implementation of public policy, thus, coercing the latter more efficient and less imperfect (Levi-Faur, 2012:12:3). Such intervention, therefore, is relevant in managing institutions of higher learning.

Locke, Fisher and Cummings (2015:11) maintain that the governance was always shared at institutions of higher learning amongst academics, managers, and students. Universities have become a managed profession in all areas and departments must also be well-managed. This study was embarked on researching the management of distance education, with Namibia University OF Science and Technology (NUST) as the unit of analysis. It seemed radically imperative to investigate the concerns of management at NUST, especially at COLL. This was attributable to COLL that encounters a dilemma comprising various concerns of management regarding planning, leading, and controlling, and organising. Open learning students lack full support from the centre. An open learning or distance learning culture should generate pleasant feelings and respect student privacy. This is substantiated by Harry, Keegan and Magnus (1998:12) stressing that students need to operate with a degree of autonomy and self-direction. Better management practices are, therefore, needed to address these concerns.

This research explored how management challenges in distance education will be addressed and how distance education students can understand what must be accomplished and delivered by COLL in the quest to enhance the quality of services at NUST. The study suggests mechanisms for use and how desired outcomes can best be accomplished, considering the vast limitations in human- and financial resources that COLL must encounter. This chapter provides an overview of the background, problem statement, research questions, significance of the study, theoretical framework, and methodology of the study. The following section, therefore, provides the background to the study.

1.2 Background

The number of higher education institutions (HEIs) offering distance education programmes increased significantly globally in the last two decades, and most countries observed growth in distance education enrolments (Hanover Research, 2011:4). Möwes (2010:2) provides evidence that distance education and open and learning policies have accomplished much to extend accessibility to HE globally. Distance education institutions in Namibia have played a significant role in promoting socio-economic and political dimensions over the last decades. It is well-known that distance education in Namibia, since the country's independence, had the potential to address Namibia's educational and training needs in a cost-effective manner (Keyter, 2002:2). The two national universities, NUST and University of Namibia (UNAM) offer distance education programmes nationwide.

COLL is a centre within NUST; its mandate is to deliver distance learning services to students. Learners targeted explicitly by COLL, hail from diverse backgrounds within the country, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region, and from farther afield, in their quest to gain access to HE through distance learning. COLL encounter problems, such as the teaching of and interaction with distance learning students. Whilst COLL has engaged with various faculties of the universities over the years to engage academic officials to work on academic activities, the demands of distance education generate numerous constraints in the teaching profession. These constraints are outlined in Chapter 5. The academics, however, undoubtedly carry responsibility for the teaching process of the university (Harry *et al.*, 1998:24) but more needs to be accomplished, especially on how policy and access to training should be realised from the Namibian perspective.

Panda (2003:8) maintains that distance education centres in many parts of the world, addressed the concern of providing education and training for disadvantaged communities, irrespective of their location, whether in remote rural areas or metropolises. Both the UNAM and NUST have established various sub-centres to administer distance education activities in various regions in Namibia. Aspects, such as training, access to accommodation, networks, management, and evaluation, are vital considerations in establishing these centres. A sensible policy framework should guide this and proactive management and work towards sustainability concerning service provision. Panda (2003:3) proposes that those involved in distance education need to be critically aware of planning, policy and development concerns within their organisation and contribute through active participation.

Planning, organisation, staffing, training, control, and budgeting can be identified as management principles of policy implementation functions of sub-processes within institutions. NUST must focus on this to improve service delivery. Staff members should be well-trained on how to deal with this principle daily to enhance institutional services. The New Public Management (NPM) approach to service delivery entails a series of changes in the traditional government focus, structure, functioning, and organisational culture in the public sector (Cloete, 2003:7). The NPM reforms also advocate the re-inventing of public services. This will assist institutions, such as NUST, to be innovative and creative, whilst stimulating the development of the prevailing interrelated NPM. For this to be realised, networking and governance approaches to public management are crucial.

Universities should play a significant role in social development and engage other stakeholders by networking with various industries concerning the type of courses that fits business practices. Distance programmes must be influential by expanding its mandate to various societies. Most universities, especially in Africa, are experiencing several complications, such as managing distance education. Such challenges include serving a student diverse population concerning enrolment, demography, location, and knowledge levels (Ohene & Essuman, 2014:157). Therefore, more complications have been created for the university, with additional pressure on the resources of NUST.

The realisation of distance education students depends on four factors: 1) student support services; 2) logistics; 3) administration/management; and 4) the availability of learning materials. Once these factors are implemented and well-maintained, it will create a conducive environment for student success. Student support officials are responsible and accountable for the administration of distance students. One of the fundamental responsibilities of distance education is to provide learning materials to students and to administer the student's assessment. A lack of human resources at regional centres caused dilemmas in the administration of distance education. These dilemmas are outlined in Chapter 5 and addressed in Chapter 6 regarding normative approach.

A need exists to review the institutional organisational structures and address the severe challenges experienced by NUST distance centre. This research was undertaken to analyse management combined with additional aspects of HE, such as the theoretical framework, policy framework, evaluation of distance education in Namibia, and a normative approach to this research. These aspects are expanded on in the subsequent chapters. This study provides an opportunity to explore and describe management and governance challenges. HEIs in Namibia experience various governance challenges. This is explained in the succeeding sections.

1.3 Research problem

The National Higher Education (NHE) systems in Namibia have undergone substantial shifts in management structures, resulting from the influence of globalisation and regionalisation. NUST encountered complications regarding transformation into a university of science and technology and adopting some global university practices. Distance education centres thus encounter challenges in providing services to students. Distance education centres in public universities must become autonomous in their quest to provide improved public service delivery. This will enable such centres to deliver better services to their students. The centres should have the discretion to design policies that fit their operations and management style. This would indicate that COLL would no longer need to rely on NUST statutes and regulations. The transition from the Polytechnic of Namibia (PON) introduced numerous management concerns in faculties and centres. For NUST to become a fully-fledged university, financial and better-qualified human resources are needed. In this regard, the distance education centre was affected by such a transformation.

The transition by which NUST was brought about left the centre of distance education with numerous management challenges. Student support officials find it difficult to provide services to regional centres because of poor planning and limited resources. Another fundamental management challenge occurring after the transition from the PON to NUST is the poor representation of distance students by a student representative council (SRC). The quality of academic and administrative support is consequently compromised in distance education delivery. It should be the responsibility of the SRC to ensure that students receive the necessary support at the regional level, including tutorial classes, whilst off-campus.

Distance students do not attend regular classes; they only attend classes at the main campus during the mid-term break. They must nevertheless complete assignments that should be passed to qualify for writing examinations. The marks from the assignments also contribute to the final mark. Media reports claimed that these distance students pay individuals to do their assignments, enabling qualifying with high marks (Nakale, 2011:6). This poses a significant challenge to this mode of study. The question that arises is whether students following this mode of study gain legitimate qualifications for which they have worked for. Because of the criticism, there is a need to invent an improved management system for universities, especially at distance education centres. This study aimed to establish ways to manage the distance education process at NUST enabling complex concerns to be addressed. A paradigm shift is needed to realign from a traditional management model of public administration to an innovative management governance style.

The purpose of the research was to identify the management problems at NUST concerning management concerns in distance education. The planning of distance education material and

resources was the main concern in distance education management. The decentralisation of distance education to regions with few or limited resources placed a burden on officials, responsible for coordinating distance education. Therefore, it is important to find a harmonious solution or mechanics that will best suit the decentralisation of services at universities. Universities should apply technology for both teaching and administration in finding a better approach.

The most essential characteristic of distance education is the dependence on technology as a means of education (Keyter, 2002:41). NUST finds it difficult to use technology as a means of delivery. Students sometimes lose their assignments in the process of submission because such work is not submitted online, and there is no electronic portal that can be used for submission and to check for plagiarism. Students submit highly plagiarised assignments, such assignments that are not assessed because no available device could detect plagiarism.

This problem led the researcher to formulate the study objectives and questions listed below.

1.3.1 Research objectives

- To analyse the theories and models of governance and management in distance HE;
- To analyse policy framework aspects implemented for managing or guiding HE processes in Namibia;
- To analyse management concerns of distance education in Namibia at COLL of NUST; and
- To explore solutions/strategies that may enhance the management of distance HE in Namibia.

1.3.2 Research questions

- What is the relevant literature on governance, management, and distance HE?
- What is the legal framework or policy aspect implemented for managing or guiding distance HE in Namibia?
- What are the management constraints of distance education present in COLL at NUST?
- What are the implemented solutions/strategies that enhance the management of distance education?

1.4 Significance of the study

The study attempted to benefit the management and NUST Centre of Distance Education and other open and distance learning (ODL) institutions in Southern Africa and farther afield. It will also provide a comprehensive overview of the challenges inherent in university management in delivering distance education services. The results of this study could assist in informing COLL management and distance education learning institutions of improved methods for expanding their capacity. The

study may serve as a reference document for the management of NUST. The study may also offer alternative solutions and strategies for managing distance learning challenges.

1.5 Theoretical framework

Aspects, such as governance, management, the role of HE management and distance education, are described and explained in the subsequent section.

1.5.1   Governance

Levi-Faur (2012:120) defines governance as an interdisciplinary research agenda on order within the government, by the government, without the government, and beyond the government. The author advocates that governance is becoming an increasingly broad concept central to the study of the political, economic, spatial, and social order in general, and the understanding of the dynamics of change of democracies. Sound, stable, and regular interactions amongst authorities on all levels of government and the public they serve, are valuable examples of good governance. Various government institutions should find connections to promote service delivery to the citizens; this is what most African countries or governments fail to adopt. Conversely, such ministries operate in isolation or as stand-alone systems.

In the context of HE, universities failed to maintain good partnership and collaboration in their academic activities. Governance should be a guideline link in the chain between public universities and other stakeholders. Governance refers to a system of making and implementing decisions concerning resources and administration (Lahn, Marcel, Myers & Stevens, 2009:5). It includes the structural and hierarchical organisation of the university, its decision-making and communication processes, policies, and objectives governing its activities, including regulating those activities.

A well-managed institution stimulates social democracy; national wealth; sustainable development; and social stability. This may be achievable if all stakeholders share an understanding of what management requires in practice. Good governance practices should be the driving force behind the country's national development. A few countries and societies came close to achieving good governance in its totality (Sheng, 2009:3). The study further maintains that to enable sustainable human development, action must be taken to work towards this ideal to make it a reality. The university should be the organisation promoting good governance through its programmes and students.

Good governance is at the heart of the HE sectors in any country and will continue to be of the highest importance as the country continues to develop. A university's governing body is unequivocally and jointly accountable for institutional activities, taking all final decisions on matters

of fundamental concern within its remit. "Student and staff members of the governing body share the same legal responsibilities and obligations as other members and must not be routinely excluded from any discussions" (Lanham, 2014:11). The author further suggests that the governance of universities should guard institutional reputation by guaranteeing that clear regulations, policies, and procedures, adhering to legislative and regulatory requirements are implemented, ethical and followed. This practice should be adopted by universities globally, as a quest to promote good governance. If good governance is not achieved, governance becomes a concern to both the government and community members.

Governance, consequently, became a hot topic as evidence of its critical function in determining societal well-being intensifies (Graham, Amos & Tim, 2003:1). Governance is a significant factor in shaping a good society, eradicating poverty, and promoting development. Therefore, governance opens new intellectual space and provides a concept allowing individuals to discuss the role of government in coping with public concerns and the contribution that others may make. It also opens doors for government actors to play a significant role in addressing problems and national concerns.

Graham *et al.* (2003:2) states that "governance is concerned with how other actors, such as civil society organisations, may play a role in taking decisions on matters of public concern". Therefore, governance is not a concern of the central government alone; other government institutions, such as local and regional government, and state-owned enterprises (SOEs), play an important role in governance. Provided this broad view, NUST has a role in advocating for improved governance practices. HEIs are constituted with a governing board that decides on all activities of the institution.

1.5.2   Management

Righteous management aims to deliver services to the community in an applicable, well-organised, equitable, and justifiable manner. This can only be realised if vital resources for service delivery, including human resources, finances, technology, and process aspects of care delivery are combined at the point of service delivery, whilst cautiously coordinated. Managers at any institution of higher learning need to ensure that resources are well-structured and applied to produce the best results. In resource-constrained and challenging environments, such as universities, especially in several low and middle-income countries, a manager must learn to be a leader in the quest to attain the best results. Managers must apply the good doctrine of leadership practised globally, enabling good decisions. An additional deeper understanding is that of management functions, which should be considered as paramount imperatives in university governance's decision-making process.

Within this context, management is a process, comprising planning, organisation, coordination, and control of decision-making actions aimed at developing activities efficiently and effectively (Passos

& Nunes, 2016:2). University management is an explicit action aiming to organise and mobilise human and material conditions available and necessary to the success of an educational process that needs to be characterised as democratic and participatory. As distance education became a new phenomenon in the learning age, a new methodology of delivery resulted in a shift from the traditional mode of delivery to digital learning. Most universities across the globe are, therefore, encountered with management challenges. These challenges cannot be solved in a short period but will take several years to be resolved.

Van der Waldt and Du Toit (1998:41) suggest that the successful management of an institution is closely related to the way individuals are managed in an institution. It is, therefore, significant that managers understand the behaviours of an individual in the institution. The manager must know how people function in groups, with an understanding of their attitudes and behaviours. As the university develops an expanding distance education, it is, therefore, imperative for managers to understand how officials should be managed. Managers need the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and understanding of the role, tasks, and purpose of the service that officials deliver.

Passos and Nunes (2016:64) maintain that with growth in offering distance education, educational institutions began to view and organise education in new ways and, therefore, seek to identify and develop educational processes geared to this reality from an educational and management position. The authors suggest that those managing distance education seek guidance to strengthen relations in applying the new concept of educational organisation based on the physical distance between students, faculty, and institutions, which demand decentralised, participatory, independent, but also integrated functions. Institutions of higher learning should, therefore, advocate for research and innovation to decentralise their activities and enhance management strategies in distance education. Attributable to the complexity of distance education, HEIs need to introduce innovation processes in its management. Whilst the use of data and information is vital in management, managers in some institutions find it difficult to use available information to make reasonable decisions.

Reviewing important information and data concerning service delivery, whilst employing this data to make decisions about how services can be modified and improved, are major management tasks. Managers are responsible for the finances available to this service and to ensure these are used to produce the maximum possible benefits for students and officials. The following section, therefore, provides a detailed role of HE management.

1.5.3   The role of higher education management

In Namibia, higher education is new. It is available at two public universities (UNAM and NUST) and one private university (International University of Management (IUM)). University officials lack

managerial skills which, in turn, results in underperforming employees that make unviable decisions. Most universities across the globe have assigned tailor-made strategies to officials and have explained what type of skills they need to develop. Bantwini, Moorosi and Nolutho (2017:145) suggest that with management being a fundamental element of a successful university, soft skills, such as leading, planning, and organising are essential in management. Universities must equip their officials in soft skills. This can be possible if universities introduce staff development programmes.

University departments' management needs the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and understanding of the role, tasks and purpose of the services they offer. Managers should ensure the effective implementation of strategies and policies that incorporate every layer or unit within the university environment in a decision-making process. The purpose or function of all public institutions is to promote the general welfare of society by executing a national policy (Keyter, 2002:204). HEIs exist to meet individuals' needs, such as education, regarded as a public good. To provide an actual and well-organised service, public institutions should be appropriately managed, which entails the implementing essential generic management functions, such as organising, planning, leading, and controlling (Keyter, 2002:205). These management functions are essentials because it promotes an effective administrative system in HEIs. Management functions are therefore significant in higher education because HEI promotes an improved management system.

Austin and Jones (2016:104) maintain that the acceptance of NPM in German HE suggests that governments want universities to become better-managed enterprises. Therefore, management is structured around notions of greater institutional autonomy supported by enhanced hierarchical management by deans and rectors and vice chancellors. More involvement resulted in increased competition amongst universities for resources and funding based on lump-sum budgeting. Universities today encounter financial concerns because they are poorly managed. The quest for a normative approach is essential in this study and to recommend for better strategies. The cause of this dilemma is the centralised system of governance in some countries.

The management of HE institutions is encountered with a lack of autonomy because of government-centralised power. Governance is in the balance between government action, market forces, and institutional autonomy (Austin & Jones, 2016:104). Universities should be free and autonomous to achieve their goals and make decisions that meet their needs.

1.5.4   Distance education

Shomaker (1998:8) suggests that distance education revolves around three common themes:

- A physical distance between the instructor and the student exists;

- Distance education students are adult learners; and

- The course originates on the parent campus, whilst the students receive the course through some means of delivery at a remote location. This type of delivery became popular and should be well-managed. Managing distance education requires ample resources. A good policymaking process should be established. More about the mode of delivery of distance education is detailed in Chapter 2.

"The management of distance education seeks guidance for strengthening relations within a new concept of educational organisation based on the physical distance between students, faculty, and institution, which demand management of decentralised, participatory, interdependent, but also integrated functions (Passos & Nunes, 2016:2)." The author maintains that distance education is far more than a bridge across a geographical map. It comprises a dramatically augmented responsiveness to learners, covering comprehensive understanding, ideas, and collective thinking (Shomaker, 1998:8). Keyter (2002:23) maintains, "Distance education is used to cover various forms of study at all levels where students are not in direct physical contact with their educators". The author suggests that distance education, alike any accepted method of education, is a means by which somebody who desires to learn is involved in some form of communication with someone who can educate.

Keyter (2002:25) maintain that distance education has its origins in correspondence education. Correspondence study has slowly developed a way to include a variety of media additional to printed texts and interaction in writing, for instance, recordings of the spoken word, radio and television, video recordings, the telephone, and computer communication. The distance learners' catchment area is not limited by geography. It can be maintained that HE distance learning students constitute a global community of learners. Subject to the rules and policies, which the institution performs, anyone possessing the required qualifications can enrol at any distance education institution.

Distance education assists universities to market and provide educational opportunities beyond their service regions, across states, and globally. Such opportunities can assist any provided country to equip its citizens with the necessary skills and contribute to the development of the country or institutions. Students, however, lack adequate moral support in academic activities, especially those residing outside the campus. A coordinated approach is needed whereby the university may progress to good online learning programmes and assist students with their research. Faculty and administrators from off- and on-campus should continue to collaborate on teaching, research, service, and programme administration (Brown & Freeman, 2014:41). Though the choice may be the student's, moral support must emanate from university officials and parents. Distance education systems have flexible arrangements, facilitating individualisation and learning for university students. Through this flexible structure, university students can select from the wide diversity of distant

educational environments, supporting web sites and mobile applications that would best suit their learning styles (Caliskan, Suzek & Ozcan, 2017:530). HEI evolved because they regard technology or online learning as the most essential form of delivery.

Distance education advocates that it is the student who determines the "when?", "where?" and "how?" of their learning. "Distance education takes place when a teacher and student(s) are separated by physical distance, and technology (voice, video, data, and print) often in concert with face-to-face communication, is used to bridge the instructional gap" (Möwes, 2010:12). Technology is strategically employed to prevent the on- and off-campus programmes from becoming separate programme silos (Brown & Freeman, 2010:41). Möwes (2010:12) states, "these types of programmes can provide adults with a second chance of university opportunity, reach those disadvantaged by limited time, distance or physical disability, and update the knowledge base of workers at their places of employment".

1.5.5 Distance education challenges

Distance education became the buzzword in education in South Africa, but the allocation of the necessary resources has not accompanied the rhetoric. Some universities employ technology to accommodate more students at the beginning of each semester because some of their programmes run fully online. Some universities may experience technology and the Internet as a detriment to deliver courses online. Advanced technology is, therefore, slowly becoming an essential feature of distance education in Africa but remains the single most significant handicap of distance education on the continent. Computers and the Internet are not fully employed in the context of Africa.

It became imperative for universities to depend on technology to survive in the era of sustainable and digital learning. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in distance education should be the focus of both the growth and the development of distance education. A fundamental challenge in distance learning is that the modern distance learner will have to learn how to use ICT, which is not taught in many places (and where it is taught it is relatively expensive). Other problems in developing countries include an unstable power supply (Mnyanyi & Mbwette, 2009:2). Students may also lack the technology to make successful use of distance education. Students experience numerous challenges at the quest for the success of their studies. These problems may not be solved by the government alone, but all stakeholders should play a crucial role.

1.6 Research design and methodology

This section presents the design and methodology for the research. Provided that a major focus of this research is to gain a deeper understanding of how officials deal with management challenges at NUST, especially in distance education learning. It is important to discuss the methodology and the

design of the research. How data analysis was undertaken is explained, and information on the sample size and the population sample is provided.

1.6.1   Research design

A research design is a general approach employed to organise various components of the study in a comprehensible and logical way to ensure an appropriate synthesis of the research problem (De Vaus, 2001:12). The research design explains the way the data are collected, measured, and analysed. The purpose of the research design is to guide the researcher through the data collection process to effectively present the research problem as logically as possible. The researcher adopted an explanatory design to clarify the nature of relationships in governance challenges, applied when crucial relationships and vital variables are defined (Maxwell & Mittapalli, 2008). The study employed a qualitative approach; literature, journals, and books were consulted, and interviews were conducted. The reasons for choosing these methods were that special case studies allowed the researcher to classify cases of management at NUST; it appeared to be the most appropriate choice for this research.

To address the research problem, a quantitative questionnaire was administered for data collection and respondents included student support officers, regional coordinators, and instructional designers. The questionnaire was employed to collect quantitative data; interviews provided qualitative data. The questionnaire was distributed amongst staff members and other respondents in the study selected through purposive sampling techniques, whilst interviews were based on the snowball sampling technique.

1.6.2   Methodology of questionnaires

De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2011:59) define a questionnaire as a document containing questions or other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis. A structured questionnaire with closed- and open-ended questions was designed. Open-ended questions require the respondents to provide their responses to questions. These questions were designed to be clear and easy to understand. The questions were relevant to the subject of the study and were unbiased. Extensive, boring questions with negative connotation were avoided.

The researcher administered the questionnaire to allow enough time for the respondents to complete the survey. Respondents could, therefore, clarify difficulties regarding the questionnaire with the researcher, as the researcher was available in case respondents experienced problems. The researcher also employed an e-mail survey. An e-mail with an attached questionnaire was distributed

amongst the respondents for completion. The benefit of this data collection method is that it assists the researcher to eradicate a paper-based questionnaire. To avoid travelling to the regions, students or officials were e-mailed a questionnaire.

The right to privacy and confidentiality was considered during the designing, answering, and analyses of responses to the questionnaire and interview questions. As part of the ethical responsibility of the researcher, the respondents were not compelled to reveal their identity and treated as anonymous. Questionnaires responses were held confidential.

Various advantages are associated with employing mixed research methods. Through combining quantitative and qualitative research and data, researchers are in a position to gain in breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration, whilst offsetting the disadvantages or the weaknesses, associated with each approach separately. It also offers a more complete and highly comprehension of the research problem than either quantitative or qualitative approaches alone. The other associated advantage is that it offers an approach for the development of improved and more context-specific instruments. It assists in explaining findings or how causal processes work.

1.6.3   Sampling methods

De Vos et al. (2011:390) recognise sampling as being employed in qualitative research, though it is less structured, less quantitative, and less strictly applied than in the case of quantitative research. Two main categories of sampling are used, indicating probability sampling and non-probability sampling. With non-probability sampling, the selection is made in a non-random manner (Berg, 2011:22). This study employed a quantitative approach whilst adopting a non-probability sampling method to address the research problem. Purposive sampling can be useful for situations where it is necessary to reach targeted populations. "In purposive sampling, a particular case is chosen because it illustrates some feature or process of interest for a particular study" (De Vos *et al.,* 2011:392). These authors further advocate that in purposive sampling, the researcher must think critically about the parameters of the population and then choose the sample case accordingly.

There are five purposive sampling methods, indicating 1) modal instance sampling, 2) expert sampling, 3) quota sampling, 4) heterogeneity sampling and 5) snowball sampling. This study adopted snowball sampling because COLL management has a busy schedule and is difficult to reach. COLL regional coordinators are based in the regions, and the researcher used purposive sampling to gain access to these respondents.

1.6.4 Population sample

After defining a population, a frame thereof must be obtained before sampling can begin. A frame is a list or system that identifies members of the population enabling drawing the sample without having to physically assemble the population (Blair, Czaja & Blair, 2014:110). Biggam (2011:164) signalises that data collection from the whole target population is unlikely, regardless of whether the research is quantitative or qualitative. NUST has a population of 800 staff members and 13 000 students. COLL, as a department, has 30 official members. A sample of 80 respondents was drawn from the entire population (see Table 1.1); 80 respondents were representative of the entire population. The respondents who were part of the samples had extensive information, which the study sought to explore. This assisted in effectively addressing the research aims and objectives.

Table 1.1: A sample size of respondents

Target	Number
Students	40
COLL Staff Members	28
COLL management	2
Marker Tutors	10
TOTAL	**80**

Source: (Author Own's Work)

1.6.5 Data analysis procedure

Mouton (2001:108) maintains that the purpose of an investigation is to understand the numerous constitutive fundamentals of data through a review of connections amongst concepts, hypotheses or variables, and to establish whether any patterns or trends can be identified or isolated, or to launch themes in data. Analysis refers to classifying a whole into separate components for individual examination. Data analysis is a process of obtaining raw data and converting it into information useful for decision-making by users. Several phases can be distinguished. The phases are iterative in that feedback from later phases may result in additional work in earlier phases (O'Neil & Schutt, 2010:25). The study analysed data employing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The summary of data collected from the respondents was analysed according to the information collected by using a questionnaire.

1.7 Research ethics

The respondents were invited because of their extensive experience of the topic. Their views on the topic enabled to generate a comprehensive illustration of governance challenges in distance education. The participants were neither subjected to any form of intervention or manipulation of their environment nor exposed to any harm or exploitation. It was accentuated that participation is voluntary, and the participants were under no obligation to consent to participate. The participants were free to withdraw at any time and without providing a reason.

1.8 Chapter summary

This chapter presents the introduction and background, theoretical framework, and problem statement of this study. The research design and methodology are explained, indicating the use of questionnaires and interviews to collect data. NUST is introduced as the unit of analysis to position the reader towards the milieu of the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ON GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

2.1 Introduction

Distance education departments in many universities encountered the dilemma of poor management attributable to understaffing and a lack of capacity-building programmes for university officials. The inadequate funding of universities by the government ultimately causes these dilemmas. Management challenges are not a new phenomenon, with authors having divergent perspectives. This research examines how distinctive authors understand these challenges and how these contradictory perspectives can address the research objectives of this study to solve distance education concerns. The author also suggests models that address the governance challenges of universities and models of distance education.

The primary purpose of the literature review is to describe and explain the research questions and identify inconsistencies, divergences, and contradictions in the literature. In this chapter, the literature provides debates on the governance models, HE governance and its repute in Africa. The chapter proposes governance as a conceptual framework, distance education models, and explains how such models fit into the contemporary scene of HE practices. The models presented in this chapter are instruments that can be employed to improve the implementation of both governance and management in distance education at institutions of higher learning. The chapter describes sound governance principles, the management of distance education, and the change of universities and university environments.

2.2 Governance as a conceptual framework

The concepts of governance were introduced into political science and, more recently, practical political discourses when the traditional model of the nation-state is no longer adequate to describe the reality or to guide reform policies in government. The institution at the global level observed a major change in the organisation of political power. This transformation labelled as a shift from government to governance (Papadopoulos & Papadopoulos, 2006:20). Governance became the prevailing mode of political regulation in functionally, differentiating multicultural and democratic societies. This emergence of new structures and modes of governance raises the question of democratic legitimacy in African nations.

Papadopoulos and Papadopoulos (2006:20) maintain that results and debates of democratic legitimacy of governance are not very convincing. Many scholars agree with the above statement because the conception of governance is not clear and nor is there agreement about what democratic legitimacy requires, and especially how it can be achieved when applied to politics and policymaking beyond the nation-state.

Conversely, Papadopoulos and Papadopoulos (2006:20) state that practising diverse types of governance and considering their implications may assist African governments to avoid unjustified generalisations, whilst producing a better normative approach to the use of governance. Such practice may also produce more differentiated conclusions to the practicality of governance in the African governance system. To avoid ungovernability, the plurality of competing interests and preferences has to be organised through horizontal coordination and cooperative policymaking cutting across institutions, sectors and territories (Papadopoulos & Papadopoulos, 2006:21). The ensuing section discusses corporate governance theories and paradigms.

2.3 Corporate governance theories and paradigms

In this section, various corporate governance theories were identified and their relevancy to HE governance. Corporate governance is significant because the university operates similarly to a private firm. The emerging strategic governance challenges of universities require corporate governance approaches and practices. Amongst these theories, some of them will be applied as a normative approach to address the research questions of this study in Chapter 6. Provided the need for finding solutions to governance challenges, it is imperative first to understand the significance of these theories. Subsequently, these theories do not only improved governance and management of universities but stand as a strong point for universities' performance. These theories include agency theory, stewardship theory, stakeholder theory, and resource dependency theory.

2.3.1   Agency theory

Agency theory is the relationship between the principals (such as shareholders of the institution) and agents (directors of institutions) (Celik & Dogan, 2011:156). This theory states that the principals of an institution hire the agents to perform duties. The principals delegate the work of running the institution to the directors or managers as agents of shareholders. Celik and Dogan (2011:156) posit that when applying this theory, the shareholders expect the agents to act and decide in the best interest of the principal. Agents need not to decide in the best interests of the principals. The agent may be succumbed to self-interest, opportunistic behaviour and fall short of expectations of the principal. The key feature of agency theory is the separation of ownership and control. The theory prescribes that individuals or employees are held accountable for their tasks and responsibilities. To reinforce this, rewards and punishments can be used to correct the priorities of agents. The agency theory is depicted in Figure 2.1 below.
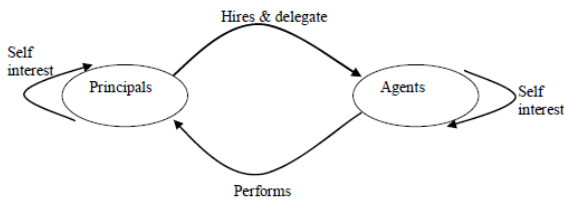
Figure 2.1: Agency theory

Source: Celik and Dogan (2011:156)

2.3.2   Stewardship theory

Katsamunska (2012:74-81) maintains that stewardship theory states that a steward protects and maximises shareholders' wealth through performance. Stewards are company executives and managers working for the shareholders, protects and make profits for the shareholders. Concerning NUST, various stakeholders play a significant role in the institution's management. Stewards can be vice chancellors, deputy vice chancellors, and academic deans. This aspect is detailed in the subsequent chapter. The stewards are satisfied and motivated when organisational success is attained. It stresses on the position of employees or executives to act more autonomously so that shareholders' returns are maximised. The employees take ownership of their jobs and work at them diligently.

The stewardship theory is illustrated in Figure 2.2 below. In this era of Covid-19, employees are forced to work hard no matter how the situation might be. The theory fits into the practicality of public institutions. This aforementioned theory may support the adoption of approaches to governance and management of public institutions. Correspondingly, with the challenges of governance, it became paramount that public institutions need to apply robust strategies, such as the theory of stewardship. The stewardship theory has been designed to fit in the structure and system of public institutions, specifically universities.
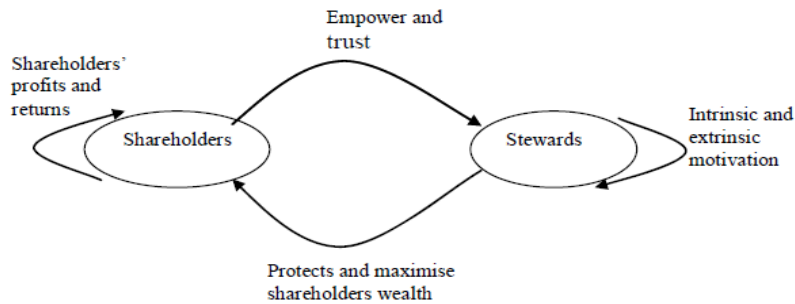
Figure 2.2: Stewardship theory

Source: Celik and Dogan (2011:157)

2.3.3   Stakeholder theory

The stakeholder theory incorporated the accountability of management to a broad range of stakeholders (Celik & Dogan, 2011:158). It states that managers in organisations have a network of relationships to serve; this includes the suppliers, employees, and business partners. The theory focuses on managerial decision-making and interests of all stakeholders have intrinsic value, and no sets of interests are assumed to dominate others. Figure 2.3 below illustrates a typical stakeholder theory structure and elements. The stakeholder theory is aligned with meeting the organisation's strategic objectives. The theory is imperative since all stakeholders of the institutions are held accountable. One of the plausible reasons for this is that the network of relationship and accountability determine the degree to which the organisations can survive in times of uncertainty. It is against this volatile context that stakeholder theory does not support the mechanistic, bureaucratic organisations with excessively centralised controls system of approach. The above view may be critical in the African government, as the stakeholder theory does not support the view. The evidence presented by the stakeholder theory may suggest that organisations are required to have a network relationship concerning decision-making.
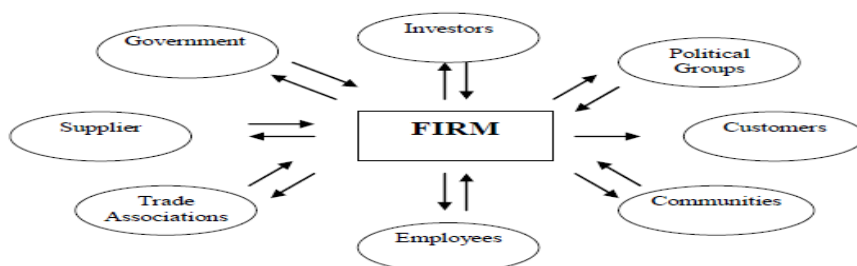
Figure 2.3: Stakeholder theory and elements

Source: Celik and Dogan (2011:156)

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2.3.4 Resource dependency theory

The resource dependency theory focuses on the role of board directors in providing access to resources needed by the firm (Asaduzzaman, 2011:45). The resource dependency theory states that directors may play an important role and provide or secure essential resources for the organisation through their linkages to the external environment. The provision of resources enhances organisational functioning, the firm's performance, and its survival. The directors bring resources to the firm, such as information, skills, access to key constituents such as suppliers, buyers, public policymakers, social groups, and legitimacy. Directors are categorised as insiders, business experts, support specialists and community influential. The directors are accountable to the resources of the institution on how it should be managed and distributed. The delivery mode of resources should be transparent and sensible.

2.3.5 Governance paradigm

The current views on corporate governance rest on two broad pillars, the shareholding paradigm and the stakeholding paradigm (O'Sullivan, 2000:3; Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 2001:26). As indicated in the discussed theories above, these paradigms offer competing analyses and theories. Inevitably, this debate represents a polarised conceptualisation and theorising in a continuum of how corporate governance is understood. At one end is the conventional and dominant idea of 'individual liberty' and thus the maximisation of shareholders' value. Conversely, justice for all accommodates broader stakeholders' interests. 'The positioning of each model follows its stipulation of the relative importance of justice versus liberty concerning the fiduciary constructs to whom the directors of the business owe the duties of care, loyalty, and candour (Sullivan & Conlon, 1997:714).

Polarisation also appears within a single category of shareholding or stakeholding itself concerning various assumptions. For example, when sharing the same position of shareholders value maximisation, both the agency theory and the stewardship theory presuppose contrasting human natures as self-interested and thus not trust, or as widely motivated and thus trustworthy. The ensuing section details the models of governance at universities.

2.4 Governance models at universities

As the demand for HE services continues to develop, and as governments acknowledge the role of universities in promoting economic development, it becomes essential to ensure that HE systems are adequately managed. It is essential to manage universities efficiently because HEIs need to respond to the demands of society. Researchers who study bureaucracies and complex organisations have neglected to investigate the behaviours of universities. The models discussed in this section analysed the practices of academic officials and management. This section explains and

describes the four models of governance, which include the university as a 1) cube model, 2) political model, 3) collegial model, and 4) bureaucratic model.

2.4.1   University as a cube model

The cube model focuses on graduate training, and its application is more suited to research and the professional development of students. Many institutions of higher learning globally employed the cube model in their learning system. The University of Alabama applied the cube model to paediatric psychology doctoral students with an emphasis on research skills and competencies. A reason for applying the cube model, specifically to paediatric psychology, is that scholars identified critical competencies in this field. Madan-Swain, Hankins, Gilliam, Ross, Reynolds, Milby and Schwebel (2011:136) maintain that paediatric psychology addresses the range of physical- and psychological illness affecting children and adolescents with an emphasis on evidence-based methods. The authors further maintain that the cube model can be applied successfully in developing research and training competencies in paediatric psychology. Future research on the cube model should address the development, implementation, and assessment of research competencies for the training and career development of future paediatric psychologists (Madan-Swain *et al.*, 2011).

The cube model emphasises that students' professional development can be realised if research is at the forefront of a university's objectives. Universities should concentrate not only on traditional students when conducting research but also on distance students, who should play a role in producing new knowledge and in finding a solution to contemporary concerns affecting communities. Figure 2.4 depicts the essentials of the cube model and its function at a university.
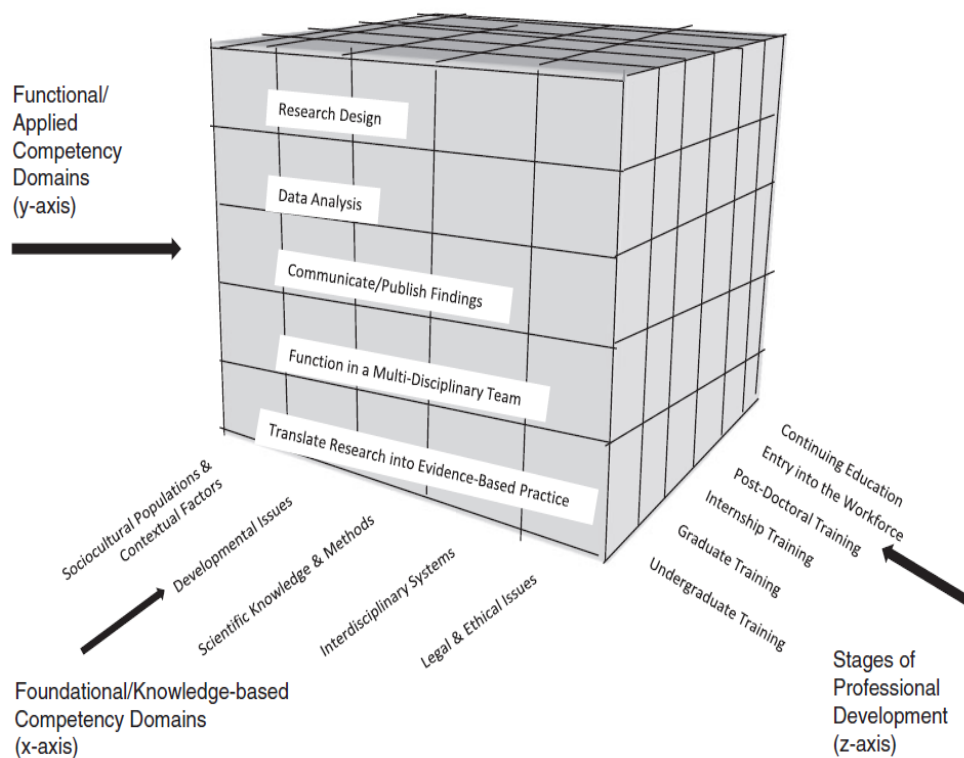
Figure 2.4: The cube model of governance at universities

Source: Madan-Swain *et al.* (2011:136)

The cube model does not focus primarily on the management of universities but also on the professional development of officials and students at the university, as indicated in Figure 2.1. The x-, y-, and z-axis in Figure 2.4 illustrate the practice of the cube model and its significant role in human development. The three domains of the cube model, as depicted in Figure 2.4, include the 1) applied competency domain, 2) knowledge-based domain, and 3) stages of professional development. The three domains are interrelated and depend on each other. Universities globally are turning to focus more on the cube model attributable to these three domains. The ensuing section will explain the university as a political model.

2.4.2 University as a political model

The political model developed from the democratic prospect of academic institution management. The university and government should understand management challenges and potential solutions because the political model is multidimensional, and problems may arise from this model at any provided time. Universities concentrate much on deciding their strategic goals and mission without considering political concerns central to govern official and student needs. Balgrade (1971:12) maintains that factors, such as student riots, professor unions, and strikes are political concerns, and

university management must address those concerns rather than defend their rigid role in management. Balgrade (1971:12) further maintains that the above factors form part of the political model. Universities best understood as political models because power, policies, and influence exist in complex organisations.

The fundamental problems with the political models may ascend from tensions and fights between various groups within the university system. Second, Senate members of universities appointed and confirmed with the advice and consent of the minister (Rodden, 2017:21). Senate members come from diverse backgrounds and cultures with no skills to manage a university. At some universities, Senate members are required to participate in continuing education activities to enhance their management skills. Third, Senate members are political office bearers and may lack management skills, which affect resource distribution and budget votes of the university. In short, political governance at universities is a concern with the political behaviour of HE governance and may destroy the university's reputation. The ensuing section will discuss the university as a collegial model.

2.4.3   University as a collegial model

The concept of collegiality comes from the Latin word "collegium", which refers to a group of individuals working in a large organisation (Stillwaters Media Lab, 2013:1). Baldridge (1971:9) maintains that collegial governance is the professionalisation of the academic community. The collegial model allows the sharing of power between management and academic faculties in decision-making processes. The model of collegiality emphasises that universities should not be bureaucratic but must allow participation by all members of the academic faculty because academic officials know the organisation and can contribute significantly to the achievement of university goals.

The collegiality model supports the working relationship of university management, academic officials, administrative officials, students, and stakeholders. The collegial model advocates for management officials to collaborate and disagree in decision-making, but also work towards a shared vision of the university. Though some universities might want to adopt a different model of governance, the perceptions of collegiality remain relevant because individuals intend to work inclusively, there is a need for more collaboration than ever before, especially in the aspect of distance education. Berg and Seeber (2016:68) observe that daily interactions amongst officials within the institutions is limited, and officials hardly communicate with one another. The ensuing section will examine the bureaucratic model of governance, which is essential and recommended for universities.

2.4.4 University as a bureaucratic model

Tahir (2010:4) maintains that universities have become larger and established in more places, but academics also worry that management is becoming a symptom of a new bureaucratic control exercised over their working lives. The bureaucratic model can produce inefficiency, dehumanisation, and ritualism because the model creates a division between management and academics. The bureaucratic model advocates that the management process makes all the decisions within the university rather than the academics' faculty. The bureaucratic model of governance needs to understand the essence of academics and embraces a culture of working collectively between management and academic officials and the need for participative work design from a human relations perspective. The model should refrain from its rigid and dominant approach of management and inherit a collaborative approach with academic officials.

The bureaucratic system is famous for its rigid rules and authority monopolised by specific management individuals that may frustrate academic officials because the system does not allow the academic officials to contribute to the university management process. Academic officials prefer a collegial model that permits freedom of expression, rather than a bureaucratic model that does not allow the academic officials to critique management.

The management of universities can advocate a unique management approach to uplift the value and achieve the vision of the university. This management approach includes aspects, such as policies or decisions inclusively by all employees, and allows them to play a role in the strategic vision of the organisation. The management aspect at universities is often highly bureaucratic (Baldridge, 1971:7). The bureaucratic model advocates for authority concerning legal formalised systems of a university and explains how policies are to be efficiently performed. It also does not deal with political concerns, such as the struggles of groups within the university who want to force policy decisions towards their interests.

It is vital to note that the bureaucratic model dominates the administration system of distance education and plays an essential role, as it involves the administration of ODL activities. The administration activities in ODL from the bureaucratic model perspective include deciding, issuing instructions, processing data, and implementing all these activities. Ntanos and Boulouta (2012:2), the bureaucratic way of administration is the most rational and indispensable for massive administration because of the centralised system. Mainardes, Alves and Raposo (2011:128) maintain that the bureaucratic model at universities also includes management activities to manage external services and administrative activities. The bureaucratic model advocates that activities must be efficiently be managed. Max Weber, the founder of the bureaucratic model, visualised

bureaucracy as a process that would give a quality improvement in an organisation if applied successfully.

In conclusion, the four models presented above play an essential role in HE governance. The success of universities depends on the combination of these models, and they should be applied concurrently in HE management.

2.5 Models for structuring university governance

Governance has a critical place in recent public management and public policy discourses globally. The expression of governance depicts the broadened patterns of collective action. The fate of public policies in today's world lies in the hands of public organisations, which intertwined with others in latticed patterns of governance and general performance of policy outputs and outcomes. Most colleges and universities across the globe encounter crises of confidence in leadership or its financial systems. Poor leadership compromise service delivery and the practice of good governance at institutions of higher learning. Trackman (2008:41) asserts that governance problems have common roots with similar attributes that can lead to similar results from various universities. On the oversight, universities used various governance models, and such models do not produce excellent results.

Trackman (2008:41) maintains that some crises relate to governance models themselves because some governance models are autocratic, not collaborative enough whilst others may be cumbersome involving too many constituencies in the institution's decision-making process. The perception towards governance sounds negative concerning the key perceptions around poor leadership and management practices, administrative corruption and lack of accountability coupled with an excessive political intervention (Links & Haimbodi, 2011:14). Universities governing bodies should understand, and take advantage of opportunities to develop good governance practices. Therefore, improving the functionality of universities. The ensuing section detail three models that assist the structuring of universities and includes shared governance, corporate governance, and trustee governance.

2.5.1   Shared governance model

Shared governance is a structural model through which university officials can express and manage their academic work with a higher level of professional autonomy. Shared governance is a structural process incorporates partnership, equity, accountability, and ownership. It positions the responsibility of authority and for practice-related decisions into the hands of officials who will operationalise or implement the decision. Similarly, shared governance reflects the view that colleges and universities ought to be run by most immediate stakeholders, primarily by faculty, professional officials, and students. Shared governance is a model to which colleges and universities

most frequently return when difficulties arise with alternatives and the most frequently criticised model (Trackman, 2008:41). The author further maintains that these critics of shared governance can claim that a faculty Senate member who typically participate in governance lack skills and interest to identify and relate to external stakeholders. The stakeholders include commercial partners and government agencies and to conduct financial and personnel matters. Faculty participation in governance produced positive results in building governance structures and strengthening the relationship with labour unions and students.

Many scholars and educators appreciate the significance of shared governance because of the model's advocate for institutional autonomy and academic freedom. This view is echoed by Guanci (2018:1) who asserts that all involved in shared governance must have clarity that there are structures, processes, and outcomes that leadership will continue to have the responsibility, such as regulatory requirements, immediate safety concerns, performance management and operational decisions.

2.5.2 Corporate as a governance model

Institutions globally encountered challenges of poor practices of good corporate governance. Effective corporate governance is inescapable, especially in this era of Covid-19. The corporate governance model has evolved reactively than proactively in most parts of the world. With the world undergoing significant changes, the path towards corporate governance model depicts as a product of severe economic difficulties, such as the recent Covid-19 epidemic. Universities boards have adopted this model to satisfy the financial needs of their institutions. By adopting corporate governance model universities' board of governance quest to promote efficiency and to hold management accountable for their corrupt practices.

Trackman (2008:42) maintained that corporate governance model is widely used at public colleges and universities. This has evolved out of concern of deficiencies in shared governance models. Some institutions seek a middle ground by adopting an amalgamated model of governance in which corporate governance applied in tandem with other governance models, and corporate governance practices guided by policy framework, such as the King IV Report. In context, corporate governance practices are guided by SOEs Governance Act, 2006 (No. 2 of 2006) and this act will be explained in the subsequent chapter. Whilst this perspective of policy guidelines acknowledges the importance of corporate governance practices; all government institutions should advocate for implementing the corporate governance model.

2.5.3 Trustee model of governance

The trustee model of governance has acquired some credibility in public institutions. Provided the rareness of information on appropriate models and best practices, most countries at the global level recommend for wider adoption of trustee governance because the model has less representational membership on governing bodies. The less representation of membership assists the governing bodies to make the moral decision easier to the best performance of the institution. Trackman (2008:42) maintains that trustee governance differs from shared governance. Shared governance refers to a partnership, such as those amongst students, faculty and colleges and university administrators. Whilst trustee governance refers to the manner, in which a trustee board governs the institution's trust for and on behalf of either students or the institution.

HE institutions have the discretionary to adopt any of the mentioned three models. The intersection between shared governance, trustee governance and corporate governance denotes a set of shared values or principles, which institutions should embrace. Provided intersecting or the convergence of these models as an approach, they also bridge a divergence to a central point to hold them together as one central solution to various challenges encountered by the institution of higher learning. Some studies also maintain that there are multiple ways to design institutions to achieve a result when employing the trustee governance model or any of the models.

2.6 Good governance in distance education

Sound governance principles play an essential role in shaping twenty-first-century universities. Castro (2012:1) maintains that governance is one of the most critical areas of the HE policy reform because HE governance involves not only aspects of internal university governance but also encompasses the roles of government and external stakeholders. Sound governance principles are essential when managing universities because institutions of HE is part of the national governance system. Universities should respond to social needs and build a knowledge society, and assist the country to achieve its national objectives.

Universities are accountable and responsible for carrying out the mandate of the national government. Subsequently, universities need competent, professionally qualified officials to perform directives. HE governance encompasses aspects, such as human resources management, funding, quality assurance, internationalisation, and academic- and scientific management. The success of every university depends on how well it conducts this governance or management functions (Delgado, 2012:1).

Another part of governance is the full protection of human rights, including those of minorities. Students subscribing to ODL should enjoy full human rights at the university that they attend. Gordon

(2013:754) maintains that distance education is essential to human rights, which have universal moral norms that always bind all people in all places, independently of any legal recognition. With universities, human rights include a safe and clean environment at an institution of higher learning, where student concerns and concerns are considered. Students should also participate in the decision-making of the university. This means that students are part of the Senate, which is the highest decision-making body of a university. Students may raise concerns that affect them daily, such as accommodation, tuition fees, and Internet services at the university.

Another concern is the consideration of students living with disabilities. Human rights at an institution of higher learning advocates for the proper treatment of people with a disability and/or impairment. Inclusive education also requires team teaching, whereby a specialist subject teacher teaches alongside (several) teachers of students with special needs. Inclusivity in HE promotes stable democracy and human rights for all people, and good governance. Therefore, human rights are a device of good governance, and it is vital to protect the rights of individuals at universities. The other essential principles of good governance in HE include transparency, participation, democracy, accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency. These are explained in the Sections 2.6.1 – 2.6.6.

2.6.1 Transparency

Faibisoff and Willis (1987:4) state that many educators see distance education as one of the more innovative approaches to teaching twenty-first-century students. Transparency is essential in distance education because it provides openness to student information, results and assessments, and student activities. Transparency is a catalyst for interaction and participation that supports open learning in multiple disciplines and institutional contexts (Mackey, 2011:1). Transparency refers to the availability of information concerning all aspects of the operation and management of an institution (Khanna, 2016:6). If transparency is not well executed or embraced by institutions of higher learning, it will cause concern and doubt within societies. A lack of transparencies destroys the practices of institutions and prevents them from thriving and succeeding. Oliver (2004:10) maintains that the public wants excellent delivery in the provision of goods and services. If transparency is embodied and implemented in all sectors of the economy, it will improve the well-being of citizens.

Transparency is one of the essential attributes of an open approach to distance teaching and learning because students study at their own pace, and thus, materials and information need to be made available transparently (Huitt & Monetti, 2017:46). Some universities or centres of distance learning feature a lack of information sharing and distribution, despite them giving the impression that resources and materials are visible and accessible to students and tutors in the learning environment.

Courses delivered online and by distance centres employ various technologies as mediums of delivery and need to continue to transform the delivery system for learning to use modern technologies. These technologies in distance education employ asynchronous- and synchronous delivery. Maitland, Rhoades, and Smith (2009:59) claim that synchronous delivery involves the simultaneous interaction of students and tutors, such as interaction through telecourses, teleconferencing and online conferencing, the Internet, and online "chats". Asynchronous delivery involves materials prepared by the teacher with students participating by following their schedules and employing e-mail, audiocassettes, videotapes, correspondence, and the Internet. These methods allow students to earn their qualifications whilst off-campus. It is, therefore, essential to look at the differences between traditional- and open education, as reflected in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Analysis of traditional and open education

	Traditional	**Open**
Transparency	Opaque or hidden data and decision-making processes	Transparent data and decision-making process
Purpose	Socialising for factory work	Socialising for global democracy
Focus	Curriculum-centred	Person-centred
Desired Outcomes	Cognitive	Holistic
Assessment	Discrete cognitive knowledge	Authentic, holistic profile
Teaching Process	Standardised, directed learning	Varied, as appropriate, with more self-regulated learning
Learning Tasks	Curriculum-directed	Problem- and project-based
Resources	Private enterprise controlled	Free or inexpensive
Work Environment	Compartmentalised	Connected
Organisational Structure	Centralised	Decentralised

Source: Huitt & Monetti (2017:45)

Table 2.1 indicates some dimensions that have been used to differentiate between traditional- and open education. It is essential to recognise that all aspects of education take place in a cultural milieu. There have been numerous discussions between those who advocate for a top-down, community-oriented approach to formal education (characterised as traditional) and those who

support a bottom-up, individualised approach (characterised as open) (Huitt & Monetti, 2017:45). The open approach is more decentralised and connected when compared with the traditional approach. In principle, the open approach embraces transparency, access to information, and participation in the decision-making process. From a more traditional angle, institutions of higher learning are using problems encountered by students to decide in favour of students–this approach will assist to solve actual concerns and improve the university's performance and confidence (Kuh *et al.*, 2015:12).

All key role-players in distance education, such as student support officers, SRCs and student societies, play an essential role in the process of transparency. These role-players also assist distance education centres to improve management and administration through a well-articulated transparent process. For the organisation to have credibility and respect, their actions must be transparent in all aspects. Therefore, transparency is an essential part of good governance because it promotes openness in management. Transparency promotes better learning environments to students taking courses on distance education.

2.6.2 Participation

An essential principle of good governance that involves individuals, stakeholders and shareholders in distance education is participation. Pozdnyakova and Pozdnyakov (2017:243) maintain that distance learning is one form of education for adult students. This form of education has challenges relating to the peculiarities of distance education, and the peculiarities of the adult audience. Participation as a concept of good governance advocates solving these kinds of governance concerns in HE by including everyone in the system.

Universities need to carefully consider any additional features intended to improve distance education because such features may put pressure on administrators of distance education unless the university implemented mechanisms to solve such concerns. These mechanisms can use new technologies, such as e-books, Turnitin (an online plagiarism detection service) or social media. These are essential to the university because they enable the university to cope with modern challenges in education. To enhance the administration of distance education, the university must engage with the academic faculty to produce a robust result. This result includes the success of distance education students who may complete their studies on time.

Other results may include the success of the university concerning growth and development. The department of distance education must provide academic- and financial support to faculty officials committed to teaching distance education courses. This can assist the department manage staff

retention. Universities' support of their distance education faculties is significant, especially for students taking online courses who need their support on a day-to-day basis.

Universities must also provide mechanisms for the sustainability of online programmes, such as faculty training and technology enhancements. Undoubtedly, this will enable the department of distance education to maintain consistency and allow them to offer more online courses. Participation is essential, especially in online courses, because it encompasses everyone during the development and implementation process of online and blended courses. Morris, Finnegan and Wu (2005:228) conclude that participation is essential for successful online learning. A lack of participation delays progression in implementing online courses because some officials lack an understanding of how online courses operate. Therefore, standardisation is an essential device in online and distance education courses (see Section 2.6.2.1).

2.6.2.1 Distance education standards

A lack of standards for both online and distance courses is a concern when considering participation in teaching for distance education. This lack can ultimately result in a decline in the quality of faculty officials. Kuh *et al.* (2015:2) maintain that disruptions in the quality and standard of distance education courses come from an uneasy sense of twenty-first-century demands, such as the shrinking of the economy and a lack of funding. If this disruption continues, it will compromise the quality of courses, teaching, and students. In this complex context, understanding student performance and optimising success is not just essential to maintain public confidence, but it is even more vital to guide and inform decisions and policies at the university. Therefore, the standardisation of courses and study materials is essential to improve the performance of higher learning institutions.

Distance learning courses feature standardised content, such as a standard syllabus and assignments, and reusable course modules and learning objects. Creating a baseline level of quality in distance education will require some standardisation. When doing this, the university needs to stimulate capacity-building programmes on standardisation, for example, how faculty officials are to maintain quality and consistency when marking tests, assignments, and research for both graduate- and undergraduates programmes. Gramstad (2019:1) maintains that the standardisation of online distance learning courses has demonstrated higher student success and retention than any other online courses. Subsequently, this allows for courses designed to allow the student to concentrate on the content, and not worry about hunting for information. This applies mostly to ODL students, rather than students receiving traditional education guided by an instructor, and who can lose focus. Therefore, standardisation is a significant component of participation, especially in distance education. The next aspect and the most challenging principle of good governance is accountability.

2.6.3 Accountability

Carey and Schneider (2010:2) maintain that universities are in danger of being marginalised by a society that does not see their aspirations reflected in a higher learning institution. Accountability must be at the forefront to solve concerns of HE by harnessing institutional self-interest and making what is right for universities what is good for society. Universities across the globe have departments of distance education that need accountability in their operations. Distance learning units or departments should integrate a monitoring and evaluation system to monitor and assess courses and programmes. As accountability involves elements of monitoring and evaluation, these aspects must be applied in distance education. Monitoring distance education should include finding facts and generating evidence of results. Accountability is not a secure system in distance education and requires attributes to achieve reasonable progress. Such attributes include quality assurance, quality audits and monitoring, and evaluation systems within the distance education department. These attributes will assist the distance learning department to accomplish the goals of the university because, if such attributes are implemented, they will assist the university to promote quality programmes, successful graduates, and attract recruits. Accountability is a complicated process to achieve, and institutions need to improve it.

Carey and Schneider (2010:4) maintain that even if the right accountability measures can be developed, and the right systems for using information, there will still be numerous barriers to the development of robust, long-lasting, and effective accountability systems. A challenge is to measure the performance of learners and how administrative staff and faculty officials perform. Similarly, faculty officials might assess a student differently, which can cause problems when maintaining an accountable process. Therefore, officials must follow and adopt the same standards of assessment.

Such assessments include the quality assurance processes of distance education. Most institutions of HE, and especially those that deal with distance education, need to have a quality assurance unit for accountability and improved governance. The university needs to incorporate quality audits into its long-term planning to improve distance education activities. The quality audit is an essential component of accountability, and it evaluates and provides reports to stakeholders and shareholders of HE. Through a standardised quality assurance process, accountability aims to provide information to policymakers and stakeholders about meeting standards and value for money. Having standardised implemented quality assurance promotes trust and confidence in stakeholders and shareholders. Quality assurance, assessment, quality audits, and monitoring and evaluation are essential components of accountability. The next important concept of good governance is democracy.

2.6.4   Democracy

Amukongo (2017:9) defines democracy as a system of governance in which members of an institution or society partake directly or indirectly in decision-making processes and through which they can exercise control over decision-making on concerns that affect their lives. In context, democracy is a concept not readily achievable. Lind (2018:1) states, "teachers, parents, and students ask themselves how the contradiction between the democratic promise of freedom and the autocratic self-understanding of traditional education is solved." Democracy in universities is defined by the practice of equal opportunities and individual rights. It is one of the fundamental reasons for creating a sound democratic system, and the education system must orchestrate such a system. Westheimer (2006:348) maintains that if people are not born democrats, education surely has a significant role to play in ensuring that democracy is visible in society. Institutions of higher learning fit into the system of democracy because they offer educational services. HE is a concept of human rights, and each citizen is entitled to attend HE institutions. Therefore, democracy, human rights, and HE are all social concepts, which all support one another.

HE is a public good and universities must promote capacity-building and ensure that the broad vision of education for all as a general concept is also part of their vision (Amukongo, 2017:121). In the same way, institutions of higher learning need to promote improved governance and human rights. Democracy at institutions of higher learning determines the quality of learning experiences, the ability of adults to participate in education and knowledge generation and contributes to national development. Education is the moral ideal of a democratic society because once democracy exists in a country; the country is more likely to allow youths to attend universities. The rationality of democracy in universities allows students to become intelligent, compassionate, and critically engaged adults, fully aware that without informed citizens, there is no democracy (Giroux, 2019:4). Giroux (2019:4) further maintains that educators cannot forget that the struggle over democracy is about much more than the fight over economic resources and power. Therefore, democracy encapsulates language, culture, and identity. Effectiveness is the next concept of good governance to be discussed, along with its relevance to distance education.

2.6.5   Effectiveness

Effectiveness is the most basic standard for gauging the success of public action (Salamon, 2002:23). The concept also considers the extent to which an activity achieves its intended objectives. The effectiveness of distance education can be a challenge, as illustrated by the high rate of student dropouts and delays in the completion of studies. High dropout rates are a symptom of underlying challenges facing ODL students (Musingafi & Mapuranga, 2015:59). High dropout rates caused by various factors, one of which is a lack of time management because students struggle to balance

time between work, family, and studies. These challenges cause distance education to be ineffective as they lead many students to quit their studies.

Additional challenges include inadequate knowledge of pedagogy from tutors, insufficient student commitment to studies, and a lack of training initiatives for tutors and administrators because officials need to understand how the distance education environment operates. White and Weight (2000:56) assert that effective distance education demands specific qualifications by the instructor that includes both knowledge of the content area and the instructor's ability to communicate effectively within the distance education environment. Distance education can experience many challenges, though there is a high probability that students will succeed in their studies despite these complications. Therefore, distance education centres need to consider effective management as an essential principle for overcoming management concerns.

Effective management of distance education at any institute of higher learning requires a holistic approach. Centres, units, and departments need to network in the quest for the effective management of distance education. The quality of learning should not be measured concerning student learning achievements but on the effectiveness of tutors and administrative officials (Nsiah & Oti-Boadi, 2015:708). The success of effective management in distance education rests on determining how university management officials' best implement programmes and activities. It is also vital that both academic- and administrative officials form part of management. Therefore, effectiveness is an essential principle of good governance, especially in distance education. The ultimate principle of good governance is efficiency.

2.6.6   Efficiency

Distance education is a process that needs resources and money to run day-to-day activities. Utilising resources and money efficiently will permit a broader spectrum of the student population to participate in learning. Universities lack funds since they survive mostly from course fees, insufficient to fund development in distance education. Understanding actual costs can be useful in arguing for more government support for distance education programmes (Du Plessis, 2010:16). Du Plessis (2010:16) further contends that any department that aspires to render quality education should be financially buoyant. Subsequently, if ODL institutions are economically viable, they must depend less on government funding because the government must control most of its affairs. Rena (2008:192) maintains that spending on educational provision has significantly increased, but there are limited budgetary means to cater to the financial costs that countries encounter when building infrastructure in HE. Departments in universities cannot maintain and control resources, such as individual academic support, computers, and overhead projectors, teaching venues, online- and printing

resources, new buildings, and office space for staff members. Financial resources are needed to maximise university outputs.

Efficiency in education involves maximising outputs, which includes the volume of administrative services provided, minimising inputs, such as the number of institutional resources or the capital required to produce those services, and maintaining or improving the quality of education (Sullivan, Mackie, Massy & Sinha, 2012:56). Subsequently, distance education centres at universities use more university budgets to cater for distance education resources without considering the efficacy of such funds. Poor management of distance education resources will cause inefficiency, especially when implementing distance education activities or programmes. The ensuing section explains challenges in HE.

2.7 Management framework

Management as used in business practice refers to the coordination of employees to do work. A more technical definition of the same would be the art or science of achieving goals through people. Management involves the functions of planning, organising, staffing, leading, and controlling. These aspects will be explained later in details in the ensuing section. The definition also insinuates productivity, particularly of employees as one of the important aspects of management (Gupta & Sharma, 2014:36). Management includes the design and maintenance of a work environment to ensure that the productivity of the employees is at maximum.

Problem-solving is also an important aspect of management and must be treated with utmost importance in managerial practice. The art of problem-solving carries with it the need for problem identification, analysis, and implementation of remedies. An important term in management is 'objectives' and refers to the aims the organisation plans to achieve, three of which exist. One common objective for most if not all institutions is to achieve its targets and goals at cost-effective rates. The other is ensuring the welfare and health of official with the last being the protection of machinery and resources of the organisation (Guo & Kumara, 2012:15).

There are several roles, which served by managers. Managers are the primary drivers of work in an organisation. They perform five duties, indicating: planning, organising, staffing, leading, and controlling. Planning involves a selection of missions to undertake, objectives and lines of action to take to achieve the said objectives (Guo & Kumara, 2012:82). Decision-making comes in handy in this managerial function. Organising refers to the act of establishment of the intentional structure of roles to be filled by individuals in the organisation. Managers are also tasked with the responsibility of assigning people duties according to their ability, such as duties provided to those who can best perform them. The structure is such that it ensures the creation of a conducive environment for the

employees to perform their duties. Staffing conversely involves the filling and keeping filled, the positions presented in the organisational structure. Managers determine the workload requirements, evaluates officials, select, and promote them to effectively perform their duties efficiently. As leaders, the managers are tasked with the responsibility of influencing officials to contribute to the achievements of the group/organisational objectives. Managers motivate, possess diverse leadership styles, and have good communicating skills (Fooladi, 2011:20).

Managers also perform control functions. Controlling involves the measurement and direction of the employees to ensure that their actions conform to the plans of the organisation. Controlling therefore goes a long way in ensuring the accomplishment of plans. The other important managerial function executed by managers is coordination. It refers to the essence of achieving harmony amongst individual efforts towards the achievement of the goals of the organisation. Managers reconcile the differences in approach and interest and harmonise the goals of the individual employees to contribute to the goals of the organisation (Danoshana & Ravivathani, 2014:185).

The benefits, associated with effective management within the organisations, are many. Chiva and Alegre (2009:430), revealed that effective management within the organisations plays a significant role in ensuring that the employees are highly motivated as cited in (Bear, Rahman & Post, 2010:66). It is always crucial for organisations to ensure that officials are motivated. If there is an improvement in the levels of motivation of the employees, there will be an improvement in the levels of productivity of the organisations and as a result, effective management within the organisations play a key role in ensuring that there is an improvement in the levels of productivity of the organisations. Effective management within the companies plays a key role in improving how communication is passed. Effective managers always strive to ensure that there is effective communication within the places of work, and this always results in the realisation of the goals and objectives of the institutions (AlHaddad, Alzurqan & AlSufy, 2011:315).

George and Bock (2011:233) revealed that effective leadership and management within organisations always go a long way in ensuring that there is an improvement in the levels of teamwork within the organisations. Effective managers are always good at coordinating various affairs within the organisation, and as a result, there is an improvement in the levels of teamwork within the organisations. This is always highly beneficial in ensuring that there is an improvement in the levels of performances of official's employees.

2.8 Management theories

Despite the massive changes experienced in the practice of management, it is still difficult to understand management and how it can be analysed. Management theories assist to bring together these diverse perspectives and try to define management in a composite manner, such as grouping interdependent concepts in management. Management is believed to have boosted by the industrial revolution, as production and specialisation increased. It has however experienced many changes as the business environment tries to conform to the changing times. Management techniques should however not be mistaken for management theory as the former simply refers to methods of achieving a particular result. Management theories, which affected the changing face of organisational environments, are the scientific management school, the classical organisational theory school, and behavioural school amongst many others (Urby & McEntire, 2014:222).

2.8.1   The scientific management school

The scientific management school is a collection of the works of Taylor and Gilbreth's study of motion and is regarded as the first management theory. Taylor sought to overthrow the old-fashioned management practice by introducing actual timed observations that would later lead to better management practice. He advocated for a systematic way of training and breaking of complex tasks into a series of manageable tasks hence optimising the performance of the tasks. During the industrial revolution, Taylor resorted to science as the solution to the managerial injustices at the time. Taylor's theory led to significant improvements in productivity. Gilbreths conversely contributed to this theory by reducing the motions involved in a bricklaying site (Adebakin, Gbadamosi & Akpor-Robaro, 2010:230).

2.8.2   The classical organisational theory school

The classical organisational theory school involves the works of Max Weber, (bureaucratic theory) and Henry Fayol's administrative theory. Weber developed an ideal bureaucracy by establishing fixed and jurisdictional areas, a hierarchy of super and subordination, intensive expert-training and written record based management, amongst others. This bureaucracy was envisioned to propel the organisation to achievement of goals in the most efficient manner possible. Weber foresaw an impersonal kind of organisation with little human-level interactions between its members (Stigliani & Ravasi, 2012:9).

Henry Fayol's theory mainly concentrated on personal duties and came up with the belief that management has five major roles, such as forecasting and planning, organising, commanding, coordinating and controlling. Henry Fayol has developed 14 other principles of administration to supplement the five above mentioned. These principles included specialisation, responsible

authority, and unity of command, the subordination of individual interest to the general interest, unity of direction, order, equity and centralisation amongst others (Stigliani & Ravasi, 2012:12).

2.8.3 The behavioural school

This theory, advanced by Elton Mayo, challenged Taylor's conclusion that science determined the highest productivity found in one best way which could be obtained by controlled experiments. Mayo, therefore, performed his experiments, where Elton Mayo used official subjected to various types of treatment whilst at work and the productivity was recorded to be increasing. Elton Mayo, therefore, came up with five conclusions, such as work satisfaction not being economic, emphasis on official self-interest, improvement of working environments, the influence of peer group and rejected the rabble hypothesis (Amoah-Mensah, 2013:66). Elton Mayo was able to deduce from the results that the group dynamics and social make-up of an organisation were important factors either for or against higher productivity. It is this theory that has since seen the emergence and inclusion of group dynamics, teamwork and organisational social systems into the current management practice (George & Bock, 2012:226).

Elton Mayo's theory of behavioural school seems to fit for most current organisations, provided that it addresses most managerial concerns currently encountered especially in large organisations. Managers need to understand the group dynamics of such organisations and the social systems encompassing the groups if progress is to be made (George, Kuye & Onokala, 2012:225). Teamwork in such organisations is also of great essence, therefore throwing another huge responsibility of encouraging togetherness amongst officials in the already full basket of managerial responsibilities. Therefore, it can be observed that this theory can be employed by modern organisations (George & Bock, 2011:226; George, Owoyemi & Kuye, 2012:77).

2.9 Management functions

Management is a universal concept. All organisations whether business, political, cultural or social, are involved in the management process because it is management that assists to direct various efforts towards a definite purpose (Shinde, 2018:1). The organisation will not prosper or succeed without the influence of management.

Figure 2.5: Management functions

Source: Short (2019:2)

Management is a process that consists of a set of ongoing activities that aim to achieve organisational goals. Figure 2.5 depicts that all management functions are interrelated. Short (2019:3) maintains that management functions are interrelated because of the results of each activity influence other activities and tasks. University management should ensure that distance activities are managed efficiently and effectively. This section will explain the following four activities of management functions, indicating 1) planning, 2) organising, 3) directing, and 4) controlling (see Figure 2.5).

2.9.1 Planning

Many institutions globally regard planning as a device to determine the future of HEIs. Planning informs managers about how institutions should be running and how to reach this. Universities sometimes endorse a long-term strategic plan not achievable as envisaged. The university approves a strategic plan without considering the resources and funding implemented, although the plans of action need human- and capital resources. Eckel and Trower (2019:2) maintain those institutions' faculty members, administrators, trustees, and alumni spend time and energy developing documents that give incomplete directions. These can be a strategic plan for the university.

A strategic plan is a collaborative and shared effort by all officials in universities. The officials should visualise how the plan must be articulated and solve institutional problems. Strategic plans are good at HEIs, but those in charge must consider how to achieve those results with limited resources implemented. Universities must consider a strategic plan because this will assist HEIs to monitor and evaluate their progress. Universities need to consider changes in their strategic plans in a quest to produce visible or desired outcomes. As a result, they need to incorporate a more significant market orientation into the strategic planning process to acquire a competitive advantage over rivals (Conway, Mackay & Yorke, 1994:29). The strategic plan of universities is a concern that must be

taken seriously by management because it helps save time and resources if HEIs achieve tangible goals of the university community. The ensuing section will explain the function of organising.

2.9.2   Organising

Organising is the process of bringing together physical-, financial-, and human resources and developing a productive relationship to achieve organisational goals (Shinde, 2018:23). Institutions fail to organise their activities because officials lack organising skills. Officials need to understand how the culture and networking function within universities work, as this will assist them to improve their organisational skills.

Shinde (2018:23) states that organising as a process involves:

- Identifications of activities;
- Classifications of a grouping of activities;
- Assignment of duties;
- Delegation of authority and creation of responsibility; and
- Coordinating authority and responsibility relationships.

In short, organising is vital in HE in both academia and administration. Therefore, officials must learn how to organise their work or activities because it will assist them to be efficient and effective in their working environment. The next function of management to be explained is directing.

2.9.3   Directing

As depicted in Figure 2.5 (see) directing is part of leadership, where a manager guides and influences subordinates. Directing is the function of management whereby a group of people or a person is influenced or directing to achieve organisational goals. Managers at HEIs globally fail to direct subordinates to perform their tasks efficiently because directing should be a function that they must practice daily. Directing actuates the universities function to work efficiently for the achievement of its purposes. The elements of direction are illustrated in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Elements of direction

Supervision	Implies overseeing the work of subordinates by their superiors.
Motivation	Stimulating or encouraging subordinates with the zeal to work. Positive, negative, monetary, and non-monetary incentives are vital for this purpose.
Communications	Communication is the process of passing information and opinions from one person to another.
Leadership	Leadership is the process whereby a manager guides and influences the work of subordinates.

Source: Shinde (2018:24).

The four elements of directing (supervision, motivations, communication, and leadership) play a vital role in influencing subordinates towards the success of universities (see Table 2.2). The ensuing section discusses controlling.

2.9.4   Controlling

In practice, most universities lose money because managers, directors, and deans of universities fail to control resources. Control at HEIs is concerned with the areas of budgeting, supplies and how officials and students employ resources. The concept of controlling consists of verifying whether the implementation of policies occurs in conformity with the adopted plans. It is essential to note that without the basis of controlling, planning becomes a meaningless exercise because the two aspects reinforce one another. Activities at universities must be controlled efficiently and effectively. The following section will explain the environment of universities and how they can cope with this pressuring environment.

2.10   The university environment

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, universities globally found themselves under increasing pressure to change the way they operate. Changes at universities will occur annually, and thus, universities need to keep moving with these changes. The culture of a HE institution determines its internal environments and performance. Universities are not performing as envisaged in their mission because both the professional and academic faculty may have various perceptions toward the organisational culture. Some officials do not care about achieving the mission of the university. This type of attitude has damaged many institutions of higher learning because it affects the progress of the institution. Individual- and team resilience are essential for the success of any institution of higher learning. Management must ensure that everyone supports the university to

promote confidence and a positive organisational culture for the university to survive in this challenging era. Even student contribution is essential for promoting one inclusive organisational culture. Organisational culture dictates the behaviours, attitudes, and values of those working in the organisation (Alshura & Al Assuli, 2017:47). All these factors are essential to officials working in HEI and promote the culture of university operations.

No university operates in isolation. Universities have an essential interaction with the external environment in numerous, diverse, and complex ways. This external environment may affect the provision of quality education. Beketova (2016:3) maintains that the external environment has a significant influence on the educational process, and universities seek methods of adapting to these changes, which means that they have to find strategies to adapt to the external environment. Government, as an external environment entity, may change HE policies, and this influences the implementation and quality of education.

These changes may have cost implications and affect the university's financial position because of HEIs' need to inject money if these changes do occur. The best solution is to organise the work of the university in these new conditions, considering the observed trends in development, including the use of all resources for an effective response to the significant changes. It is also essential for universities to budget for unexpected changes. Another solution is to establish a centre to conduct research and advise management on how to deal with concerns derived from the external environment.

2.11   Managing modern universities

Higher educational institutes globally encounter various management challenges caused by mismanagement. Mismanagement at an institution of higher learning may affect operations and contradict the goals and mission of a university. Mismanagement can affect service delivery to university clients, such as students, government, and members of the community. University management is relatively decentralised and employs sound management practices, whilst others may employ poor quality practices. The quality of management within various departments at a university might differ because each department's manager has their style of management. The lack of shared values and innovative management approaches may prevent universities from prospering because management does not have the university's best interest at heart. In finding amicable solutions, management needs to understand the function, cultures, and behaviours of today's universities.

Bantwini *et al.* (2017:146) assert that management should ensure the effective implementation of university functions because this will assist the university to be cost-effective.

At a global level, universities are encountered with unprecedented budget reductions from government, which is a management concern. The university must embrace a management approach to be practised by all managers to promote the same culture within a university. Therefore, the main concern to consider is an improved management system at universities that works inclusively and motivates others at work. Considering the university budgeting, governments need to think about a better funding model that will assist and sustain HEIs because inadequate funding is detrimental to universities and has placed a heavy burden on management. Budgets are not sufficient, and governments have the power to control the funds of universities. The lack of sustainable financing of a HE institution limits the progress of educational service delivery and development.

Universities can secure funding to improve the quality of their services by entering multilateral- and bilateral agreements with international donors (Peril & Promise, 2000:57). This approach will strengthen the financial stability of HEIs as it cannot maintain its financial consistency with inadequate funding. Peril and Promise (2000:25) maintain that government officials who may have little understanding of HE in general, the goals and capabilities of a particular university, or the local context in which it operates, typically approve budgets. Government officials manage capital budgets poorly, and universities receive less funding. As already alluded to, HEIs should strive for funding alternatives for their infrastructures and resources because if they rely too much on government, the government will also control management.

Another concern is decision-making at HEIs. In most parts of the world, management plays a role in the decision-making process. Higher authorities of a country must endorse policies relevant to the development of HE. The European Commission (2008:10) maintains that HE management can be the formal- or informal exercise of authority under laws, policies, and rules that articulate the rights and responsibilities of various actors, including the rules by which they interact. Today's universities regard policies as a fundamental device in managing higher institutions because policies guide the functions of universities. The policies employed by management at HEIs in Sub-Saharan African universities should derive power from an Act of Parliament (Ogbogu, 2019:34). Parliament makes policies for the smooth operation of higher institutions without interfering in or manipulating the policy contents at universities in their interest. The policies of universities need to emphasise that politicians, government, and external agencies should refrain from intervening in the internal management of higher institutions. Universities need to have full autonomy, and it is essential for university policies to protect academic freedom and the advancement of knowledge and truth (Ogbogu, 2019:34). The ensuing section explains the management functions of a university.

2.12   Managing distance education

Many distance education universities globally have transformed their learning delivery system by employing technology. The transition from traditional distance learning to online learning has created problems for officials coping with the new environment of technology. These problems include a lack of human- and financial resources and skills. Many universities, introducing distance learning, spend a massive amount of money on training officials regarding how to manage the new technical- and administrative aspects of distance courses. This includes the complexity of technology and teaching application software. These aspects are complicated, and officials find it difficult to use. The distance education department at universities conducts workshops and trains officials on new technology. In some universities, they establish a benchmark with other advanced technologies to train officials in technology. One key solution is for distance learning departments to involve many various stakeholders within the universities, such as faculty officials, officials from teaching and learning, and the information technology (IT) department. Universities must also engage learners when developing a new online course or programme. Though technology is challenging, managing officials of distance education can also be stressful.

Furthermore, managing distance education officials are challenging because the systems may change in response to the needs of the clientele. A challenging part is when describing the various roles and expanding competencies of officials in distance education. It can be challenging for officials to handle the pressures of the new environments in distance education. The university must train distance learning officials with management skills to cope with the environments that may arise. Those in distance education may need more skills in working with others not part of distance education, and who may be from various education sectors. The success of a reasonable distance education environment depends on the contribution of all stakeholders. Distance education students' concerns are essential to the university and must be considered.

Universities experience problems when dealing with student support and transforming from a centralised - to a decentralised approach of distance education. Distance education in regional centres needs more management support. Distance students lack support in aspects such as orientation to courses, student materials, and computers attributable to inadequate support from officials. Lockwood (1995:1) maintains that distance students need support, an introduction, and an orientation to distance education courses or programmes. This orientation and support will assist distance students to understand the philosophy of distance education.

Most students need individual support and feedback that relate to their specific and unique concerns. Student support relates to both academic- and non-academic support. Academic support includes feedback tutorials on assignments and tests, and examinations and preparations. Student support

is essential in distance education learning because students residing in remote areas are negatively affected if they do not receive this. Regardless of support contributing to the provision of off-campus support, quality is affected by how the individual delivers lectures. The ensuing section outlines the advantages and disadvantages of distance education.

2.13   Advantages and disadvantages of distance education

Table 2.3 outlines the advantages and disadvantages of distance education at HE institutions.

Table 2.3: Advantages and disadvantages of distance education

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Provides for an increase in access to education for those who otherwise have no other opportunities attributable to work, family or physical limitations	• Leading to isolation and possible non-completion of programme
• Has the potential to equalise access to education	• Lack of seriousness, competition, and learning environment
• Flexible study hours	• Chances of distraction are high
• Self- and community empowerment	• Format and structure of courses not suitable for everyone
• Updates skills and enhances potential	• Lack of Internet availability and affordability
• Provides for a modality of instruction better suited for certain learners	• Quality of faculty is compromised
• Greater flexibility in study location (students can engage with courses from home, work, on-campus or at a library)	• Occasional feelings of isolation, potentially less group support for learners
• Opportunity to develop technical competencies for instructors and learners	• Instructional design for group activities and group interaction more demanding on the instructor
• Allows for the internationalisation of learning opportunities	• Demands considerable efforts to create and maintain the technological infrastructure

• Centralised resources can produce higher quality materials for distribution	• Demands great effort and cost to develop appropriate materials

Source: Barket and Holley (1996:88)

The ensuing section discusses and explains the models of distance education.

2.14   Distance education models

Distance education models are vital for the practice of ODL at HEIs. Universities across the globe have developed various models relevant or applicable to distance education. Distance education models need to be practical or able to solve problems of ODL. Panda (2003:16) maintains that certain theoretical notions and ideas about distance education shape every distance teaching institution. These theoretical notions are transformed into concepts. If these concepts are strong and convincing, they can develop into models. This section explains these models.

2.14.1 Examination preparation model

The examination preparation model is still relevant to many universities globally. Peters (1997:3) maintains that universities at the global level have adopted this model because the examination preparation model is essential and cost-effective. The examination preparation model limits itself to conducting examinations and conferring degrees. In this model, students receive study material from the university after registration. The student must prepare, study, and write the examination. The examination preparation model assists students to apply their knowledge of what they had studied.

Despite the challenges of service provision, the examination model produces graduates. In the same instances, HE institutions experienced challenges of managing distance education activities with the examination preparation model. These challenges included aspects such as material development, qualified tutors, and contact- or block sessions. Contact- or block sessions are practised by most universities across the globe. Universities are finding solutions to these concerns by training, developing, and equipping officials for course design, development, and delivery (Mensah & Owusu-Mensah, 2002:7).

In brief, the examination preparation model can be successful with no teaching activities, but distance education will be more effective if models of distance education can incorporate professors, course development teams, and tutors to teach and support distance students with professional skills. The ensuing section explains the correspondence education model.

2.14.2 Correspondence education model

The correspondence education model is the most widely used and is still applied in many countries. The University of South Africa (UNISA) also used this model. The correspondence education model provides education opportunities to learners from poor backgrounds or to adults who could not afford a full-time residence at an educational institution. University correspondence previously used technology, the printing press, railways, and post to deliver materials to students, but has now developed a new system of delivery for teaching and learning. For example, the Internet is a new system that has made teaching and learning much less stressful.

The correspondence model still applies and has advanced in learning and now uses various technological correspondence, such as online learning, CD-ROMs, videoconferencing, and telematic services, as with the Stellenbosch University (SU). This approach focuses on written instruction with specific interactivity, which includes self-testing and assignments marked by a tutor (Panda, 2003:18). Universities that have adopted the correspondence education model have developed pedagogical approaches at an institution of higher learning, such as virtual instruction. Virtual instruction is when a course is taught either solely online or when components of face-to-face instruction are taught online, such as using a blackboard. The number of HEIs offer distance education programmes has increased significantly in the last two decades, and most countries have seen a growth in distance education enrolments. Peters (1997:6) maintains that universities that offered distance education have had their interest captured by tremendous advances in electronic information and communication media.

In summary, the correspondence education model is relevant in today's universities, despite having a high momentum of online learning. Therefore, universities should still maintain the culture of correspondence learning. The ensuing section explains the group distance education model.

2.14.3 Group distance education model

The group distance education model uses radio and television as a teaching method. Chinese Central Radio and Television University (CCRTU) is the most prominent example, but similar models are also used in Japan and Korea (Peters, 1997:8). The CCRTU became an essential component in China's HE system, covering all urban- and rural areas in China (China Education Daily, 2009:1). In this model, a group of students attending obligatory classes receives lessons, and they follow the explanations of an instructor on television and radio (Panda, 2003:18). The group distance education model is different from the typical traditional classroom because students at remote campuses can listen to radios and televisions to access lessons from tutors. Universities adopted the group distance education model from the two previous models because it promotes modernisation in HE through

live television broadcasting classrooms, multimedia network classrooms, and a multimedia research and development centre. The group distance education model is an essential device in distance education.

The group distance education model is also becoming popular in Southern African universities. For example, the SU distance education department has introduced telematics sessions for some of its post-graduate programmes. Students attend classes at distant locations through its satellite campuses and interact with their lectures. The telematic sessions enhance the virtual mobility of geographically dispersed students to broaden their participation in the academic offering, especially those who want to combine a professional career with further post-graduate studies to maximise their potential (SU, 2019:1). SU also provides a combination of both printing and telematic sessions to their distance students.

In summary, through analysing this model critically from a students' perspective, it is evident that they appreciate the support provided by their respective universities even though they are taught from a distance. The lectures transmitted through technology are nearly similar to the real campus experience. The ensuing section explains the learner-centred model of distance education.

2.14.4 Learner-centred model of distance education

The learner-centred model of distance education envisages a university or college with the mission to reach out to students who pursue college learning through alternative means to campus-based instruction with a fixed schedule, place, programme, and structure (Panda, 2003:18). Both student and tutor enter a contract based on a proposed plan. The Empire State College of the State University of New York has the longest and most successful experience with this model. Within 26 years, it has produced 30 000 graduates employing a learner-centred model of distance education (Panda, 2003:18).

This model provides the possibility to work in a digitised learning environment, which is a comfortable learning environment because the student can study at their own pace or can return to their schoolwork if they miss classes. The students have access to teaching programmes and databases carrying relevant study information. Whilst studying a subject, they can use CD-ROMs with distance education courses in hypertext form or which contain databases (Peters, 1997:10). One challenge is that it might be costly for universities to acquire resources, such as teaching infrastructure. Some universities have engaged private institutions and government to acquire those resources either through direct funding or public-private partnerships (PPP).

In brief, the model is still relevant and is used by many traditional universities of ODL. The learner-centred model of distance education is the most popular because students can access the university tutorial anywhere. The ensuing section discusses the network-based distance education model.

2.14.5 Network-based distance education model

The network-based distance education model is emerging as part of the digital transformation of universities. It makes it possible to work in a digitised learning environment that profit from a combination and integration of several advanced ICTs. Globally, universities have used web-based technologies (WBTs) such as Moodle, as part of the learning approach. Moodle is an online application used by students to engage with the university, access material online or have online lessons with their tutors. Many universities use the Moodle platform globally, and it became a popular feature in learning because universities can integrate Turnitin in Moodle. Turnitin is software that checks for plagiarism or similarities.

Advanced countries are known for employing this model because the network-based distance education model can attract students from any geographical settings.

Over the last two decades, universities in Europe and America have offered degree programmes that run entirely online or even offline. Students can work offline using CD-ROMs, memory sticks, online materials or books, whilst distance education courses can be in hypertext form and allow students to take part in virtual seminars, workshops, tutorials, counselling meetings, and chats with their fellow students (Panda, 2003:20). The CD-ROMs, radio, and television have now been replaced by Moodle, videoconferencing, and other online learning platforms. Subsequently, some universities are planning to do away with the print-based mode of delivery and use online learning because it is a friendly user environment for both the educator and student. This model has a high degree of openness, and students everywhere in the world can use distance teaching systems at the same time.

In brief, universities may give preferences to this model because it incorporates online learning such as Moodle, and students can communicate with tutors daily. Universities that have advanced ICT infrastructures offer fully-fledged online programmes.

2.14.6 Technology extended classroom-teaching model

This model, developed in the United States of America (USA), became essential over the past years and is still popular today. The model works in the following way: one teacher usually teaches a college class (or a studio class), and his or her presentation or instruction is transmitted to two or more additional classes by cable or satellite television or with the assistance of a videoconferencing

system. (Keegan, 1995:108). The teacher's presentation is usually done live, meaning that if students are not in class during that specific time, they will lose the lesson. Teleconferencing is one of the most popular forms of delivery in today's universities, and HE institutions have merged with telecommunications companies to provide these services. Some universities have signed a memorandum of agreement with private companies to assist with teleconferencing. The model also brings inconvenience to students. In some locations, the reception can also fail attributable to poor networks and students in some areas might be affected or even waste money as they have travelled to those destinations.

In conclusion, the model is essential because universities can now offer classes to both undergraduate- and post-graduate students. Though the model is not widely practised, universities may introduce this model in distance education to deliver graduate programmes.

2.15 Distance education pedagogy and epistemology

Distance education is growing to meet the needs of traditional and non-traditional students. With print-based and Internet technologies offerings, reaching to urban and rural students. The connotation between the researcher and the subject studied is (epistemology) which advocates familiarity in obtaining information and data. The ensuing section detail the aspects of pedagogy and epistemology.

2.15.1 Pedagogy

To understand the purpose of pedagogic, it is vital to look at an interaction on the efficacy of distance learning practices. Institutions are turning the approach of learning and pedagogy to self-learning. The pedagogy in distance HE depends on theories that help to explain the functioning of faculty and institutions. Each theory of learning leads to the adoption of a specific teaching and learning process.

The rationale of pedagogy evolved from print-based instruction to technology. The relative longevity of electronic technologies also means that the pedagogical underpinnings of the use of such technologies have been around for a whilst (McContha, Penny, Schugar and Bolton, 2014:23). Numerous academic faculties have received training in the use of electronic technologies the younger ones at colleges and universities, the others by in-service training. As technologies, evolved institutions and universities invest enormous funds in training and capacity-building programmes. Enhancing capacity-building programmes in technologies at those institutions is essential because it builds a good society. Scholars maintain that pedagogy is the driver whilst technology is the accelerator.

Technology became an essential device in pedagogy. Subsequently, technology in teaching is increasing day by day with the introduction of web 3.0 technologies. Web 3.0 includes all aspects of social media that became a common device in distance learning. At the same time, some schools and universities in the developing world are encountered with challenges of affording advanced technologies in learning. These aspects can be solved were institutions can benchmark with those of developed countries. The ensuing section will discuss evidenced-based pedagogies, which includes:

- Pre-Lecture resources through mobile devices;
- Remote teaching (Implementation);
- iPad as pedagogy (Collaboration); and
- Twitter as pedagogy (Socialisation).

2.15.1.1   Pre-lecture resources through mobile devices

McContha *et al.* (2014:32) maintain that students traditionally enter a general chemistry lab class with uneven preparation from their high school education. Equally, students also have limited knowledge to access library materials. Additionally, it is also rigorous for students to obtain the right information in the library. To offset this disparate starting point for students, professors or academic faculty may develop mobile device- enabled podcasts to reduce cognitive load (McContha *et al.*, 2014:32) as cited in (Seery & Donnelly, 2012). The authors further maintain that podcasts gave students on-demand access to instructions and minimised time spent lecturing in class. Students using podcasts evidenced scores higher marks compared to those of traditional teaching and learning methods.

This teaching method also motivates students to be matured, self-learning and free. This method is not common in third world countries. This situation may be attributed to a lack of funding in higher education institutions (HEI). Whereas, in developed countries, universities provide podcasts devices during the first year of registration. This evidence-based approach to the incorporation of mobility into traditional, blended, and online environments is a strategy that can reduce the cognitive load of working memory of students and in novice learners in a variety of disciplines (McContha *et al.*, 2014:32) as cited in (Seery *et al.*, 2012; Slunt & Giancarolo, 2004). This particular methodology of learning and teaching must be dialogical, affording the opportunity both to discover learning themes and to stimulate students' awareness concerning these themes.

As the world of technology evolved in distance education, other types of mobile devices such as cell phones and notepads were introduced at universities. This methodology became particularly useful since most universities use online and digital learning, especially in the era of Covid-19. Mobile

devices are useful because it assists students to learn at their own pace and time. This teaching method need students to be self-discipline and independent. The ensuing section will discuss remote teaching as pedagogy.

2.15.1.2 Remote teaching (implementation)

Remote teaching for a pedagogy may use mobile devices to deliver course content remotely, without the necessity of face-to-face instructions. Remote teaching borrows the approach of teaching heavily from distance education because students and instructors are not in the same location. In this scenario of teaching, the students may be provided a task such as by conducting and experiments using mobile devices. These mobile devices are aspects, such as podcasting or iPad. Remote teaching is used specifically in a residential teaching or mobile learning extends online context for learning activities for which remote methods provide the best learning outcome for a particular assignment in which class or learning management system. Additionally, students learn better, when they have personal experience with the course material and concrete encounter outside the classroom with which to associate information.

2.15.1.3 IPad as pedagogy (collaboration)

As students increasingly use an iPad as both an educational and social media device, it makes sense to integrate technology into online and residential learning to foster the social presence is essential for meaningful learning. The iPad is also known as one of the fastest-growing technologies in distance education learning. An iPad is a technological device enabling the university academic faculty or administrator to load textbooks and other general information of students', specifically graduate students. The iPad has promoted students' interaction with the learning management system. Students use the iPad to perform all course functions, enabling interactions with peers, faculty, content, and assignment. The advantage of the iPad is that it is cheaper than laptops and desktop computers, whilst being extensively mobile. The iPad is a device that transforms into classroom practice. The iPad can be employed whilst offline because books and other learning materials can be loaded on the device.

With iPads, students can collaborate in the same network but in various locations, by using the Assemble™ app, they can create a collaboration web to share findings and discuss conclusions about diverse perspectives of the same project. Johnson (2011:2) state that, "through iPad phone connection, students can have access to volumes of primary source documents and data to assists on their project in or outside of the classroom". IPads do not have USB ports, disk drives or CDROM/DVD capability; alternative methods for sharing data with other computers and devices over the Internet has been developed. Dropbox allows students to set up a personal account where they

can store iPad created documents, photos, and field notes. Students can also access those documents from any other computer or Internet-capable device (Johnson, 2011:3).

2.15.1.4 *Twitter as pedagogy (socialisation)*

Twitter is an online social networking service and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based messages of up to 140 characters known as tweets. Many scholars globally find it significant that Twitter forms part of the web 3.0 revolution and maybe employ as a learning and teaching device in academia. Subsequently, businesses and public institutions take this form of communication seriously and employ people to study Twitter comments and positively tweet about a product or interaction on a particular topic. Scholars and researchers reveal the potentials for increased participation, engagement, reflection, and collaboration in multiple learning environments (Hamm *et al.,* 2014:9) as cited in (Gao, Luo & Zhang, 2012). The effective use of Twitter in teaching and learning is discussed below:

2.15.1.5 *Real-time online or other setting lecture participation*

A backchannel can be set, which allows a wide-participation, increasing engagement in more traditionally didactic interactions (Hamm *et al*., 2014:7) as cited (Elavsky, *et al*., 2012; Roos, Terras, Warwick, & Welch, 2011). Twitter as a web 3.0 application, incorporated features of learning specifically engagement devices. This is essential because a group of peers or students can learn at their own space when using the application. Conversely, students can share files, such as images or word processor files, using Twitter. Engagement when using this application is highly prioritised. Challenges, such as limited Internet, might occur to some students especially in areas where it is limited or no access to the Internet is experienced. It is imperative that stakeholders in HE, such as government, industries, SOE and private businesses, can jointly seek a normative approach to expand Internet coverage at universities and public schools.

2.15.1.6 *Classroom or learning management system extension*

By using Twitter, class content or discussions can continue outside the normal prescribed time or period. Additionally, any other interested participants may join the conversation to further enrich the discourse and learning. A paramount feature of Twitter is that access to information and content related discussions can be placed on the World Wide Web.

2.15.1.7 *Sustained learning*

Posting content, current events, surrounding subject matter can sustain learning from class-to-class or login to beyond the parameters of the course. Students may also use a practical scenario of tweets comments as part of learning. It is important to mention that NUST may use such application in this

unpreceded time of Covid-19 because the university encountered major challenges to convert into digital or online learning.

2.15.1.8   Assessment

The tutor may tweet exam reviews to an experimental group, offering over certain hours and submit it for assessment. It may be observed that students' grades may significantly be higher in the experimental group compared to those of the control group. This type of assessment is significant because it promotes autonomous amongst students. Tweet assessment can be used as part of students' assessment; this is significant in the sense that universities may also use any other application to assess students.

2.15.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge, the philosophical study of the nature, origin, and scope of knowledge. Many epistemologists take the main lesson of Gettier-style counterexamples to be propositional. The complexity of the distance learning environment must be based on a conceptual framework, using a constructivist element. Critical and social constructivism provides a theoretical basis for cognitive development. Constructivism as a model of instruction can foster apprenticeship-style of learning, engaging the learner with authentic context. The constructivist learning theory assumes that learners construct knowledge as they attempt to make sense of their experiences. Constructivist learning theories are becoming widely accepted in all fields of education, including web-based distance education (Schwier, 2002:5).

Subsequently, ICT can provide an interactive environment that creates "an effective means for implementing constructivist strategies that would be difficult to accomplish in other media" (Driscoll, 1994:395). Constructivism is assessed on how students grasp what they have learned and how they can interlock the goal between theory and practice. How students learn and their ability to construct knowledge has implications for how teachers instruct. The examination of these implications for teaching is necessary for the success of the constructivist learning environment (Schwier, 2002:6).

Epistemology in this study is the subjective beliefs about what information means and how knowing and learning occur specifically in distance education. The fundamental aspects and understanding epistemology are for the teacher or academic lecturer to know that what is taught is essential to students and has positive influences. Epistemology is essential to this study because it shows the relevancy of learning environment and how learners became investigators of knowledge and to reassess what they have learned.

2.16   Chapter summary

The first part of this chapter provides the context and examined challenges affecting governance in HE. The chapter also analyses the significance of sound governance principles in HE. It can be concluded that sound governance principles are essential because they provide the best guidance for managing distance education efficiently and effectively. To improve the quality of governance in HE, universities need to follow and implement essential aspects relating to these models. The literature recommends the technology extended classroom-teaching model to be the most appropriate model of governance to be adopted at universities.

A conceptual framework is provided, based on these themes in the quest to address the research questions. The literature review also describes the challenges of managing universities and how management functions are an essential component in the administration of HE. The chapter introduces the distance education model and theories of pedagogy and epistemology. The subsequent chapter expands on the policy framework of HE in Namibia.

CHAPTER 3: POLICY FRAMEWORK CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION IN NAMIBIA

3.1 Introduction

Globally, universities are encountered with rigid regulatory frameworks, which can cause failure in the governance practices of HE. Rigid regulatory frameworks are made to satisfy the interests of politicians, and this harms the governance of HE. Governance failure in HE may stem from the inability to address essential concerns rather than policies. The failure of policy and governance may also manifest from the failure to cope with longer-term policy problems and instead concentrating on shorter-term concerns and solutions (Peters, 2015:263). The failure of policies can result from various sources and divergent underlying characteristics leading to an incapacity to provide systematic guidance for university governance.

HE policies should provide an inclusive and comprehensive framework for satisfying inadequacies and purposes of multiple stakeholders of HE (Vargas, 2014:91). This means that the distance education policymaking process should include all stakeholders. HEI institutions management ignore others when designing policies for distance education. HE institutions should re-established itself as the centre for knowledge and change societies. Additionally, HEIs should be converted into learning organisations so that they become able to systematise their learning. The knowledge they produce is an essential element to bring about change or the solutions needed by a particular policy object. Additionally, HEIs can learn from other stakeholders, and their practice can produce knowledge that can be used for the betterment and prosperity of the societies in which they operate. The reshaping of policy is a critical method to transform institutions in response to changing situations in communities. Having good policies ensures that development programmes and projects of universities respond to the needs and priorities of local communities.

Changing policies can affect the external environment, and stakeholders are required to act by the statutes, rules, and regulations (SRR) of the university. Aspects of the external environment were discussed in Chapter 2. Officials and management of the university are obligated to comply with the regulatory frameworks governing HE in the country. Importantly, laws and regulations of universities provide an enabling environment for sound governance and clarify roles and responsibilities for stakeholders in HE. HE policies are not different from any other field of public administrative attention.

To cure the shortcomings of some policies, universities should design policies that fit within the context of their operations because changing policies later may impede the success of the university. The amendments of current policies should be substantiated with evidence-based and the need to do so. It is also essential to change policies that have failed and replaced them with new ones.

Successful governance of universities may arise if HEIs adopt appropriate legal frameworks that can be adopted through governance reforms.

Public administration involves formal and informal actors who play an essential role in the management and who implement university procedures (UNESCAP, 2009:1). These actors are officials involved in the decision-making process of a university. They also make, endorse, and recommend various policies to the Council of NUST, especially policies related to distance education learning. Statutes, rules, and guidelines of the university direct the formal- and informal actors, whilst acts regulating universities, give mandatory authority to these actors to make decisions and comply with policies of HE.

Distance education management officials form part of this structure as formal actors, but the Senate approves all activities of distance education. Activities in distance education at NUST, therefore, should comply with the regulatory framework governing the university as specified in the statutes, rules, and guidelines. The focus of this chapter is the distance education policies at NUST, which is known as COLL. COLL is responsible for the management of distance education at NUST. NUST follows a unified model of management that assists the vice chancellor to manage all units and departments at the university to achieve the objectives of the institution. COLL plays an essential role in promoting HE through its delivery system of distance education courses.

This chapter addresses and clarifies the research question that focuses on the legislative framework of the governance of HE. The following acts, policies, and practices are essential to HE governance in the context of NUST and are listed and explained below:

- Contextual background;
- The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, 1990;
- SOE Act, 2006 (No. 2 of 2006);
- HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003);
- National Council of HE Act, 2006 (No. 26 of 2006);
- The Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) Act, 1996 (No. 29 of 1996);
- NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015);
- SRR;
- Distance education practices;
- Structure of NUST;
- Management challenges of ODL;
- Organisational structure;
- Support strategies in distance education;
- The success of distance education students;

- Technology; and
- Quality assurance.

3.2 Contextual background

Namibia University of Science and Technology, formerly known as the PON, has its roots in the establishment of an Academy for Tertiary Education (PON, 2006:2). The Cabinet of Namibia approved the transition of the PON into NUST through an Act of Parliament known as NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015). The vision of NUST, as a premier university of science and technology, is to prepare future leaders. NUST, as a tertiary higher institution that aims to be responsive and meet the needs of students, society, and economy through multiple pathways, such as excellent education, applied research, innovation, and service in collaboration with stakeholders (NUST, 2019:1).

The distance education centre at NUST falls under the office of the Deputy vice chancellor for academic affairs situated in Windhoek. COLL strives to make education more accessible to all Namibians through distance education methods. Most students studying at COLL are public service employees of government ministries who live in Windhoek and towns in the regions. COLL has a director, deputy director, and coordinators and student support officers that manage the day-to-day activities of the centre. Through pedagogic innovation, COLL seeks to be internationally recognised and distinguished in the design and delivery of supported ODL programmes. COLL, as a centre for distance education, is committed to the following objectives:

- Foster collaboration across organisational boundaries;
- Provide intelligent application of technology for a high level of service valued by students;
- Provide appropriate and productive learning and teaching media and support services;
- Provide flexible, student-centred learning experiences;
- Provide programmes that meet individual lifelong learning needs; and
- Enhance the quality of course materials and support services (COLL, 2019:1).

Over the years, COLL has re-established itself as a distance education centre in a position to offer students a quality education on par with full-time courses offered at the campus of NUST. As part of a dedicated face-to-face institution, COLL has positioned itself and gained credibility with students and officials (SAIDE, 1999:2). The number of students who graduate annually substantiates this assertion. Since COLL's establishment in 1994, the centre has increased the number of courses offered through distance learning and has also advanced to online learning. The university has embarked on a strategy that all exit courses should be offered online.

COLL offers courses through distance learning for only two faculties of the university, indicating the 1) Faculty of Human Sciences and 2) Faculty of Management Sciences. The modes of delivery are print-based and e-learning. The print-based learning experience provides a way for students to meet their educational learning goals. During registration, students receive learning materials and tutorial letters to study through distance learning. Additionally, students attend a compulsory vocational school for courses for which they have registered. The vocational school is held in Windhoek at NUST main campus for one week per semester. All students attend courses delivered face-to-face by lecturers. The ensuing section explains the Namibian Constitution of 1990.

3.3 Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, 1990

The Namibian Constitution of 1990 is viewed as a modern fundamental Constitution attributable to its Bill of Rights, separation of powers, and democratic order. The Constitution is the supreme law of the country, which guarantees the rule of law and acts as a normative guideline for citizens, and legislators, the judiciary, and the executive government. Education is a human right, and Chapter Three of the Namibian Constitution makes provision for the right to education and emphasises that everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions, where that education is reasonably practicable (Goitom, 2016:1). Education is one of the critical mechanisms of human rights in Africa, and the Namibian Constitution protects this right in Chapter 3. Conversely, education is a pillar and fundamental principle of human rights and, therefore, it is a necessity that universities and other educational institutions promote this right to education.

All legislative acts that establish public higher institutions in Namibia must receive the consent of the president. The bill or act is passed through the two houses of law (National Council and National Assembly) before the president consents. Once the head of state consents to the bill, it becomes a law and is thereby ready for implementation. This law represents a dual structure, whereby a Senate of a university, especially in academic matters, is guaranteed by statute, and this balances with the governing authority concerning the finance and management of the university (Knight, 2002:281). The Namibian Government and institutions of higher learning have to build a secure link with stakeholders in education to address problems encountered by society.

Similarly, the relationship between government and HEIs must be conducted in a spirit of mutual responsibility and respect for the academic freedom guaranteed by Article 21(1)(b) of the Namibian Constitution of 1990. This Article states that all persons shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and belief, which includes academic freedom in institutions of higher learning (Coombe, 1993:81). Universities must adopt an effective management system to fulfil the Constitution's recognition of learning in higher institutions as a fundamental right for individuals.

In this context, an effective management system implies that the HE governance is essential as universities need to be run effectively and efficiently and comply with a legal framework that governs the university. The Namibian Constitution has made provision for the establishment of the HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003), and this Act governs all HEIs in Namibia and provides for the establishment, objects, functions, and composition of the National Council for HE, and aims to install better management systems for universities.

The Namibian Constitution of 1990 also makes provision for HE institutions to be legitimate and registered with authorities governing HE. Section 20(4) of the Namibian Constitution makes provision that all persons shall have the right, at their own expense, to establish and maintain private schools, colleges, or other institutions of tertiary education. Institutions of HE must follow the guidelines of policies guiding HE. It is the mandate of authorities responsible for registering institutions of higher learning to comply with the relevant laws of the country, as the Namibian Constitution of 1990 makes provision for such mandates.

The Namibian Constitution of 1990 states that the rationality of colleges or universities should be legitimate, as entrenched in Article 20, Section 4(b), which stipulates that colleges or institutions of tertiary education must register under any law authorising and regulating HE. Article 20 further emphasises that the standards should be maintained by such schools, colleges, or institutions of tertiary education. Furthermore, the Namibian Constitution reiterates that if such institutions fail to comply with relevant implemented laws, these institutions should be deregistered. After discussing the Namibian Constitution of 1990, the ensuing section explains the SOEs Act 2006 (No. 2 of 2006). This Act is relevant to the study as NUST is an SOE.

3.4 State-owned enterprise Governance Act, 2006 (No. 2 of 2006)

The SOEs Governance Act, 2006 (No. 2 of 2006) makes provision for the efficient governance of SOEs and the monitoring of their performances. Additionally, the Act seeks to institutionalise the functioning and restructuring of SOEs in Namibia. The SOEs Governance Act, 2006 (No. 2 of 2006) establishes the SOE's governance Council and defines its powers, duties, and functions. The Act also makes provision for the facilitation of programmes for the training and development of members of the board and management officials. This act defines the process of interaction between the board's members of SOE in Namibia and other statutory structures.

Corruption is a central challenge in many SOEs in Namibia. The government has introduced a new ministry of SOEs as part of government initiatives to establish governance systems for SOEs in an attempt to end maladministration and corruption within SOE institutions. The Ministry of Public Enterprises' governance operates under the new Public Enterprises Governance Act, 2019 (Act No.1

of 2019). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (OECD, 2018a:5) maintains that corruption is the antithesis of good governance and is a direct threat to the purpose of state-owned institutions. Corruption of SOEs causes interference in decision-making, which leads to a deficiency in controls and protection against competing that detracts from learning objectives. Conflict of interest in SOEs in Namibia can lead to the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. NUST is an SOE that has encountered similar concerns in its governance, for example, when the minister or High Education interferes in the recruitment process for an executive manager or vice chancellor. The ensuing section describes and explains the HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003).

3.5 The higher education act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003)

Section 3(b) of the HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003) gives the authority and mandate to the Minister of HE to coordinate the entire HE system. The minister promotes HEIs in the interest of the Namibian people. The minister also provides reports and introduces new policies on HE to Parliament. Section 3(1)(a) of the HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003) determines the national policy on HE and endeavours to secure co-operation in implementing policies by all persons involved in HE. Matengu and Likando (2014:86) propose that the HE Act and HE implemented policies be treated as one component and framework governing HEIs in Namibia. By so doing, they will guide institutions of HE under one policy, thus avoiding duplication of policies, programmes, and competition from both public universities.

3.5.1   Higher education funding in Namibia

The HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003), Section 33(1) states that the minister must determine the terms of allocating funds to public HEIs. These funds are appropriated by Parliament for such a purpose but are subject to the policy. The allocation of funds must be done transparently and be based on reasonable conditions as determined by the minister. The HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003) provides guidelines on the funding of public universities. The Ministry of HE needs to secure enough capital to divert funds to public universities, which universities need to perform their mandate. The ensuing section explains the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE).

3.5.2   National Council for higher education

The HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003), Section 4 states that there should be an NCHE. In the context of Namibia, the NCHE aims to advise the government on concerns of HE. The NCHE also ensures that there is an accountable governance system in HE and that programmes are in line with quality expectations. Additionally, the NCHE assesses the quality of HE academic programmes. These programmes are evaluated according to the NCHE's programme accreditation requirements and endorsed by review panels comprised subject or discipline specialists. The programme accreditation

system aims to safeguard the quality of academic programmes offered at HEIs in Namibia, thereby facilitating the employability of their graduates (NCHE, 2009:6). The HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003) plays an essential role in the management of the NCHE. According to the HE Act 2003 (No. 26 of 2003), the objectives of the NCHE are to:

- Promote the establishment of a coordinated HE system;
- Promote access of students to HEIs;
- Promote quality assurance in HE; and
- Advise on the allocation of money to public HEIs.

Consequently, the NCHE is managed by a secretariat whose functions include the provision of such secretarial- and administrative services and technical assistance as may be required by the NCHE or any committee of the NCHE (Matengu & Likando, 2014:90). Section (7)(1) of the same Act outlines the composition of the NCHE, which should consist of permanent secretaries of the Ministry of HE, Ministry of Finance, and the National Planning Commission.

Section 11 of the Act stipulates that any member appointed concerning Section 7(1)(d) or any alternate member appointed or designated concerning Section 8 hold office for three years from the date of his or her appointment or designation, but may be re-appointed upon the expiry of his or her term of office. The Act also defines the compensation of members of the NCHE.

The HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003), Section 15(1) stipulates that the minister must, with the concurrence of the minister responsible for finance, determine the allowances payable to the members and alternate members of the NCHE, and the members of a committee of the NCHE not in full-time employment of the Namibian Public Service (NPS). These allowances are drawn from money appropriated by Parliament. The ensuing section describes the NQA Act, 1996 (No. 29 of 1996).

3.6 Namibia Qualifications Authority Act, 1996 (No. 29 of 1996)

The Namibian Government foresaw the significant need for a central body to oversee the identification of capabilities needed within an industrial area, and to establish policies and procedures that would lead to the requirement for this knowledge and skills (NQA, 2018:1). Article 56 of the Namibian Constitution gives the mandate to establish the NQA Act, 1996 (No. 29 of 1996). Section 5(1) of the NQA Act, 1996 (No. 29 of 1996) suggests that the affairs of the NQA be managed by a council that determines the policies and procedures of the NQA, and that exercises control over the performance of the functions of the NQA. The NQA aims to promote quality assurance at universities and colleges in Namibia. The NQA also evaluates, registers, and provides accreditation for

institutions of higher learning in Namibia. Higher institution programmes are monitored and authorised by the NQA.

The NQA Act, 1996 (No. 29 of 1996) makes provision for the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The NQF consists of ten levels, each defined by a set of level descriptors. Consequently, the NCHE works together with the NQA to endorse the complete courses taught at all institutions of higher learning in Namibia. Section 4(1) of the Act states that the NQF consists of several fields of learning as determined by the Council, and subfields and domains known as the NQF classification. In Section 3(2), the Act further stipulates that the NQF must consist of qualifications duly recognised by the NQA and that meet its criteria and standards. All qualifications recognised through this system need to be quality assured, which gives students confidence that the course and the university offering the qualification are reviewed continuously to ensure high standards. The NQF is user-friendly and allows international students to easily compare qualifications to plan their education, training, and career progression in Namibia.

Numerous private colleges in the country operate without registering their institutions with the NQA. Therefore, all institutions providing HE should be legal entities that follow the law because this assists the authority governing HE to maintain a high quality of tertiary education institutions and the programmes they offer. Consequently, institutions of HE need to present legal qualifications endorsed by the NQA to the Ministry of Higher Education (MHE). As the Ministry of HE cannot control the number of HEIs established daily, individuals, groups of people or institutions should, therefore, respect and adhere to the legal framework of the NQA.

3.7 Namibia University of Science of Technology Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015)

NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015) outlines the formation of the university and its functions. NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015) guides the activities, procedures, and processes of the university. Whilst it is noticeable that Senate members manage the administration of the university and are answerable to the Council, universities are encountered with the intrusion of political bearers who sometimes undermine the power vested in the Act or policies that govern universities. For instance, politicians create preferences, prejudice, and partisanship within the university environment.

In the same manner, the relationship between the official members and the Council members causes undesirable results harmful to the growth of the university (Tjivikua, 2019:4). The role of the political office bearers (like the minister), Council and Senate members, and officers of the university, should create an inclusive environment that contributes towards creating a contemporary university in a competitive world.

NUST governing structure contains the Council, which is the highest policy-approving body. The Council is the governing body of the university and exercises general oversight over the institution and its affairs. NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015), Section 7(1) stipulates that the Council of the university oversees governance, and general control and executive power of the university and all of its affairs and functions, and the administration of its property. The Council is, therefore, responsible for the entire university governing system. The Council is also responsible for the tertiary education budget. Council shares ultimate and collective responsibility for all the transactions of the university, although they are not engaged in the day-to-day management and operation of the university. Council usually meets with officials, students, and other stakeholders of the university at graduation ceremonies and inaugural lectures. This enables the Council members to meet stakeholders outside of formal meetings. Additionally, Council members avoid conflicts of interest and act in good faith and the best interests of the university.

The Namibian Government may hold the Council accountable because it is the highest decision-making body. The Council reports to the minister on all activities and resolutions taken at meetings. Additionally, the Council is responsible for reporting any deficiencies of academic and administrative activities to the minister. NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015), Section 30(1) states that the Council must furnish a report not later than six months after the end of each academic year to the minister on its activities during the preceding academic year, together with certified copies of its audited financial statements in respect of the academic year. The Senate is also an essential component of the university and reports to the Council on all administrative and academic activities of NUST.

The Senate is responsible for the academic- and administrative affairs of the university and can be compared to a closed governing body as it does not include any member outside of the university system. Additionally, NUST Senate system does not preclude advisory bodies who must play a role in decision-making, such as academic officials, student societies, and the SRC. The structure of the Senate includes the vice chancellor, deputy vice chancellor for academic affairs, and deputy vice chancellor for administration and finance, deputy vice chancellor for innovation and research, and directors and deans from all departments and faculties. Assessment and learning, community engagement, and research are vested in the Senate of the university. Whilst Section 15(2)(c) of NUST states that the Council may appoint two members of the Senate to serve as Council members, Section 15(2)(d) suggests that all academic officials with the rank of full professor need to form part of the Senate.

The Senate makes recommendations to the Council in connection with matters referred to it by the Council or which the Senate considers necessary in the interest of the university. The Senate also submits reports to the Council in connection with the functions of the Senate, as the Council may require and perform other functions from Senate as may be prescribed by statutes. NUST Act, 2015

(No. 7 of 2015), Section 18(1) states that the deputy vice chancellor for academic affairs is responsible for the academic affairs of the university, and serves as the vice chairperson of the Senate. Section 18(2) further states that if the vice chancellor's position becomes vacant, the Senate must elect a vice chairperson from their members who will hold the office for such period as may be prescribed by the statutes. The replacement may happen if the chairperson of the Senate has resigned or his/her term has been terminated. NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015), Section 18(4) states that the Senate must hold at least three meetings in each academic year, of which at least one meeting must be held a semester. The ensuing section describes NUST SRR.

3.7.1 Namibia University of Science of Technology statutes, rules, and regulations

The SRR of NUST was adopted through the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia and all the relevant Acts of Parliament (SRR, 2016:7). SRR is subjects cited in Section 35 of NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015). Importantly, the SRR provides guidelines as to how the institution should function and regulations for the establishment, composition, and terms of reference (TOR) of the standing committees of the Council concerning Section 12 of NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015). Additionally, the SRR provides regulations for the establishment of the membership, and TOR for the establishment of the standing committees of the Senate concerning Section 19 of NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015). The ensuing section outlines the roles, function, and powers of both the Council and the Senate.

3.7.1.1 Council

Membership of the Council is prescribed in Section 7(2) of NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015) and subject to the relevant provisions of any legislation of state-owned- or public enterprises. Without derogation from the general powers and duties conferred to the Council by the Act, the Council is the highest policymaking body for NUST, and its powers and duties are subject to the provisions of the Act and statutes of the university (SRR, 2016:13). The SRR of NUST provides the powers and duties of the Council, which include:

- To appoint, support, and assess the performance of the vice chancellor;
- To appoint the deputy vice chancellors and the registrar;
- To direct and maintain all the affairs, properties, and finances of the university in such manner as it appears expedient, in promoting the aims, objectives and mission of the university;
- Under Section 4(2)(b) of the Act, to commercially develop any discovery, invention, or intellectual property to promote business and innovation and assist the university in the execution of its functions; and
- In consultation with the Senate, to promote research and advancement of knowledge.

3.7.1.2 Senate

Subject to the provisions of Section 15 of NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015) and SRR of NUST, and with the approval of the Council, the Senate may lay down procedures to provide for the effective implementation of its functions and powers under NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015) and SRR (SRR, 2015:13). Without derogation from the preceding sources, the Senate decides and rules on all academic matters and similarly makes provision for:

- Matters relating to teaching, learning, research, service, and academic functions of the university;
- Modes of study, and the requirements and conditions under which students may enrol or engage in activities of the university;
- The formulation, development, and maintenance of academic policies;
- Conducting and supervising examinations, and rules for conducting and supervising examinations;
- Student admission and graduation;
- Assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of courses, academic programmes, and research.
- Reporting to the Council on proposed changes to the SRR about academic matters as stipulated in Section 15(1) of NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015); and
- Appointing individuals or committees to perform duties or assignments as delegated by the Senate without derogating from powers vested in the Senate.

In brief, the above are some of the functions and powers associated with the Council and the Senate of NUST. The ensuing section explicates the policies of distance education in NUST.

3.8 Distance education practices

Open distance learning is one of the most rapidly growing fields of HE and training in Namibia. The distance education practices at COLL comply with laws and policies regulating NUST. NUST's SRR provides guidelines for COLL. COLL still lacks policy documents to guide its operations; however, the distance education policies and procedures conform to the university's SRR and NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015). NUST students who register for distance or online education courses or programmes are regarded as students who participate in academic activities and receive a certificate upon the successful completion of their course or programme. NUST distance education follows all policies relevant to academic administration at COLL. The next sub-sections discuss aspects and policies essential to distance education at NUST, including:

- Quality management (QM) policy;
- Policies on access to students' records;

- ICT use policy;

- Policy on student plagiarism;

- Research policy and procedures;

- Guidelines on academic administration decisions;

- Academic structure and administration;

- COLL personnel; and

- Courses and departments.

3.8.1   Quality management policy

The quality management policy at NUST refers to all processes and systems implemented to advance the achievement of quality in the institution (PON, 2014:2). COLL use a standardised system to manage the quality of programme delivery. This includes a standardised marking system of tests and assignments. This system assists tutors to maintain consistency in the marking of assignments and tests. QM also includes all activities that managers perform to implement institutional quality policy. Additionally, QM policy grants an opportunity to provide the distance education centre with institutional quality compliance and a QM approach to ensure the smooth implementation of a QM framework in distance education at COLL.

The quality framework describes the holistic approach and processes, and related systems and devices that manage and control the quality of distance education centres (PON, 2014:2). QM presents the institution with structures, key features, guidelines, procedures, and roles and responsibilities pertinent to the management of institutional quality. Quality assurance management places a strong emphasis on institutional development by helping the university achieve its objectives for course delivery. QM policy indicates the institutions' commitment to developing and maintaining quality standards. The quality standards at COLL assist to attract more students who take courses through distance education correspondence.

3.8.2   Access to student records policy

Policy on access to student records is part of NUST (SRR). This policy regulates procedures and practices that apply regarding the integrity of student records and their safekeeping as institutional memory. In the case of NUST, this policy applies specifically to the offices of the Registrar, vice chancellor, vice chancellor of academic affairs and research, vice chancellor of finance and administration, bursar, deans, and COLL, and is specifically designated to student support officials. Section 6.1.5(a) of the policy states that Regional Coordinators of COLL are responsible for the creation and duplication of student files at the regional centres throughout Namibia as the first point of contact for distance education students.

Section 6.1.5(b) of the policy states that regional coordinators are accountable for the safekeeping of all student files in filing cabinets and their continuous updating. NUST or COLL also ensure that student information and privacy are protected. In a bid to ensure such sentiments, NUST students use a secure login to access their course information in the programmes or courses for which they are registered. The central administrative system, called the Information Technology Services (ITS), ensures that student details are safe and secure. The policy on access to student records is essential because it disallows the release of educational records, such as examination results, without student consent. The university also informs the students of their rights and those of the university during the registration period. The ensuing section describes the ICT use policy.

3.8.3   Information and communications technology use policy

The ICT policy is part of the SRR of NUST. The purpose of the ICT policy is to outline the sustainable use of university computer equipment and software. The rules protect the university from cyberattacks that may be caused by end-users. The improper use of computer peripherals could expose NUST to risks, including virus attacks, compromise network systems and services or lead to the disclosure of confidential information and legal concerns. Section 3 of NUST ICT policy states that the policy applies to employees, students, contractors, consultants, official guests, and visitors, contract- and part-time officials, and all personnel affiliated with third parties. These are all categorised as users.

Consequently, this policy applies to equipment owned, leased or in use at NUST premises. Similarly, Section 5 of NUST ICT policy provides that any user found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action or termination of employment in the case of employees or expulsion in the case of students. The head or director of the department must initiate a disciplinary hearing for any suspicious actions that may contravene the policy. The distance education centre should disseminate information to its students on the essential aspects of this policy when employing NUST ICT infrastructure, especially to students who reside in the regions. The ensuing section explains the policy on student plagiarism.

3.8.4   Student plagiarism policy

NUST subscribes to the universal principles of academic honesty and integrity. The university strives to be one of the top universities of science and technology in Africa and to achieve this goal, NUST needs to make credible and innovative contributions in teaching, learning, research, and community engagement. HEIs should ensure that all academic activities are underpinned by honesty and integrity. Despite these goals, dishonesty in academic activities may occur from time to time. Policy on student plagiarism states that the purpose of this policy is to define plagiarism clearly and to

declare such conduct as undesirable and unacceptable. The policy provides a set of processes and procedures that both deals with transgressions and encourages the development of skills and knowledge to prevent such transgressions. It also assigns responsibilities of various role-players for identifying, acting upon, and managing plagiarism.

NUST has introduced the Turnitin application to university officials and students, which assists to eliminate dishonesty and lack of integrity. This application software checks the similarity of student assignments with other, existing texts. The university still needs to formulate a policy for Turnitin software implementation. Distance students must submit their assignments employing the Turnitin application. Section 5 of the Plagiarism Policy expresses that "all students of NUST commit themselves to and abide by the policies and rules of the institution". The core activity of the university is learning and, in this respect, academic honesty and integrity are paramount to ensure that such learning is valid, reliable, and credible. The ensuing section explains the guidelines on academic administration decisions.

3.8.5   Academic administration decisions guidelines

The guidelines on academic administration decisions assist Deans and Heads of Departments (HODs) to effectively make decisions on aspects transferred from the office of the registrar concerning the delegations authority framework. The delegation's authority framework deals with the admission of students and all academic administrative matters that may derive from the office of the registrar. Academic administration includes aspects such as processing and approval of marks by the HODs and the Board of Studies Executive Committee (BOSEC). The approval of marks also includes those of distance education students. The marks are approved employing digital software. The system converts the marks into a final mark, and the BOSEC endorses this before released to students. The marks and all examination-related activities are administered by the examination department, which falls under the office of the registrar.

3.9 Organisational structure

Figure 3.1 (see) depicts the organogram of NUST. COLL, as a department of distance education, falls under the office of the deputy vice chancellor for academic affairs and research (DVCAAR). The director of COLL reports to the office of the deputy vice chancellor for academic affairs and research. The deputy director of COLL serves as a member on various committees of the university and reports all activities to the director.

Additionally, the director of COLL serves as a Senate member and reports to the vice chancellor on concerns surrounding distance education. COLL consists of three sections, indicating 1) courseware development, 2) student support, and 3) administrative support. The three coordinators of COLL at

the main campus and regional centres are the driving force behind the success of the department and report directly to the deputy director of COLL. The ensuing section discusses COLL personnel.
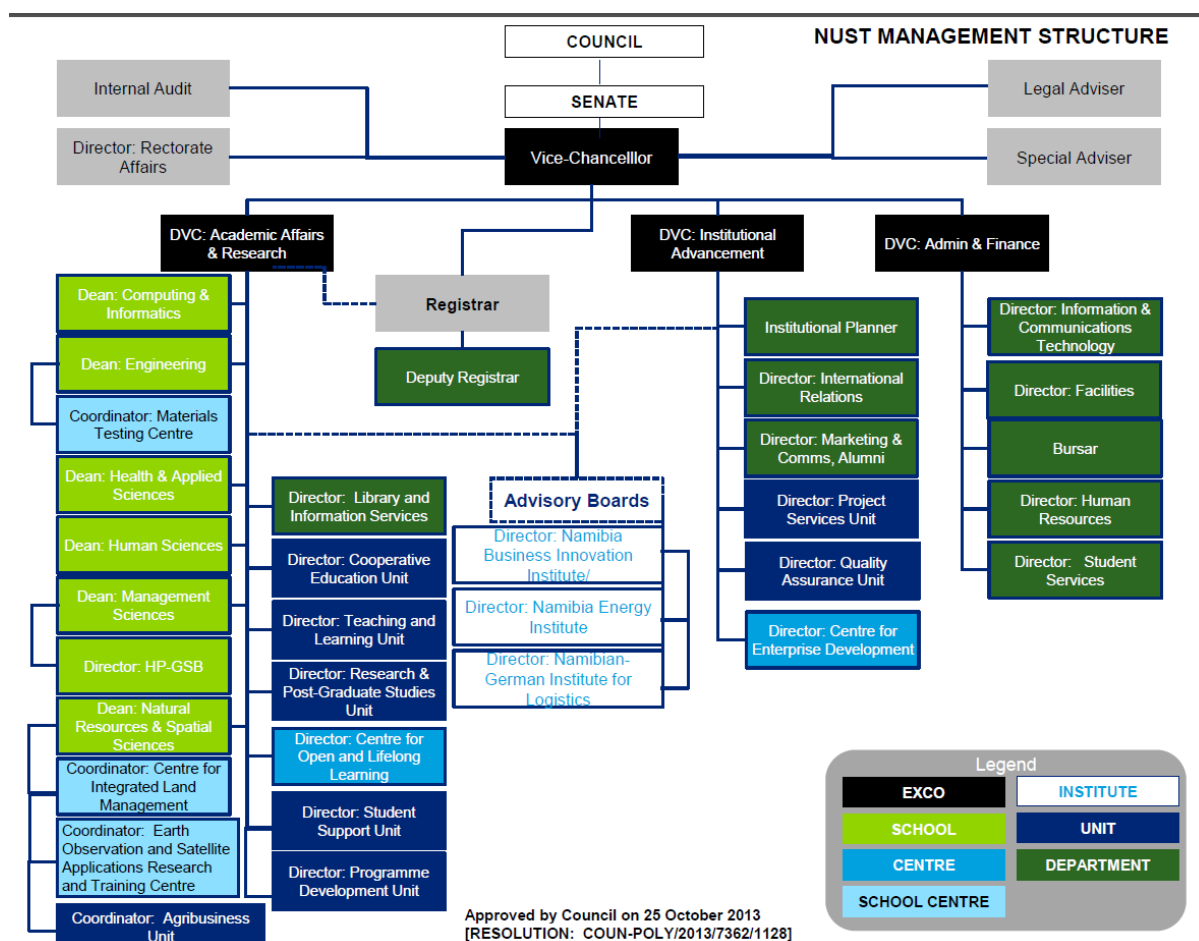
Figure 3.1: Namibia University of Science and Technology management structure

Source: NUST (2013:1).

3.9.1   Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning personnel

COLL has 35 officials in total who coordinate and administer the distance education activities. Figure 3.2 graphically depicts that there are five students support officers and seven regional coordinators within COLL. Additionally, this includes 14 officials who administer the centre's activities in the regions, whilst the other 16 officials reside in Windhoek at NUST main campus. The numbers next to the title portfolio depict the number of officials in that position. COLL has experienced a concern with staff retention in the last five years, though the cause is unknown. Before performing their duties at COLL, officials receive induction training focusing on their job requirements. The training allows employees to acquire the necessary competencies and skills. Employees at NUST must go through a probation period of 12 months, and supervisors of those officials must submit a report to Council

for their appointment. NUST supports officials in their professional- and personal development, enabling officials to qualify for further advancement.
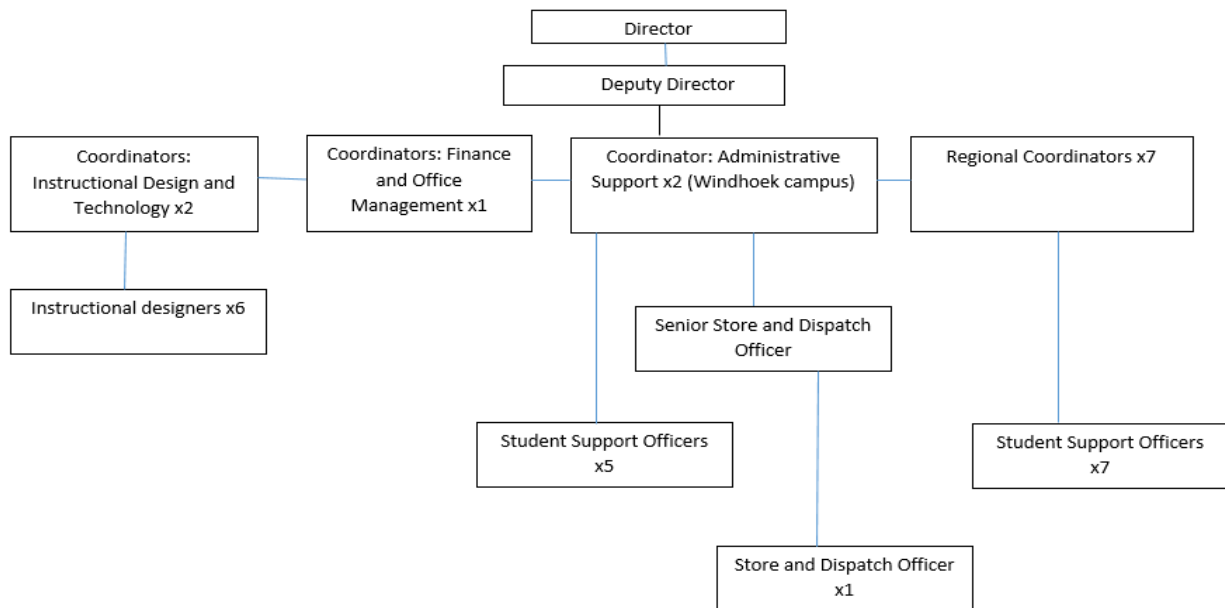
Figure 3.2: Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning organogram

Source: Author Own's Work (2019)

3.9.2   Courses and departments

COLL provides courses in distance education for two faculties, indicating Human Sciences and Management Sciences. Both faculties offer full programmes through distance education (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Course delivery structure

Faculty	Departments	Courses/Programmes
Human Sciences	Public Management	Bachelor of Public Management Bachelor of English
	Communication	Bachelor of Communication English Communication Service Courses
	Education and Languages	Foreign Languages Technical and Vocational Education Diploma in Vocational Education and Training: Trainer
Management Sciences	Economics	Bachelor of Economics Bachelor of Technology in Economics
	Hospitality and Tourism Management	Bachelor of Hospitality Management Bachelor of Travel and Tourism Management
	Office Management Technology	Bachelor of Office Management and Technology
	Human Resources Management, Accounting and Finance and Marketing and Transport and Logistics	Bachelor of Human Resources Management Bachelor of Accounting (Revised) Bachelor of Accounting (General) Bachelor of Technology in Accounting and Finance Bachelor of Marketing Bachelor of Marketing Honours Bachelor of Human Resources Management Bachelor of Human Resources Management Honours Bachelor of Transport Management Bachelor of Logistics and Supply Chain Management

Source: COLL (2019:1)

3.10   Open distance learning management challenges

Good management practices are essential for the successful implementation of distance education programmes. COLL is encountered with several management concerns. One of the overriding concerns is that cumbersome workload pressures officials. Pressure may also arise from the flexible teaching and learning context managed by those responsible for administering HEIs (King, 2001:48). The above has led COLL to encounter personnel retention problems because employees prefer to work in a department with a lighter workload. As a result, officials of COLL opt for jobs within NUST in other departments or at sister universities such as the UNAM. This has been ongoing for several years, and management of COLL has found it challenging to retain employees attributable to the technical nature of its positions. Coordinators spend an enormous amount of time training new officials who later exit the department. COLL should enhance its resource pool by employing more officials to solve the concern of retention. The ensuing section discusses the administration of distance education.

3.11   Distance education administration

Administrators, managers, and academics do administration in distance education. Distance education administrators and coordinators are complacent in fulfilling the demands of the current education milieu (Hashim, Kayode & Hassan, 2015:479). The administration is a substantial component in distance education, without which management cannot operate. Administration ensures the effective and efficient performance of all departments at HEIs, with support officials acting as the link between the executive and stakeholders. Keyter (2002:105) maintains that support involves those processes that recruit students and support them in their learning. Whilst academics assess the extent to which students have learned, administrators are at the forefront in promoting and overseeing all distance learning activities.

NUST distance education managers or support staff are responsible for making decisions and finding solutions to concerns raised by students and academic faculties, whilst administrators of COLL promote useful learning, communication, and interaction between students and academic faculties. Administrators at COLL ensure that printed- and online materials are available to both students and marker tutors. Training became an essential aspect of distance education, and administrators at COLL provide training to all distance education academics at the beginning of every academic year. Training workshops are offered to guide academics on how to use COLL materials and online learning.

Hashim *et al.* (2015:481) maintain that since most academics have no prior experience in teaching and managing communication in learning at a distance, semester- or occasional training may provide

them with the skills required to teach online or teach distance courses. The type of training includes aspects such as understanding the online application, student engagement, and how to assess the student through e-learning courses. Marker tutors or academics at COLL are also responsible for writing up study materials used by distance students. Additionally, training is also provided on how to study materials should be developed. COLL instructional designers ensure that study materials are updated regularly to keep up with the latest content of courses offered through distance learning.

The management of NUST ensures, evaluates, and monitors study materials of both print-based and online learning. The policy of NUST stipulates that materials for distance education should be updated after three years of development. Delays in the development of materials are established. COLL has worked on a mechanism to mitigate such challenges. The mitigation process is that more than two writers are assigned to work on one piece of study material. Student support is decentralised in all regions.

COLL has appointed student support officers at all ten regional centres. Students can contact student support officials with any related administrative matters. Administrative queries include study materials or assignment tutorial letters that have not been received. COLL student support officers disseminate most of the information, such as tutorial letters, distance manuals, and tutor information to students. The diverse contributions that conform to student support services in open- and distance-, and flexible education share two common ideas, indicating 1) the evolution towards the integration of support services with teaching, and 2) the possibilities that technology provides in support of students, aimed at both general- and specific needs (Gil-Jaurena, 2014:4).

COLL is still encountered with the absence of efficacy of administrative support. Whilst distance learning is not a new or insignificant practice, research into the efficacy of distance learning is still an emerging field. Nevertheless, distance learning has continued to appear encouraging when examining best practices for designing distance courses, recommending student engagement strategies, and optimal methods for instructor presence and facilitation globally (Dixson, 2015:115). The urgency of distance learning efficacy at NUST is based on two critical factors: the rapid growth of the student population and a lack of quality and quantity of teachers (Al-Asmari & Rabb Khan, 2014). Such factors put pressure on the current infrastructure of the university. This situation needs to be addressed, particularly if NUST wants to be included in providing education to both rural- and urban area students.

3.11.1 Support strategies

Students in the regions may not be in the same advantageous position as the full-time students on campus who can attend classes at the university. COLL student support system deals with all the

administrative concerns of distance students. Most distance education institutions lack support mechanisms for academics and students. Regional centres are the interface between students and the university at the grassroots level because learners get opportunities not only to interact with academics and peers for resolving their academic queries but also to administrative- and academic support.

There are challenges in the distribution of material to students, especially during the beginning of the academic year. Students often complain about materials that arrive late. There have been delays in dispersing material to students on time, often caused by poor planning of administrative activities because COLL, especially from the aspect of material distribution, fails to plan ahead of the academic calendar year. These delays may also be caused by academics who fail to submit study materials on time or some writers assigned to write study materials for distance students resigning close to the commencement of the new semester. Management of COLL should hold officials accountable and report such challenges to the higher authority of NUST.

Regional centres of COLL are also encountered with the problem of material distribution. Distance education centres provide administrative- and logistical support and access to computers and online materials, including libraries (Van Staden, 2012:30). COLL centres are stationed across the 13 regions of the country and experience diverse problems as far as material distribution is concerned. Centres require that materials arrive before registration starts. Some centres have also experienced growth concerning distance education enrolment, which has put pressure on their services. These services can be inadequate because, at most centres, the computer labs only accommodate a limited number of students. NUST should demonstrate how it plans to maintain the growth of enrolment for distance education and improve the quality of services and material distribution.

NUST should introduce mechanics to establish how the distance education centre will control materials distributed to regional centres. Resource materials put NUST distance education centres at risk because students might lose trust in the administration system of NUST, and then instead opt for another institution of higher learning that provides a similar service. COLL also experiences concerns on student assessments.

There has been a clamour for fundamental rethinking on how COLL students should be assessed. The assessment depends on the course curriculum, and there is an imbalance regarding how distance education courses are assessed. The imbalance includes courses with the same credits assessed differently. Tutors are concerned with the standardisation of marking, and COLL must understand that if there is a lack of uniformity in the marking of student assessments, it will compromise the quality of programmes offered through distance learning. Students have a right to have their assignments reasonably assessed. The ensuing section describes marker tutor support.

3.11.2 Marker tutor support

Marker tutors are academics used in distance education. These academics are appointed on a contract basis to provide academic support to distance students. Marker tutors, known as academics, are appointed to evaluate assignments and provide feedback to students. NUST management provided authority to faculty deans to scrutinise the workload of academics marker tutors at COLL because academic officials are overloaded with COLL part-time contracts.

Once they are overloaded with too many contracts at COLL, the quality of their initial work is compromised. Marker tutors are the pillars of distance education, especially in the context of NUST. Other roles played by marker tutors include the setting up of examination papers and marking of exam scripts of distance education students. These challenges include aspects such as, limited timeframes, which they must mark and return distance education assignments or test scripts. Marker tutors receive information about the courses, their roles, and responsibilities. Support officials ensure that marker tutor contracts are available and signed and that they receive remuneration for their work completed on time without any delays.

COLL may use any person who meets academic requirements to write study materials, and not necessarily the academics of NUST or those responsible for the creation of distance education courses. COLL should plan before the commencement of the new semester as material development has many stages, including finding writers, instructional design, editing, and quality assurance. A lack of academic support in distance education learning became an administrative concern.

3.11.3 Student support

Gil-Jauren (2014:3) maintains that distance education is expanding globally, and it is vital to explore how students learn and which institutions should provide support services. Distance learning universities have initiated student support systems in a quest to motivate student learning environments. This support system includes developmental- and problem-solving support systems. Many global scholars have paid attention to teaching and academic support, whilst less attention has been paid to student support, which is a complex concern. Distance students' needs all the support in distance learning to keep themselves involved and motivated. These encourage students to study hard and graduate. COLL student support assists students to develop a more effective learning environment or addresses student problems, which may inhibit their study progress (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Developmental and problem-solving support

Developmental support	Problem-solving support
Course choice advice	Solving problems with the student's institution
Career advice	Overcoming study problems, such as stress or loss of concentration
Assist with skills and development	Sorting out personal problems affecting study
Identifying and reinforcing motivation	Student dropout support
Post-graduate student support	Student retention support system

Source: Simpson (2015:4)

NUST distance education provides both developmental- and problem-solving support systems to its students. At the beginning of every academic year, distance education students receive induction training on the type of support services that COLL provides. Additionally, a student residing in Windhoek or in towns where regional centres have been established can visit COLL offices. Simpson (2015:5) maintains that a distance education support system involves the aspects stated in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3: Support 'with the student' and 'for the student'

	Informing	Advising	Exploring
With a student	Giving appropriate information	Suggesting the best way forward from a choice of options	Assisting students to decide for themselves
	Action	Advocacy	Agitation
For a student	Practising actions to assist students, such as seeking a funding mechanism	Making a particular case for the student or providing exceptional treatment	Changing the institution culture to assist students more effectively

Source: Simpson (2015:5)

The theory of Simpson (2015) is relevant in the quest for creating a conducive environment of learning. Advising students to solve problems for themselves is one of the fundamental approaches to encouraging students to take ownership of their studies. During the orientation sessions, NUST officials much advocate that students should take their studies seriously.

3.11.3.1 Distance students' disadvantages

NUST registers more than 13 000 students per academic year; close to 4 000 of these may come from the centres of COLL. Some students drop out of the university during their first year of registration attributable to social- and economic factors. Arko-Achemfuor (2017:659), maintains that the high dropout and low graduation rates are a disservice to the world of distance education. These factors are caused by a lack of resources and poor Internet infrastructure. Arko-Achemfuor (2017:659) maintains that institutions may appear to have resources or support systems implemented but some disadvantaged students, especially those from rural areas, find it difficult to access such services because of their distance from the main campus and lack of Internet services in their constituencies.

3.12   Regional centre concerns

Students in some regions do not acquire tertiary education after matriculation because of the absence of HE in regions outside Windhoek. COLL decentralised some of its distance programmes through regional centres in Namibia. Subsequently, regional centres are encountered with challenges, such as delayed logistics from the main centre in Windhoek and student facilities. Delayed logistics include student availability of materials and tutorial letters. In an increasingly competitive HE market, NUST should ensure that they are responding to the demands and needs of students as best they can by using regional centres as agents for such a mandate. COLL should play an important role in achieving the strategic plan of NUST as envisaged. The strategic plan is a vital instrument for developing and directing the activities and priorities of the university. COLL, as a subunit of NUST, needs to realign its mandate with the institution's strategic plan. All regional centres of COLL should play a decisive role in achieving COLL and NUST mandate.

COLL established more than ten regional centres nationally. These centres need resources, funding, and effective management. Möwes (2010:3) maintains that COLL's resources have grown with the establishment of the ten regional centres across the country, wherein ODL students are provided with a full range of administrative- and academic support services. The regional centres are equipped with wireless Internet connectivity, computers, library books, online library facilities, direct access to online journals, conducive study facilities, and examination halls (Möwes, 2010:3). The author further claims that Namibian regional centres are equipped with a good level of resources and modern facilities. COLL has made provision for students to visit the main campus and have access to all support services (Möwes, 2010:3).

Officials at regional centres encounter challenges in administering activities because only two officials are assigned per regional centre. During induction and orientation sessions, officials share

the vision of COLL with current and prospective students. Since there is a high dropout rate of students or they fail to complete studies on time, officials encourage students to form peer relationships with other students and to study together because this greatly contributes to individual success.

Regional centres are also encountered with institutional challenges, such as delays in dispatching study materials to students, and the management of administrative activities. The difficulty facing administrative services includes poor responsiveness from headquarter administrative officials and the lack of prompt technical assistance support, be this for computer systems, telephone and/or the Internet. NUST needs to develop a network that will link the headquarters in Windhoek with other regional centres in Namibia. This will enable the centres to respond promptly to students when they need services. Networking will also complement administrative and academic support services to ensure student success (Möwes, 2010:3).

3.13 Course completion success

Many students attending courses through distance education fail to complete their studies on time because of various factors. These factors include economic- and social factors. The economic factors are aspects, such as unemployment or the inability to pay their tuition fees. The social factors may include family problems that prevent students from completing their course successfully. Some students are the sole breadwinner in their family, and this responsibility can hinder the progress of their studies. The following are essential to student success:

- **Academics:** COLL academic officials should play an important role in the success of its students. Their role is to mentor and motivate students to succeed during their studies. Many students fail because some academics do not provide the necessary support to students. Some academics opt to pay full attention to their work and neglect distance students. The success of distance students depends on the convergence and integration of support systems.
- **Support:** Students support is essential because some students never attended a full-time course during their time at the university. Students need all the support from administrators, academics, and senior students who have been in the system for a few years. Senior students understand the challenges they are going through and stand in a better position to advocate such dilemmas to junior students. The support system applies to all distance education students at NUST.
- **Distribution:** The distribution of resources or study materials are essential to distance students. Student success is, amongst others, determined by the type of learning and study material received at the beginning of annually. The content of the study material is linked to the courses they have registered for. Study material needs to be prepared on time and is distributed to regional centres before each semester commences.

3.14   Technology

Universities globally are encountered with the problem of successfully managing the learning environment of distance education. COLL at NUST shows that ODL can provide a flexible and effective learning atmosphere. Distance learning administration is much dependent on technology and learning management systems (LMSs), also known as course management systems. An LMS has been transformed into application software, which can be applied to a range of concerns relating to the control and management of distance learning. COLL employs e-learning application software that assists the centres to run the necessary administrative activities. The application software is convenient and user-friendly. Students can use some of the university software to access documents, such as examination results, timetables, and academic records.

The management of distance education has improved COLL's technology utilisation because assignments can be submitted online, and officials can use Turnitin software to check for plagiarism. ODL presents new challenges in ICT, especially in developing countries. Maxwell *et al.* (2008:60), asserts that technical competence is needed to have adequate access to contemporary ICT. This is a challenge for distance learning. The ensuing section examines quality assurance in HE.

3.15   Quality assurance

Quality assurance is an essential element in HEIs. NUST has a quality assurance unit that falls under the office of the vice chancellor. This unit provides capacity-building training programmes on quality assurance-related concerns and assesses programmes submitted for registration with the NQA. Möwes (2010:4) maintains that COLL usually participates in the institutional audit conducted by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council of Higher Education in South Africa (CHESA). The CHESA is mandated to assure quality at tertiary institutions through programme accreditation and institutional audits. The HEQC has commended COLL for its quality instructional materials based on internationally recognised quality criteria and guidelines of the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) (Möwes, 2010:4). All the courses recommended by COLL go through the quality assurance process. This means that all programmes recommended to COLL for distance education are quality assured. Quality assurance is a component of distance education that has always been a concern, especially in the context of distance education and particularly in HE settings. Over the years, NUST has engaged with the NCHE of Namibia and NQA to assess the quality of its programmes, standards of teaching, and availability of resources.

3.16   Chapter summary

The Namibian Constitution was viewed by many as modern concerning promoting human rights to its people, especially the right to education. Universities and other institutions of learning promote the right to education. HE governing universities should be legitimate, and the HE Act, 2003 (No. 26 of 2003) provides the mandate and power for the Minister of HE to control and monitor institutions of higher learning. Namibian public universities have one legal system that will control public HEIs funded by the government.

Universities in Namibia are encountered with the challenge of political office bearers who disrupt the functionality of the university governance, and such involvement undermines the laws and professionalism of the university. It should be noted that the Council is the highest governing body, and it reports directly to the minister on all activities of the university. The minister may hold the Council accountable for any governance-related concerns. The Senate is responsible for the management and administration of the university and reports to the Council on both academic- and administrative activities of NUST. The SRR of NUST provide guidance and derive power from NUST Act, 2015 (No. 7 of 2015). Both the Senate and the Council members must comply with the SRR.

Furthermore, the SRR outlines the function and powers of the Council and the Senate. NUST policies on distance education, as entrenched and stipulated in the SRR, give the mandate to centres and departments of the university to create their policies but should comply with all relevant laws of the university. Succinctly, the institutional policies relevant to NUST distance education include QM policy, policy access to student records, policy on student plagiarism, and guidelines on academic administration decisions.

The chapter explained the management challenges in the delivery of distance education. A lack of policy implementation compromises the provision of quality distance education. The objective of NUST is to focus on applied research and innovation in the quest for a better solution concerning HE in Namibia. COLL, as a centre of distance education, has expanded significantly over the years and provided quality services to its stakeholders. The distance education centre needs better management strategies to manage the centre successfully. The administration of distance education involves the support of students, support strategies, and collaboration with regional centres. Regional centres of COLL are an essential component of NUST distance education. The last part of this chapter focused on the quality assurance of distance education as one of the significant features of distance education. The subsequent chapter focuses on the methodology of questionnaires.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter mainly provides the findings of the study based on the data that were collected from the respondents. The study targeted employees at NUST. In total, there were 80 sampled respondents. Out of 80 questionnaires administered, a total of 41 questionnaires were returned. This translates to a response rate of 51.25% which is within Mugenda and Mugenda (2003)'s prescribed response rate for statistical analysis. In their case, they established a minimum acceptable value of 50%. This commendable response rate was made possible using convenient research procedures, such as the use of e-mails and self-administered questionnaires.

The study employed frequencies (absolute and relative) for single response questions. For multiple response questions, the study employed 4 point Likert scale questions in collecting the data and in the analysis, frequencies and percentages were computed. These were then presented in tables, graphs and charts as appropriate with explanations provided in prose. At the same time, the chapter provides a discussion of the results, which involves comparing the findings of the study with those of previous studies, which have been performed by previous scholars.

4.2 Methodology and instruments

This research employed a descriptive quantitative design that involved data collection using a self-administered survey questionnaire. Additionally, the study employed a non-experimental descriptive strategy. The targeted population of the study consisted of l NUST's population of 800 staff members and 13 000 students in total. A sample size of 81 people was drawn using the following formula.

Table 4.1: Slovene's sampling formula

Slovene's Sampling Formula Sample Size Using 95% Interval		
Formula:	n = N/(1+N(e^2))	
Where:	N =	Population
	n =	Sample Size
Confidence level		95%
Margin of error		5%

	N	13800
	e	0.0025
Sample Size(n)	=	**80**

The sample was spread across COLL centres in the country. COLL centres were purposively chosen considering that they work directly with distance education students at NUST. Respondents were selected through non-probability purposive sampling. The questionnaire was either e-mailed or hand-delivered out to respondents purposively sampled based on their knowledge and expertise and direct involvement in distance education, the topic under investigation. Thereafter, responses were thoroughly analysed using SPSS software by analysing descriptive statistics. This analysis is presented in this chapter.

4.3 Findings based on survey feedback

4.3.1 Demographics

The first section of the questionnaire intended to collect demographic information from the students. The key information collected includes their gender (see Table 4.3), age (see Table 4.4), the number of years they spent at NUST (see Table 4.5), and their regional centres (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.2: Respondents' gender

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Female	18	62.1	62.1	62.1
	Male	11	37.9	37.9	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

The first section of the questionnaire explored some of the demographics of the students. The first one was the gender of the students. Based on the findings of the study, there were more females (62.1%) who participated in this study than males (37.9%) (See Table 4.3).

83
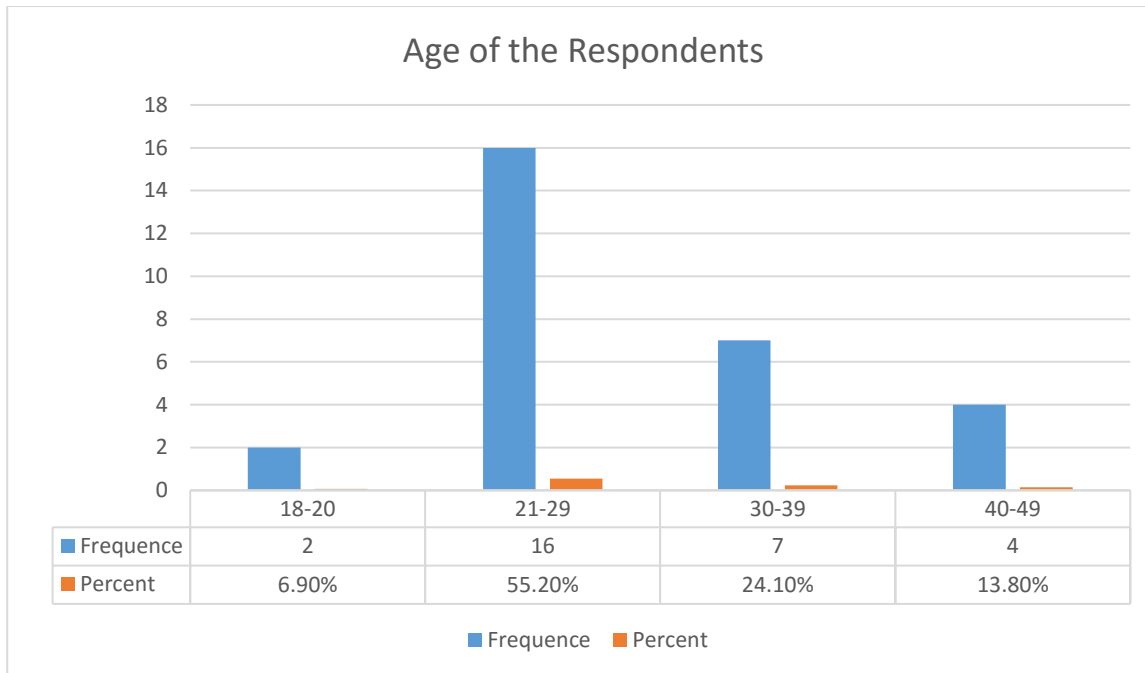
Figure 4.1: Respondents' age

Figure 4.1 indicates that two of the student respondents were between 18 and 20 age group, whereas the majority 16 of the student respondents were between 21 and 29 age group. A total of seven students were in the age range of 30-39 leaving only four students in the range of 40-49. Most of the respondents were between 21 and 29 age group. This statistic suggests that most respondents were mature enough to be to provide a reasonable assessment of governance challenges in distance education.

4.3.2   Number of years at Namibia University of Science and Technology

The study sought to establish the number of years the student respondents had been at the university; the results are presented in Figure 4.2 below.
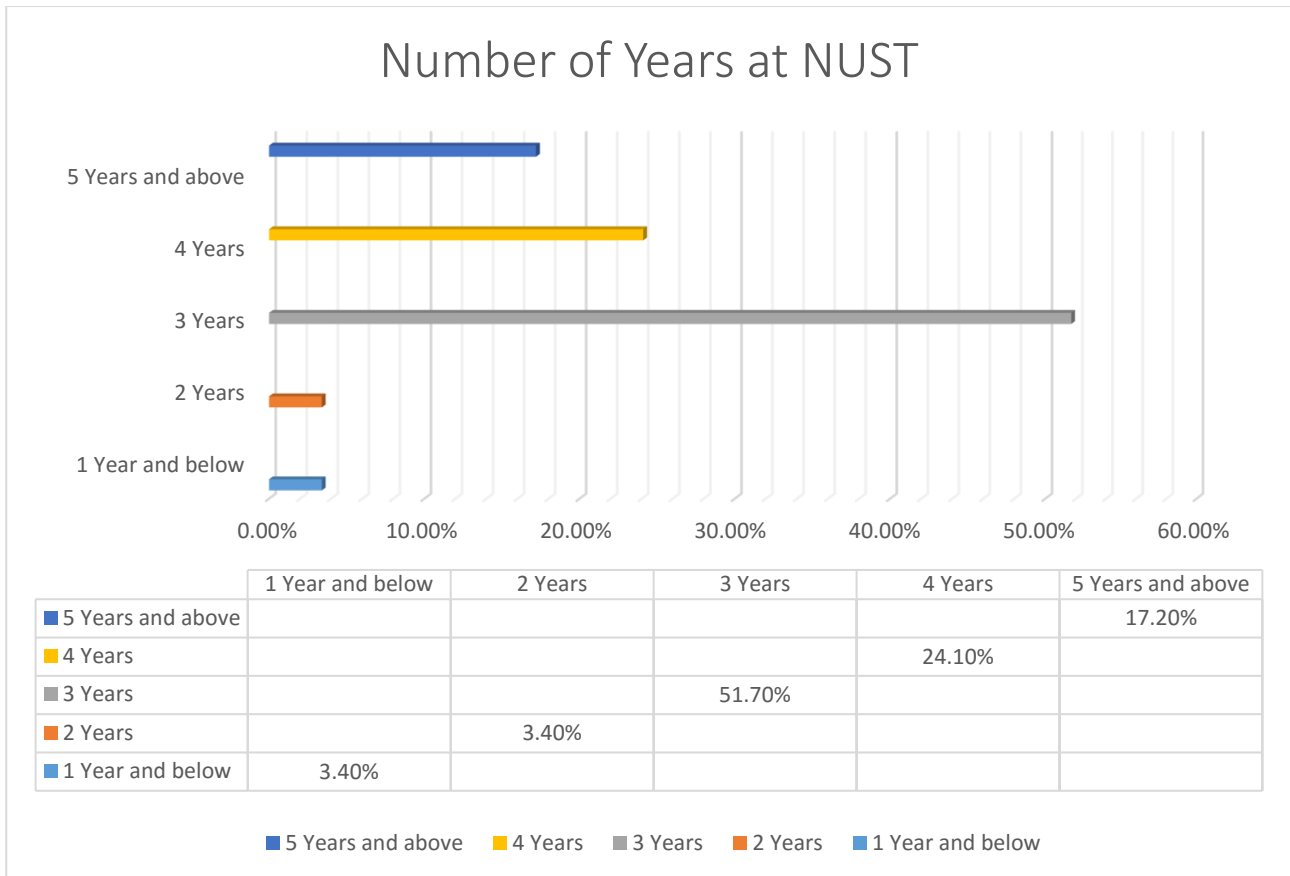
Figure 4.2: Number of years at Namibia University of Science and Technology

The results presented show that 3.4% of the total respondents had been at NUST for no more than one year, whilst another 3.4% had been at NUST for two years. The majority of the respondents, 51.7% indicated that they had been at NUST for three years leaving 24.1% and 17.2% having been at the university for four and five years respectively. This finding is an indication that the majority of the respondents has been at the institution to understand the concerns related to governance at the institution. This finding presented a good opportunity for the researcher to obtain data from the respondents who might have experienced or witnessed governance concerns hence were in a good position to provide a reasonable assessment of governance challenges in distance education.

4.3.3 Regional centres

The study further sought to reveal the distribution of students across NUST centres throughout the country; the results are presented in Figure 4.3 below.
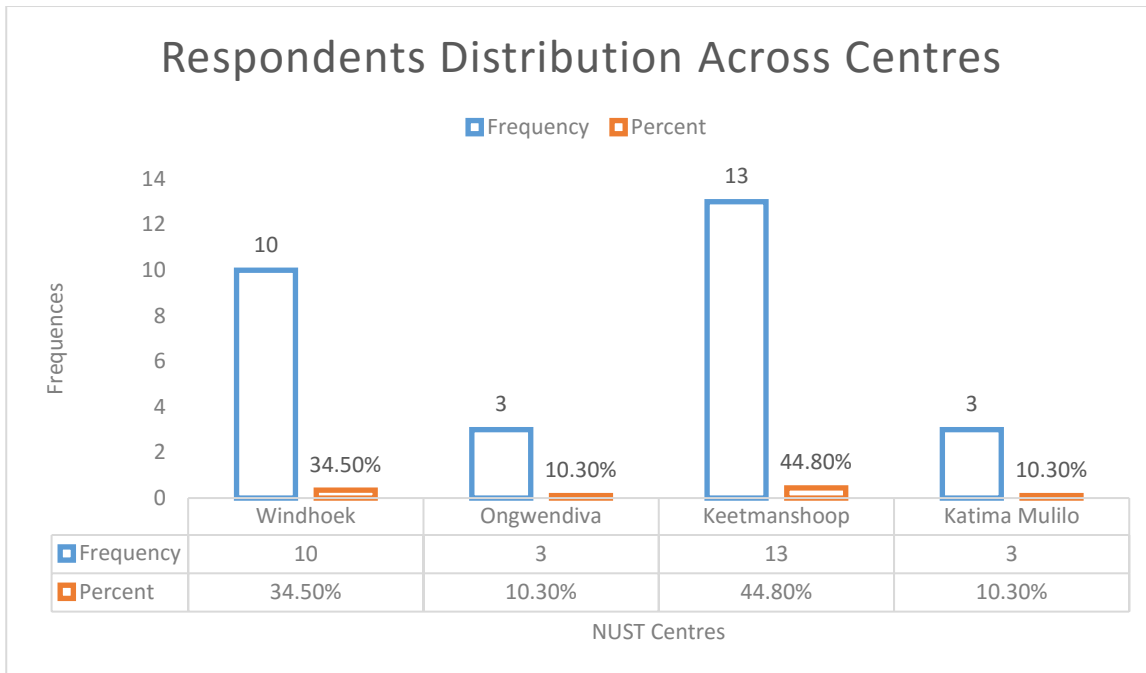
Figure 4.3: Respondents' distribution across centres

The study explored the distribution of student respondents across the country at NUST centres. The study findings reveal that Keetmanshoop had the highest frequency of the 29 students who participated with a frequency of 13 making 44.8% of the 29. This was followed by Windhoek with a total of 10 students who made 34.50%. Ongwediva and Katima Mulilo had three respondents each, contributing a 10.3%. These findings suggest that most of the student respondents were not from Windhoek, where the main campus is situated. Additionally, these findings presented an opportunity to get detailed of the status in the assessment of governance challenges in distance education at NUST.

4.3.4 Perception of student support services

One of the main objectives of this study was to explore the management concerns of distance education in Namibia. To ensure that this objective is addressed, the study explored the perception of student support services. Various questions were posed to explore respondent perceptions of student support services. The findings are presented in Figure 4.3 below, with the mean scores presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.3: Satisfaction with support services

	Mean
Satisfaction with the study materials of COLL	1.28

Satisfaction with the Internet facilities of NUST	1.10
Satisfaction with the infrastructures of NUST distance education centres	2.62
Promptness of feedback about queries concerning material, books and Internet	2.69
Satisfaction with the distribution and delivery of study materials	2.73
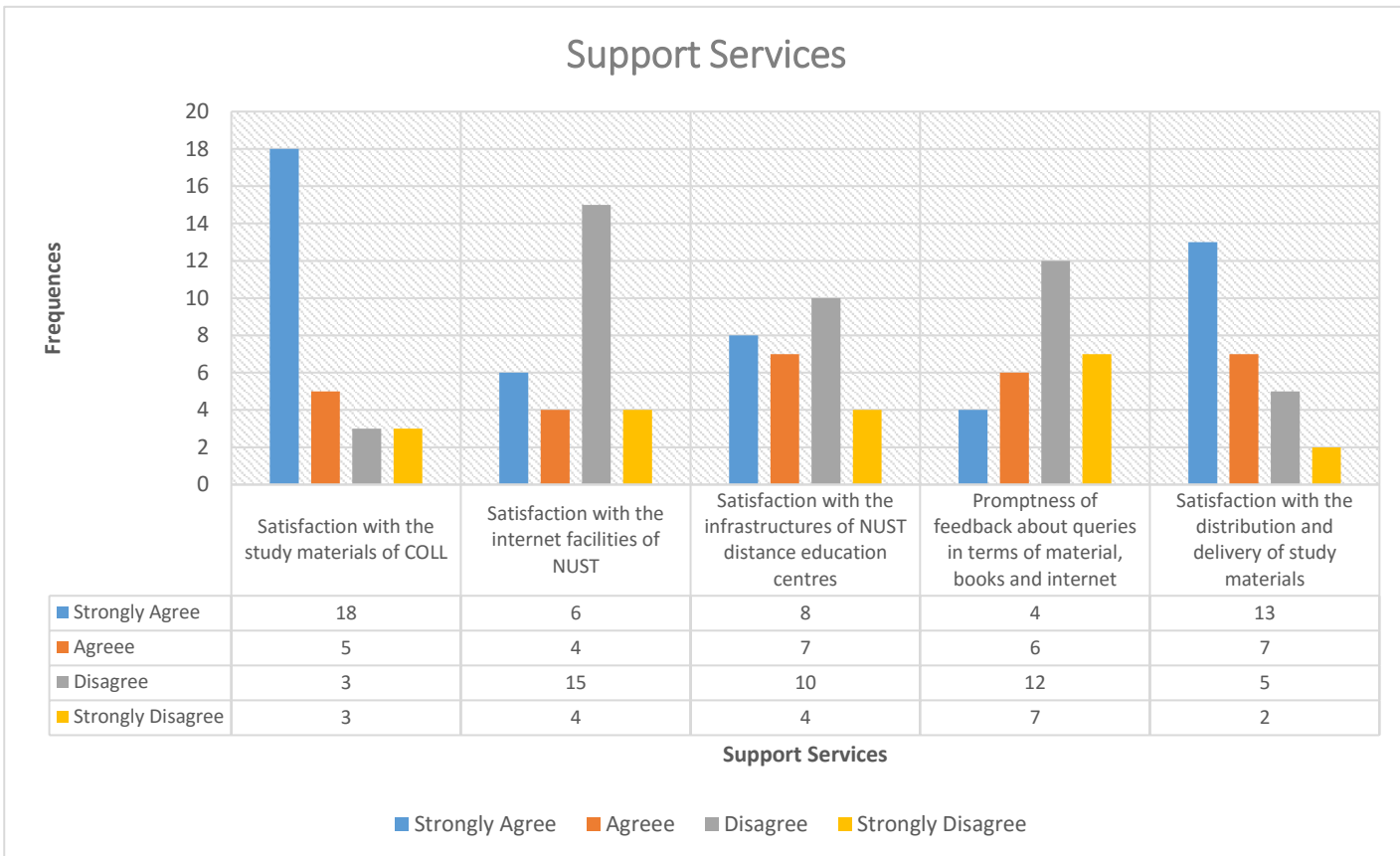
Figure 4.4: Satisfaction with support services

	Satisfaction with the study materials of COLL	Satisfaction with the internet facilities of NUST	Satisfaction with the infrastructures of NUST distance education centres	Promptness of feedback about queries in terms of material, books and internet	Satisfaction with the distribution and delivery of study materials
Strongly Agree	18	6	8	4	13
Agreee	5	4	7	6	7
Disagree	3	15	10	12	5
Strongly Disagree	3	4	4	7	2

Satisfaction with the study materials of COLL: The study established that a total of 18 (62.07%) strongly agreed that indeed they were satisfied with the study materials of COLL. Of the same satisfaction with the study materials of COLL, the study established that 5 (17.25%) of the respondents agreed whilst 3 (10.34%) disagreed and another 3 (10.34%) strongly disagreed that they were satisfied with the study materials of COLL. If 62% of the students strongly agreed with the satisfaction of study material, this depicts that there is a true reflection that COLL manage its logistics or student material in an efficient and effective manner. Institution management and leaders should in this regard ensure that institutional arrangements are implemented to allow NUST distance learning students to get quality education in the same manner as those the full-time students.

Satisfaction with the Internet facilities of NUST: On whether the participating respondents were satisfied with the Internet facilities of NUST, the study found out that 20.69% (6) of the respondents strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the Internet facilities of NUST. Four (13.79%) respondents agreed that indeed they were satisfied with the Internet facilities whilst 15 (51.72%) respondents disagreed of the same. A total of 15 (51.72%) students strongly disagreed that they were satisfied with the Internet facilities, and this results indicates that most of the students are not satisfied with the Internet facilities currently offered.

These findings reflect that the problems of Internet accessibility have a great negative influence on distance learning for many students. For example, a student who uses a centre in Keetmanshoop may not necessarily be staying in Keetmanshoop urban but rather in Tses, which is actually 80kms outside Keetmanshoop. When they travel to use the facilities, they would expect the facilities to be up, running and with speed. If not, many may not be able to submit assignments on time, for example. Further, Keyter (2002:23) suggests that distance education, such as any accepted method of education, is a means by which somebody who desires to learn is involved in some form of communication with someone who can educate. Internet in distance learning is of great importance to necessitate this communication. These results confirm the findings that Internet facilities are of great relevance in facilitating distance learning.

Satisfaction with the infrastructures of NUST distance education centres: The study further established that challenges concerning infrastructure, are a contributing factor to distance learning at NUST. Eight (27.58%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 7 (24.13%) respondents agreed. Meanwhile, 10 (34.48%) disagreed and 4 (13.79%) respondents strongly disagreed that they were satisfied with the infrastructure of NUST distance education centres. The mean score for this aspect was 2.62. This score and findings indicate that the current situation with NUST distance learning centres is indeed not unsatisfactory and therefore needs revisiting. For example, some of these centres are not owned by NUST but rather have been leased to NUST; this slows the development and transformation of these centres into fully-fledged campuses.

Promptness of feedback about queries concerning material, books, and Internet: The study also sought to find out if the students were satisfied with the promptness of feedback about queries concerning material, books and the Internet. The study established that 4 (13.79%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 6 (20.69%) agreed, 12 (41.38%) disagreed and 4 (13.79%) strongly disagreed that there is indeed promptness of feedback about queries concerning material, books, and the Internet. With a mean score of 2.69, this indicates there was a moderate satisfaction amongst students. These results suggest that under the right circumstance, for example, where NUST's policies and management actions regarding distance learning are taken and implemented seriously, promptness in providing feedback to students can be achieved. The advocates of distance

education, moreover, maintain that distance learning is a form decentralising service provision and is there is efficiency, the service delivery improves the allocation of resources, cost recovery, and accountability, and reduces corruption in-service delivery and ultimately positively influences on the governance in distance education (Shomaker, 1998:8).

Satisfaction with the distribution and delivery of study materials: On whether the students are satisfied with distribution and delivery of study materials the study established that 13 (44.83%) strongly agreed, 7 (24.13%) agreed, 5 (17.24%) disagreed whilst 2 (6.90%) strongly disagreed. These findings established a mean score of 2.73, which signalises that there was reasonable satisfaction with the way the study materials were distributed. These findings are attributed to that the study materials are collected at the centres after couriered from the main campus in Windhoek. The various overnight courier services available in the country help facilitate the distribution and delivery of these study materials.

These results confirm that indeed the identified support services (study materials of COLL, Internet facilities of NUST, infrastructures of NUST distance education centres, promptness of feedback about queries concerning material, books and Internet and the distribution and delivery of study materials) influence the governance concerns in distance education at NUST.

4.3.5   The level of satisfaction amongst genders

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine any divergences in the median values of the same item amongst the two genders. Based on the findings of the study, the females were more dissatisfied with various aspects of the distribution of the study materials in comparison to the men. The findings are depicted in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Satisfaction with support services based on gender

Item	Satisfaction with study materials	Mean Rank		Mann-Whitney U	Z-value
		Males	Females		
1	Satisfaction with the study materials of COLL	11.00	21.55	27.000	-4.178
2	Satisfaction with the Internet facilities of NUST	13.50	17.45	72.000	-2.299
3	Satisfaction with the infrastructures of NUST distance education centres	12.28	19.45	50.000	-2.299
4	Promptness of feedback about queries concerning material, books, and the Internet	12.56	19.00	55.000	-2.517
5	Satisfaction with the distribution and delivery of study materials	12.00	19.91	45.000	-2.880

4.3.6   Student perception of the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning management

The study also sought to explore the perception of the students on management at COLL the findings are presented in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: Student perception of management at the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning

	Mean
Satisfaction with COLL engagement and support strategies	2.79
Explanation of NUST policies and regulations regarding studies	3.07
Satisfaction with how concerns concerning distance education students are addressed	2.83
Adequacy of information from COLL about studies at the beginning of each semester or academic year	2.97
Satisfaction with the representation of distance education students in the governance and management structure of NUST	2.72
Satisfaction with the tuition fees imposed on the students	2.21
The flexibility of the off-campus support system to cater to the needs of distance education students at NUST	2.62
The objectivity of the evaluation on the success of distance education courses	2.97

	Satisfaction with the COLL engagement and support strategies	Explanation of the NUST policies and regulations regarding studies	Happy with issues concerning distance education students are addressed	Happy with COLL information at the beginning of every semester or academic year	Satisfaction with the representation of distance education students in the governance and management structure of the NUST	Satisfaction with the tuition fees imposed on the students	Flexibility of the off-campus support system to cater to the needs of distance education students at the NUST	Objectivity of the evaluation on the success of distance education courses
Strongly Agree	18	18	13	12	10	7	9	11
Agree	4	5	6	6	3	6	5	7
Disagree	5	4	9	5	12	13	12	6
Strongly Disagree	4	2	1	6	4	3	3	5

Student Perception on Management at COLL

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

Figure 4.5: Student perception of management at the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning

Satisfaction with COLL engagement and support strategies: The study found out that amongst other many things the students are happy with, is the sufficient and efficient COLL engagement and support strategies in distance education at NUST. About 55.17% (16) which was over half of the respondents strongly agreed, 13.79% (4) indicated that they agreed, 17.24% (5) disagreed whilst another 13.79% (4) strongly disagreed that that indeed they were satisfied with COLL engagement and support strategies. This question scored a mean score of 2.79. These findings are a true reflection on how engagement at support strategies can enhance distance learning, especially in this current Covid19 pandemic period where learning occurred from home attributable to social distancing measures. These findings were consistent with the views of Passos and Nunes (2016:64) who maintained that with growth in the offering of distance education, educational institutions began to view and organise education in new ways and, therefore, seek to identify and develop educational

processes geared to enhance engagement and implementation of support strategies that ensure quality distance education provision and delivery.

Explanation of NUST policies and regulations regarding studies: The study established a mean score of 3.07 and that 62.06% (18) of the respondents strongly agreed, 17.24% (5) respondents agreed, 13.79% (4) disagreed and 6.90% (2) respondents strongly disagreed that they were satisfied with the explanations of NUST policies and regulations regarding studies. These findings prove that the policies and regulations regarding studies are set out clearly and are understood by the students. This is an indication that when policies and regulations are clear governance becomes a transparent stakeholder participatory exercise.

These findings are contrary to reality. For example, on one hand, the concern of situational and social barriers maintained institutional challenges. Students may drop out because they are unable to cover the costs of their education and in many cases this where the signs of a lack of understanding of the policies and regulations regarding studies are noticed. Family responsibilities may also prevent students from actively participating in scheduled weekend workshops for distance learning students. On the side of NUST the challenges that policies and regulations may include but are not limited to: (a) quality assurance plans are often too broad and not favourable to distance learning settings; (b) lecturers have a "passive resistance" to getting involved; (c) some lecturers that facilitate distance learning programmes have not been provided with enough special training on the delivery of ODL practices; (d) time restraints for lecturers appear to be a challenge that ought to be overcome along with the development of a common institutional approach to distance learning; (e) shortage of devices and technologies that enable scalability; (f) lack of financial sustainability models; (g) lack of committed and a qualified cadre of quality assurors and experts with the relevant distance learning qualifications. All these present serious governance challenges.

Satisfaction with how concerns concerning distance education students are addressed: The study revealed that a mean score of 2.83 was scored on this question. A total of 13 (44.883%) respondents strongly agreed that they were satisfied with how concerns concerning distance education students are addressed, 6 (20.96%) respondents were agreed, 9 (31.03%) disagreed whilst 1 (3.45%) respondent strongly disagreed that they were satisfied with how concerns concerning distance education students are addressed. These findings allude to the increasing importance of efficiency in dealing with student matters. The promptness of feedback about queries concerning material, books and Internet to which a significant percentage of 41.38% of the respondents ascertained that they were not satisfied with, (see Figure 4.4) is important for improved governance. Such promptness enables the resolution of queries and giving of feedback which may improve resource allocation; it is a prerequisite for good governance, leading to better decision-making and reduced red tape and bureaucracy; and it may enhance management consensus on difficult trade-offs in the context of

limited resources and multiple demands. Moreover, in modern democracy, the right of students to information on an institutions' activities underpins good governance.

Adequacy of information from COLL about studies at the beginning of each semester or academic year: On the perception of the respondents on whether there is any adequacy of information from COLL about studies at the beginning of each semester or academic year, 12 (41.38%) respondents strongly agreed, 6 (20.69%) respondents agreed, 5 (17.24%) disagreed and 6 (20.69%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. On this perception, a mean score of 2.97 was scored. These findings are a true reflection on NUST today. Naturally, NUST has a natural tendency to give the enrolled students information about studies at the beginning of each semester or academic year without a full reassessment of the current optimality of the information and possible changes and alteration in the near foreseeable future. This norm and the finding on this question demonstrates considerable evidence to suggest that NUST, is viewed to favour the rewards of the present over the future. This leaves NUST with high reactive tendencies rather than proactive tendencies

Satisfaction with the representation of distance education students in the governance and management structure of NUST: The study revealed a mean score of 2.72 on this perception. Ten respondents, (34.48%) strongly agreed, three (10.34%) agreed, 12 (41.38%) strongly disagreed whilst four (13.79%) disagreed. These findings are a true reflection of the current reality at NUST. Majority of the distance education students are not even aware of the people within the structure of management who represents their interests. It is worth noting that on the current NUST management structure, there is only the director of COLL (See Figure 3.1), which is a clear indication that there is less representation. There is therefore a need to expand the structure to accommodate more representation for distance students.

Satisfaction with the tuition fees imposed on the students: On whether the students were satisfied with the tuition fees imposed on them, a mean score of 2.21 was recorded. The results further show that 7 (24.14%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 6 (20.69) agreed, 13 (44.83%) strongly disagreed and 3 (10.34%) disagreed. This finding confirms that most students feel that the fees charged are not justified as compared to the services that COLL offers and delivers. This is true to an extent when students call the centres, they expect their call and e-mails to be responded to which in many cases does not happen. The mains reasons for this are the institutional challenges some discussions earlier. Conversely, students need to be educated on the uses of the money they pay as tuition. In many cases, these fees are justified as they are many other invisible services that require money, for example, Internet services, courier services or phone charges.

The flexibility of the off-campus support system to cater to the needs of distance education students at NUST: On the perception of students on the flexibility of the off-campus system to cater to the

needs of distance education students at NUST, a mean score of 2.62 was scored. This was consistent with the 9 (31.03%) students who strongly agreed, 5 (17.24%) who agreed, 12 (41.38%) who strongly disagreed and 3 (10.34%) who disagreed. Again, these findings are a true reflection of the current reality.

The challenges that NUST as an instruction encounters are, amongst other things: a) quality assurance plans are often too broad and not favourable to distance learning settings; (b) lecturers have a "passive resistance" to getting involved; (c) some lecturers that facilitate distance learning programmes have not been provided with enough special training on the delivery of ODL practices; (d) time restraints for lecturers appear to be a challenge that ought to be overcome along with the development of a common institutional approach to distance learning; (e) shortage of devices and technologies that enable scalability; (f) lack of financial sustainability models; (g) lack of committed and a qualified cadre of quality assurors and experts with the relevant distance learning qualifications. These prevent the full flexibility of off-campus support system to cater to the needs of distance education students at NUST.

The objectivity of the evaluation on the success of distance education courses: With a mean score of 2.97 and 11 (37.93%) strongly agreeing, 7 (24.14%) agreeing, 6 (20.69%) disagreeing and 5 (17.24%) disagreeing that there is objectivity in the evaluation on the success of distance education courses, these findings were indeed a true reflection in the evaluation of distance education at NUST. It is important to note that the results present a positive image on the objectivity, there are still factors that need constant supervision. These factors include instructional, technological, implementation and organisational concerns. Additionally, for consistency in the objectivity of the evaluation on the success of distance education courses at NUST, there is need to appreciate that these factors are dependable of each other even when they are isolated and itemised. As is in any system, the separate components must work together effectively so that the whole distance education system at NUST can operate holistically.

These results show the diverse perceptions of students on management at COLL. Indeed, these perceptions are valid and should be considered, beyond the radius of the institution, to be included in national laws borrowing from other advanced nations. For example, in Turkish HE System, the success and performance evaluation process in distance education programmes is subject to regulation. According to this regulation; "Distance education programmes and assessment and evaluation activities relating to the courses provided through distance education could be performed face-to-face or in an electronic medium, either attended or unattended, using the assessment and evaluation methods (assignments, project studies, written exams or oral exams etc.) approved by the Senates of HEI in line with the curriculum or the form of a central examination. Mid-term exams could be performed unattended in electronic medium if required; whilst final exams and make-up

exams shall be performed attended either in face-to-face or electronic medium. Where and how these exams will be performed and which assessment and evaluation methods, such as oral exams, performance exams, project, thesis and portfolios, will be used is determined by the Senate upon the request of the relevant department. The rate of unattended assessment and evaluation activities on success cannot be more than 20% in distance education" (YOK, 2013:9).

4.3.7 Providing distance education students with support or orientation on distance education courses or programmes at the beginning of annually

Table 4.6: Provision of distance education students with support or orientation on distance education courses or programmes at the beginning of annually

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Yes	26	89.7	89.7	89.7
	No	3	10.3	10.3	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

When the students were asked whether COLL provides distance education students with support or orientation on distance education courses or programmes at the beginning of annually, most of the students (89.7%) stated Yes, whilst 10.3% stated No (see Table 4.10). This is an indication that COLL provides distance education students with the necessary support on distance education courses at the beginning of annually.

Concerning satisfaction with COLL engagement and support strategies, the mean was 2.79, which indicates a high-level of satisfaction amongst the students. Concerning a proper explanation concerning NUST policies and regulations concerning the studies, the mean was 3.07, and this also indicates that various students were of the idea that NUST policies and regulations about their studies are well explained to them. Concerning satisfaction with how concerns concerning distance education students are addressed, the mean of 2.83 indicates that most of the students are satisfied.

Regarding receiving enough information from COLL about studies at the beginning of each semester or academic year, the mean was 2.97, and this indicates that a number of the students may satisfied with this aspect. Concerning the level of satisfaction with the representation of distance education students in the governance and management structure of NUST, the mean was 2.72, and this indicates that they are satisfied with this aspect. Concerning the level of satisfaction with the tuition fees imposed on the students, the mean was 2.21, and this signalises that they are least satisfied

with the fees imposed on them. When asked whether the off-campus support system is flexible enough to cater for the needs of distance education students at NUST, the mean was 2.62, which indicates that it was flexible enough to cater for the needs of the students. When asked whether evaluation on the success of distance education courses objective is, the mean was 2.97, which indicates that it was objective.

4.3.8 Perception of marker tutors or academics

The respondents were asked to rate the level of teaching of distance education marker tutors, with 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest. The responses are reflected in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Rating of the level of teaching of distance education marker tutors

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	1	2	6.9	6.9	6.9
	2	5	17.2	17.2	24.1
	3	20	69.0	69.0	93.1
	4	2	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that most of the students rated the distance education marker tutors highly (69.0%). This finding may be attributed to that throughout the study, the concern that emerged the most for the distance student is the perceived lack of sufficient feedback or contact with the teacher not the level of teaching of distance education marker tutors. Because there is no daily or weekly face-to-face contact with teachers, students may have trouble in self-evaluation thus may have not substantively rated.

Table 4.8: Satisfaction with markers

	Mean
Marker tutors at COLL are qualified to teach distance education programmes	**2.90**
Marker tutors provide academic support to distance students regularly	**2.90**

When the students were asked whether marker tutors at COLL are qualified to teach distance education programmes, the mean was 2.90 (see Table 4.8). This signalises that most of the students had the feeling that the tutors are highly qualified to teach the students. To the statement that the marker tutors provide academic support to distance students regularly, the mean was 2.90, which

also indicates that most of the students generally felt that the marker tutors provide academic support to distance students regularly.

4.3.9 Perception of marker academics based on gender

The Mann-Whitney U test was employed to determine divergences in the median values of the same item amongst the two genders. Based on the findings, there is generally a high-level of satisfaction with the marker tutors amongst the females when compared to that of the males. Most of the females were highly satisfied with the markers in comparison to their male counterparts (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.9: Satisfaction with markers

Item	Satisfaction with the markers	Mean Rank		Mann-Whitney U	Z-value
		Males	Females		
1	Marker tutors at COLL are qualified to teach distance education programmes	11.83	20.18	42.000	-3.037
2	Marker tutors provide academic support to distance students regularly	11.83	20.18	42.000	-3.037

4.4 Strategies that will improve management, support mechanisms, and academics

One of the main objectives of this study was to recommend some of the strategies, which can improve the management, support mechanism, and academics in distance education. Various questions were asked, which sought to the opinion of the students on some of the strategies, which can be adopted to improve management, support mechanism and academics in distance education (see Table 4.10).

Table 4.10: Improvement strategies

Strategy	Mean
The institution should have a committee that works directly with the development of both print-based and online courses	**3.86**
The institution should have an experienced human resources department or a department that organises training related to online and print-based-learning, specifically to distance students	**3.76**
There should be strategies that support the learning environment to distance students	**3.86**
Provision of assignment feedback is crucial for the success of distance education students	**3.76**
The institution should ensure that there are various professional development strategies and opportunities for tutor markers to assist them in improving their teaching in distance education	**3.83**

To the statement that the institution should have a committee that works directly with the development of both print-based and online courses, the mean was 3.86, meaning that most of the students strongly supported this strategy for enhancing the level of support. When this is one, there will be an improvement in the level of student satisfaction. To the statement that the institution should have in place experienced human resources, or a department that organises training related to online and print-based learning specifically to distance students, the mean was 3.76, which also signalises that most of the students supported having in place highly experienced human resources within the institution.

This signalises that now, various challenges are still encountered regarding human resources, and as a result, various kinds of measures ought to be implemented to solve the human resource management challenges encountered. To the statement that there should be strategies that support the learning environment provided to distance students, the mean was 3.86, and this also indicates that most of the students were in support of this strategy. To the statement that the provision of assignment feedback is crucial for the success of distance education students, the mean was 3.76, and this also indicates that the students strongly supported this strategy as a means of improving academics. To the statement that the institution should ensure that there are various professional development strategies and opportunities for tutor markers to assist them in improving their teaching in distance education, the mean was 3.83. This also signalises that most of the students strongly supported this strategy.

Based on the above means, it the most effective strategy used to improve performance include having a committee that works directly with the development of both print-based and online courses and the development of strategies that support the learning environment of distance students. They both had a mean of 3.86.

4.5 Relative importance index

To further explore the best strategy that can be used, the relative importance index (RII) was used. This helped in the ranking of some of the key proposals, suggested by the students to assist in improving the management of ODL at the institution (see Table 4.11).

Table 4.11: Ranking of improvement strategies

	W	RII	Rank
The institution should have a committee that works directly with the development of both print-based and online courses	112	0.9655	1
The institution should have in place experienced human resources, or a department that organises training related to online and print-based learning specifically to distance students	109	0.9397	3
There should be strategies that support learning environments provided to distance students	109	0.9397	3
Provision of assignment feedback is crucial for the success of distance education students	108	0.9310	4
The institution should ensure that there are various professional development strategies and opportunities for tutor markers to assist them in improving their teaching in distance education	111	0.9569	2

Based on the RII, it can be observed that the best strategy, which can be used to improve performance of the management of the ODL, entails having a committee that works directly with the development of both print-based and online courses (see Table 4.11).

4.6 Qualitative analysis

4.6.1   Identified themes and sub-themes

Table 4.12 below provides some of the main themes identified, based on the qualitative data, collected from the students.

Table 4.12: Identified themes and sub-themes

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
• Theme 1: Management concerns of distance learning	• Study material challenges • Internet-related challenges • Infrastructural challenges • Human resource challenges
• Theme 2: Solutions/strategies to enhance management of distance learning	• Establishment of proper committees • Development of human resource function in the university: training and development of the markers/academics • Improvement in the learning environments

Figure 4.6 below depicts some of the main management concerns related to distance learning.
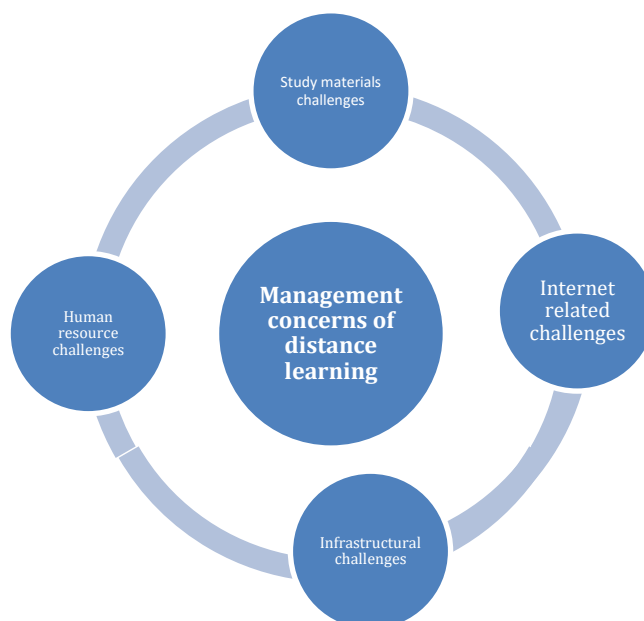
Figure 4.6: Management challenges

Source: (Author Own Source)

4.6.2   Management concerns, based on qualitative data

Based on the qualitative responses obtained from the students, there are varied challenges encountered and hinder the effectiveness of ODL. Most of the students reported that the materials are always provided late and, in some cases, they do not receive materials at all. For instance, when asked to explain why they are not satisfied with the study materials, one of the students reported that "materials are provided late, and at times, we do not get materials at all". Another student

responded "materials are not distributed on time". Another student reported that the study guides are not detailed when asked why they are not satisfied with the study materials. When the students were asked about their satisfaction levels with the Internet, most of them were not satisfied with the Internet. Several stated that the Internet was very slow. For instance, when asked to explain why they were not satisfied with the Internet, one of the respondents stated that the Internet is "Very slow, always going on and off".

The findings of the qualitative study were in line with those of the quantitative study, which noted that several respondents were generally not satisfied with various aspects of the ODL. The other notable challenges, highlighted based on the qualitative responses of the students, include the slowness of the markers in responding to the students, poor customer service, a lack of prompt feedback from the marker tutors, and communication challenges between the tutors and students.

4.6.3 Suggestions

The respondents made several suggestions on the strategies, which can be embraced to ensure that there are improvements. Some of the notable strategies, which they proposed include ensuring that the tutors are trained on various aspects of distance education, the introduction of video conferences, employment of additional staff, provision of e-Books, promptness in the provision of feedback on assignments, ensuring that the student support system is highly supportive, and making sure that there is an improvement in the levels of accountability and performance of the employees. The students also recommended the need for various kinds of mechanisms to be implemented to ensure that the students can report their grievances.

The other key strategies, which can also be embraced based on the findings of the study, include the introduction of suggestion boxes, the provision of feedback, and making sure that prompt feedback is provided to the students on their assessments. For instance, when the students were asked what they thought that the markers should do to deal with some of the key challenges encountered by the distance education students, one of the students indicated that "they must communicate regularly with the students to inform them what they are expected to do and they must guide the students". When the respondents were asked to suggest support mechanism strategies that distance education students can use to report their grievances. Students recommend using a suggestion box at all COLL centres.

4.6.4 Findings, based on the staff surveys

The study also sought to explore the views of the staff concerning various aspects of governance. Various questions were asked, which sought to address the research objectives. This section presents the main findings from the data that were obtained from the staff.

4.7 Demographics

The first section of the questionnaires, distributed amongst staff members, explored their demographics. Some of the key demographics explored include the age of the staff (see Table 4.13), their gender (Figure 4.7), and the number of years that they have been at the institution (Table 4.14), their highest academic qualifications (Figure 4.8), the regional centres they are associated with (Table 4.15), and the position that they hold at NUST (Table. 4.16).

Table 4.13: Age

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	30-39	6	50.0	50.0	50.0
	40-49	5	41.7	41.7	91.7
	50-59	1	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

The study established that 50% of the staff members that participated in this research were in the age group of 30-39, whilst 41.70% were in the age group of 40-49 and only 8.3% were in the age group of 50-59. These results reflect that most of the staff participants were young professionals.
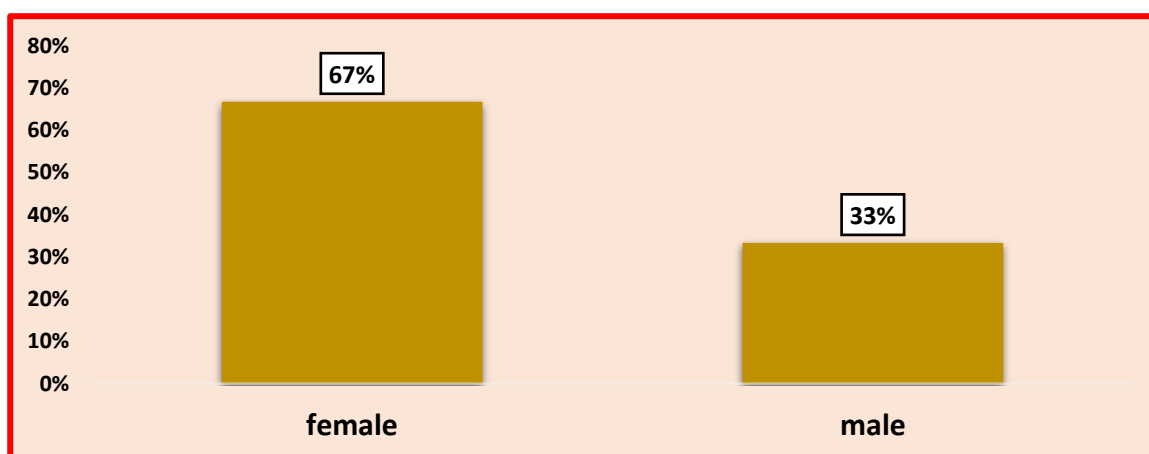
Figure 4.7: Respondents' gender representation

As indicated in Figure 4.7, 67% of the respondents are females and 33% are males. The respondents were chosen using purposive sampling. The finding implied that there were more females at COLL directly dealing with distance learning students. Gender difference did not affect the responses since the questions were neutral and had nothing to do with gender.

Table 4.14: Number of years as an official at Namibia University of Science and Technology

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	5 yrs or less	8	66.7	66.7	66.7
	6 – 10 years	4	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

In Figure 4.13, eight of the respondents represented 0 to 5 years of experiences. Four of the respondents represented 5-10 years of experiences. These statistics showed that most respondents had 5 to 10 years' experience. The long experience by most of the employees implies that most of them are aware of the policies and the practices of NUST concerning COLL. Therefore, the study was assured of getting authentic data because the four of the participants had five years and above experience.
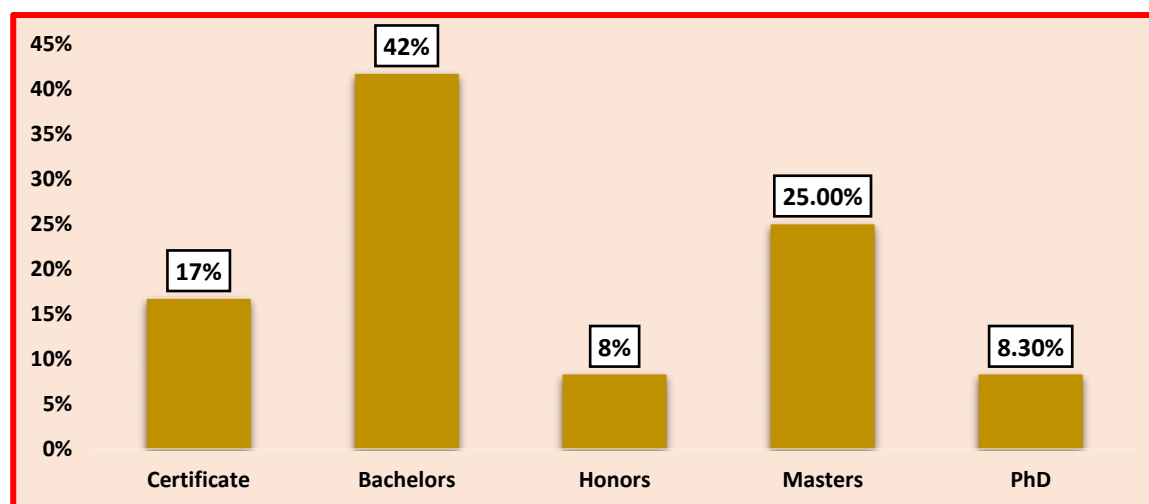
Figure 4.8: Highest academic qualification

In Figure 4.8, respondents' who indicated their highest qualifications as certificate holders made up 17% whilst 42% of the respondents indicated their qualification as undergraduate bachelor's, 8% of the respondents indicated qualification as honours graduates, respectively. The respondents who indicated their qualifications as master's and PhD holders made up 25% and 8.3% respectively. The statistics showed that most of the respondents are bachelor's graduates. This could imply that when the concerns related to governance at NUST in general and COLL in particular, the students and the

public expected NUST to perform highly benefitting from the services of the well-qualified staff. Since all respondents have tertiary qualifications, the study assumed that literate respondent was able to assess objectively the real concerns which contributed to governance challenges in distance education at COLL.

Table 4.15: Name of the regional centre

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Windhoek	10	83.3	83.3	83.3
	Gobabis	1	8.3	8.3	91.7
	Otjiwarongo	1	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Most of the staff were from the Windhoek regional centre, 8.3% were from the Gobabis regional centre, and the remaining 8.3% were from the Otjiwarongo regional centre. This finding proved to be immensely helpful in getting authentic data views on the governance challenges in distance education at COLL. The findings are helpful, because officials at those centres provided an understanding of governance challenges faced by regional centres and can recommend for better solutions to NUST management.

Table 4.16: Position at the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Student Support Officer	1	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Instructional Designer	3	25.0	25.0	33.3
	Coordinator	4	33.3	33.3	66.7
	Store and Dispatch Clerk	2	16.7	16.7	83.3
	Senior Store and Dispatch Clerk	1	8.3	8.3	91.7
	Regional Coordinator	1	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Concerning COLL positions, most of the respondents were coordinators (33%), and 25% was instructional designers.

4.8 Good governance

The study explored the level of staff satisfaction within various governance structures. The results are presented in Table 4.17 below

Table 4.17: Perception of good governance

	Percentage		
	Good	**Fair**	**Bad**
Policies and procedures on distance education are good	91.7	8.3	0
How would you define the implementation of policies at COLL?	75.0	25.0	0
COLL invests in the use of technology to improve governance mechanism and processes within NUST?	83.3	16.7	0
The use of technology in distance education activities at COLL is bad	75.0	25.0	0

91.7% of the staff described the policies and procedures on distance education to be good, whilst 75% of the staff defined the implementation of policies at COLL to be good. A further 83.3% of the respondents agreed that COLL has invested in the use of technology to improve governance mechanisms and processes within NUST, and thus far, it is working well. A total of 75% of the staff agreed that the use of technology in distance education activities at COLL is good. More questions were asked, which sought to explore the level of staff satisfaction related to governance at the institution.

Table 4.18: Satisfaction with governance

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
COLL services promote accountability and good governance	3.33	0.492
COLL services and administration promote good governance	3.42	0.515

When the respondents were asked whether COLL services promote accountability and good governance, the mean was 3.33, which demonstrates that the services promote accountability and good governance. When the respondents were asked whether COLL services and administration promote good governance, the mean obtained was 3.42. This also indicates that the services and administration at COLL promote good governance.

4.9 Distance education management

Various questions were directed, which sought to explore various aspects concerning distance education management.

Table 4.19: Policies and procedures at the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning

	Comment	
Statement	**Yes**	**No**
Does COLL have a policy in ODL?	**75.0**	**25.0**
Does COLL follow procedures in the practices of ODL?	**91.7**	**8.3**
Did COLL improve over the last five (5) years?	**91.7**	**8.3**
Does COLL have strategies in the management of distance education activities?	**91.7**	**8.3**

A total of 75% of the respondents agreed that COLL has a policy in ODL. A further 91.7% of the respondents agreed that COLL follows procedures in the practices of ODL. Another 91.7% of the respondents agreed that COLL recorded improvements over the last five years. Besides, 91.7% of the respondents also agreed that COLL has in place strategies in the management of distance education activities.

4.9.1   Control

One of the main functions of management is to ensure that there is proper control. It is also an aspect of governance. Various questions were asked to explore the aspect of control.

Table 4.20: Management of the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning visits department and regional centres and interacts directly with officials

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Disagree	1	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Agree	10	83.3	83.3	91.7
	Strongly agree	1	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

To the statement that the management of COLL visits department and regional centres and interact directly with officials, 83.3% of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.21: Management directly oversees the actions of employees and rectifies them

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Yes	11	91.7	91.7	91.7
	No	1	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

To the statement that management directly oversees actions of employees and rectifies them, 91.7% agreed to the statement by saying Yes, whilst just 8.3% of the respondents stated No.

Table 4.22: The Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning officials, such as student support officers, instructional designers, and coordinators' performance, are assessed regularly to establish whether they have met their targets

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Yes	11	91.7	91.7	91.7
	No	1	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

To the statement that COLL officials, such as student support officers, instructional designers, and coordinators performance are assessed regularly to establish whether they have met their targets, 91.7% stated Yes, whilst just 8.3% stated No. These results are an indication that indeed there are measures in place at COLL to ensure quality and monitor the performance of staff regularly to ensure consistency and quality service delivery.

4.9.2 Policymaking aspect

Table 4.23: Policies are implemented and interpreted as per statutes, rules and regulations of Namibia University of Science and Technology

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Agree	3	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Strongly agree	9	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

To the statement that policies are implemented and interpreted as per SRR of NUST, 75% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement.

Table 4.24: Statutes rules and regulations of Namibia University of Science and Technology are available and accessible to all employees

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Agree	3	25.0	25.0	33.3
	Strongly agree	8	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

To the statement that SRR of NUST are available and accessible to all employees, 66.7% strongly agreed to the statement, whilst 25% agreed to the statement.

Table 4.25: Namibia University of Science and Technology management ensures that university officials comprehend the vision and mission of the organisation

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Agree	3	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Strongly agree	9	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

To the statement that NUST management ensures that officials of the university understand the vision and mission of the organisation, 75% of the respondents agreed to the statement, whilst 25% strongly agreed to the statement (see Table 4.25).

Table 4.26: Management involves Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning officials in the development of the institution's strategic plan

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Disagree	1	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Agree	7	58.3	58.3	66.7
	Strongly agree	4	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

To the statement that management involves COLL officials in the development of the institution's strategic plan, 58.3% agreed to the statement, whilst 33.3% strongly agreed to the statement (see Table 4.26).

Table 4.27: New staff at the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning receives orientation

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Yes	11	91.7	91.7	91.7
	No	1	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

When asked whether new staff at COLL receives orientation, 91.7% stated Yes (see Table 4.27).

4.9.3 Organising

One of the other major functions of management is organising. The respondents were asked various questions to explore the role of organising (see Table 4.28).

Table 4.28: Organising

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
Management at COLL discusses official expectations regularly	3.17	0.718
Academic activities at COLL are organised by COLL officials to achieve the objectives of the department	3.33	0.492
Administrative activities at COLL are organised by COLL officials	3.33	0.492
Management ensures that COLL expenditure does not impede service delivery	3.25	0.622

When asked whether the management at COLL discusses official expectations regularly, the mean was 3.17, which is an indication that COLL discusses official expectations regularly. To the statement that COLL officials organise academic activities at COLL to achieve the objectives of the department, the mean was 3.33, which indicates that most of them responded positively. To the statement that COLL officials organise administrative activities at COLL, the mean was 3.33, whilst to the statement that management ensures that COLL expenditure does not impede service delivery, the men were 3.25, which also indicates that most of the respondents responded positively

4.9.4 Leadership

Table 4.29: Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning management is open to ideas recommended by the centre officials

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Disagree	1	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Agree	9	75.0	75.0	83.3
	Strongly agree	2	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

To the statement that COLL management is open to ideas recommended by centre officials, 75% agreed to the statement, whilst 16.7% strongly agreed to the statement.

Table 4.30: Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning management allows employees to take full responsibility for their work

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Agree	5	41.7	41.7	41.7
	Strongly agree	7	58.3	58.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

To the statement that COLL management allows employees to take full responsibility for their work, 58.3% strongly agreed to the statement, whilst 41.7% agreed to the statement.

Table 4.31: Management provides regular feedback on weekly reports by Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning officials

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Yes	9	75.0	75.0	75.0
	No	3	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

To the statement that management provides regular feedback on weekly reports provided by COLL officials, 75% stated Yes, whilst 25% stated No.

4.9.5 Directing

Table 4.32: Do you play a role or influence the goals and vision of Namibia University of Science and Technology?

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Agree	7	58.3	58.3	58.3
	Strongly agree	5	41.7	41.7	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

When asked whether they play a role or influence the goals and vision of NUST, 58.3% agreed to the statement, whilst 41.7% strongly agreed to the statement.

4.10 Findings, based on the survey conducted within the academic faculty

To further ensure that the research objectives were addressed effectively and efficiently, a survey was done within the academic faculty. The main aim of the survey was to explore their perceptions regarding various aspects of the open and distance education offered at COLL. In particular, the survey sought to explore the perceptions of the academic faculty regarding the students, management support, and administrative support.

When asked concerning the specific difficulties that the students encounter, the main challenge is the language barrier. Several students are not highly competent concerning the use of language. The other common theme was that the academic faculty acted as the mentors of the students. When the markers were asked concerning the additional aspects which should be taken into consideration, the markers suggested that there is the need for the management of the institution to ensure that the students can easily access learning materials. They also suggested an improvement in the technologies, used in the process of ODL at the institution.

When the respondents were asked about their views towards the support that they get from the management, they indicated that the management was highly supportive. Some of the notable themes observed include ensuring that they have everything that they need to perform their activities effectively, are adequately trained and that there are various team-building activities. The key respondents also noted that there is a mutually beneficial relationship between the members of the faculty and the management at the institution. The academic faculty also noted that they always get administrative support from top management at COLL. This is through training and the provision of the right resources that they need to ensure that they perform their functions effectively. It can thus

be noted, based on the findings of the study, that the management at COLL has been supportive of the various initiatives at the institution.

4.11   Discussions

The findings of the current study corroborate with the findings of other studies, which have been performed by previous scholars. For instance, in a study which conducted by Ndayambaje, Bimenyimana and Ndahayo (2013:76) noted that some main challenges to distance learning include inadequate staff, ICT challenges, limited resources, such as library access and textbooks, and ineffective record and learner support systems.

Otto and Wrightson (2005:51) performed a study, which aimed to explore some of the key challenges that hinder the effectiveness of ODL. It established that some of the main hindrances generally include insufficient funding, limited supply or lack of self-study materials, insufficient student support services, ineffective two-way communication with the students, limited adoption of ICTs, and inadequate and inappropriate infrastructure. These are similar to the findings of the current study based on the responses received from the students.

Alike the findings of the current study, Belawati and Zuhairi (2007: 20) established that some of the notable challenges include ICT infrastructure and curriculum and content development challenges. Musingafi and Mapuranga (2015:64) also sought to explore some of the challenges experienced by ODL students. The most-reported challenges included difficulties in accessing and using ICT, ineffective feedback, and a lack of study materials. These are similar to the findings of the current study. As a result, the scholars recommended the need for universities to recruit competent, self-motivated, and committed academics. They also recommended the need for the universities to ensure the adequate production and delivery of study materials. Berge, Muilenburg and Haneghan (2002:412) conducted a study to explore the barriers to distance education and training. The findings of the survey corroborate well with the findings of the current study. It noted that the main concerns include ineffective student support services, technological challenges, and administrative challenges.

The findings of a study by Zirkle (2006:189) classified the barriers to distance education as institutional barriers, faculty or instruction barriers, and student or learner barriers. Some of the main institutional barriers, identified by the scholar, include the high costs of the programmes, lack of equipment and support, scheduling, resource availability, and technical assistance. Some of the learner challenges, identified by the scholar, include instructor availability, high fees associated with some of the programmes, and difficulty obtaining their grades, transcripts, and other course-related records. These findings are similar to those of the current study. Regarding faculty barriers, the

scholar noted challenges, such as inadequate training of some of the faculties and a lack of motivation of some of the members of the faculties.

Regarding the institutional barriers, Zirkle (2006:190) noted the need for educational institutions to explore highly innovative strategies of not only implementing but also sustaining distance education programmes. The study noted that overcoming funding, and resource allocation concerns are some of the main challenges encountered. The findings of the study noted that faculty/instruction barriers also must be addressed effectively if distance education efforts are to be successful. Zirkle (2006:189) further recommended the allocation of adequate time for course development training and the provision of incentives for development.

At the same time, the researcher recommended that addressing student/learner barriers is also key to any distance education effort. Teacher education programmes in career- and technical education must design solutions to the concerns of technical- and pedagogical knowledge and skill development. These programmes also need to ensure the quality of instruction and high levels of interactivity between instructor and students and between students themselves to ensure that student motivation and performance stay at high levels. As new technologies become available to increase the quality of instruction and interaction, they should be tested and implemented.

The findings of a study performed by Muyinda (2012:31) noted that to improve the performance of ODL, some of the primary measures, which can be implemented, generally include having in place a highly efficient student support system, adoption of specially-designed self-study materials to act as tutors, ensuring that there is proper two-way communication between the tutors and the students to provide support services to the learners, and proper application of ICTs for student support.

Several recommendations were made by Muyinda (2012:31). Some of the main recommendations include training staff from the ODL, effective management of programme delivery provided by the Makerere University through the use of an open distance and e-Learning (ODeL) mode, effective coordination of the design and development of ODeL academic programmes, effective coordination of the development, production, and distribution of quality ODeL study materials, effective and regular coordination of the evaluation of ODeL programmes, ensuring proper dissemination of the findings, and forging links and partnerships with the diverse organisations involved in ODeL delivery practices.

The scholar also recommended the need for the development and promotion of the usage of ICTs in the ODL programmes, making sure that feedback can be obtained from the students quickly and ensuring effective management of all the administrative records of ODL students. The scholar also pointed out the need for proper coordination and facilitation of the continuing capacity-building for

ODeL managers, administrators, and practitioners. Various kinds of measures also ought to be embraced to ensure that there is proper management of the staff, resources, and infrastructure to ensure ease in carrying out all roles through the development of highly effective systems. The other notable measures which the scholar recommended include the development of highly appropriate planning of both short- and longer-term, strategic dimensions for ODL programmes, initiation of regulations and policies for the use of the study materials, and resources by other third parties.

4.12 Chapter summary

The chapter provides findings based on data collected from the respondent. The chapter provides discussion specifically on the perception of student support services and perception of the performance of COLL management. Management needs to ensure that various approaches are in place as a quest for better service delivery. Additionally, management should ensure the efficacy of material distribution at regional centres. As per data collected it is viewed that females are satisfied with the material distribution. Students are satisfied with support from their tutors. The institution should have a committee that works directly with the development of materials. COLL should provide training to its staff members both to tutors and administrators. On the qualitative responses, students complain that the late distribution of material may hinder the efficacy of ODL.

Some students at regional centres also note that the Internet became a major problem in some centres of the university. The slowness of marker tutors and lack of standardisation compromise quality of services offered at COLL. Several suggestions were made by the respondent in this chapter, such as ensuring that tutors are trained in the aspects of distance education, the introduction of videoconferencing, staff retention and e-Books. Other aspects also include the transformation of course delivery from print base to online learning. This will cause NUST to cut cost on human resources, such as marker tutors.

Good governance is the efficacy of the organisation behaviour and it promotes managerial practices in HEI. The universities are non-profit making organisation there is a need to promote good governance and managerial practices. Organisational governance should play a significant geared towards the success of HEI. A comprehensive overview in the context of NUST is to understand governance as a component that correct inefficiencies and malpractices of universities. Governance of universities especially in Sub-Saharan Africa has gained acceptance. Such practices should not only be the university concern but also other stakeholders. Governance in this modern world should be regarded as a system engaging multiple actors.

CHAPTER 5: EVALUATION OF GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES IN DISTANCE HIGHER EDUCATION

5.1 Introduction

The results of the interviews and questionnaires are outlined in the preceding chapter. This chapter evaluates the results using governance theories and principles outlined in Chapter 2. In addition, the legislative framework detailed in Chapter 3 is assessed. The discussion in this chapter focuses mainly on four aspects, which include, 1) challenges in distance education governance, 2) management challenges, 3) legislative framework evaluation, and 4) evaluation of distance education practices. Challenges and positives identified in the practice of distance HE at NUST are outlined in the last section of this chapter. The ensuing section explains the challenges of good governance in distance HE.

5.2 Challenges of good governance in distance higher education

The governance principles discussed in Chapter 2 were employed as the basis for evaluating governance challenges in distance HE at COLL at NUST. These principles include accountability, participation, and transparency – some of the vital principles that support the attainment of distance education goals and objectives.

5.2.1 Accountability

Accountability became the driving force behind distance HE in recent years. Globally, stakeholders in HE advocates that accountability concerns in distance HE needs to be addressed. According to the literature reviewed, distance HEIs should have accountability mechanisms in place to avoid the danger of being marginalised by the environment and societies in which they operate. Such mechanisms entail essential aspects of quality assurance, quality audits, and monitoring and evaluating systems. It is strongly believed that such mechanisms are instrumental in driving distance HEIs' objectives as they stimulate confidence and trust amongst various stakeholders.

It is thus imperative for learner results and academic staff performance to be evaluated against set standards. The results of such evaluations should be made available to the relevant stakeholders, policymakers, and decision-makers to aid in the improvement of accountability levels.

Monitoring in distance education (DE) involves observing the relevance, appropriateness, and logic of the course and its contents. Furthermore, it should be ascertained whether the time allocated for the completion of the course and its modules is adequate. Equally important is noting the diverse types of errors by students for the duration of the course. Other areas that require monitoring are the time schedules for various activities related to the dispatch of course materials to learners, teaching

schedules, learners attendance records, maintenance of learner records, receipt of assignments timeously by students, and the use of technology in the teaching methodology. Monitoring should also identify the number of dropouts and those lagging. Evaluation of the academic tutors regarding the knowledge of the subject concerned and the extent to which academic tutors can communicate effectively with students within the distance education environment is of great importance. In this regard, it is worth noting the observations of Bernard, Abrami, Lou and Borokhovski (2004:77), who pointed out that the evaluation of student learning outcomes presents an approach employed by HEIs to determine how much students have absorbed for the duration of the course.

Course monitoring assists in enhancing and maintaining the efficiency of teachers/faculties and coordinators and helps to identify avenues of improvement in course design and delivery of course-related materials. Moreover, it helps in developing confidence amongst distance learners, especially if the assessment and monitoring systems are transparent (Chaudhary & Dey, 2013:36). If accountability mechanisms are enforced in distance HE learning, students will gain skills and competencies, such as self-study skills, time management skills, and the ability to plan and organise, solve problems, take responsibility, work under pressure, be creative, and take initiative. Accountability is essential to distance education because it allows students to become responsible for their studies.

According to the research findings, COLL academic officials and ordinary staff members believe that the services are currently offered to promote accountability and good governance. This is evidenced by the official members' responses when they were asked whether COLL services promote accountability. A mean of 3.33 indicates that there should be accountability mechanisms in places, such as quality assurance, quality audits, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, reporting formats, and standards. Furthermore, 75% of COLL officials' members concurred that management provides regular feedback on weekly reports provided by COLL academic officials. Such weekly reports form part of stringent reporting requirements that promote accountability in distance HE. The survey conducted also empathised that management allows staff members to take full responsibility for their work. Such an approach encourages proactive thinking and innovation, which is a catalyst to the successful accomplishment of COLL objectives.

The literature review in Chapter 2 supports the findings mentioned above. The researcher noted that NUST has a quality assurance unit that falls under the office of the vice chancellor. The unit is responsible for staff capacity-building training programmes on quality assurance-related concerns and assessments of programmes earmarked for submission for registration with NQA. Moreover, COLL takes part in the institutional audit conducted by the HEQC of the CHESA (Möwes 2010:4). The CHESA is mandated to enforce quality assurance activities at tertiary institutions through programme accreditation and institutional audits. The HEQC has commended COLL for its quality

instructional materials based on internationally recognised quality criteria and guidelines of the SAIDE.

Despite having various accountability mechanisms, quality service provision cannot be guaranteed. Maintaining quality assurance in the distance education system is a mammoth task attributable to staff shortages and many distance education student enrolments. As such, students at COLL raised a few accountability concerns. Some of the concerns include delays in giving feedback regarding student assessments, delays in deliverance of study materials, and the absence of adequate technology infrastructure that enhances learning.

5.2.2   Participation

It is essential to note that institutions of higher learning primarily resist change. There is a need to change because it allows collaboration and officials of human-computer interactions (HCIs) to adapt to new ways of change. COLL officials who have been in service for years claim that management does not involve them in the decision-making process of the department. Furthermore, some officials also claim that favouritism is a common aspect at COLL and such practice demoralises others at work. In the same way, officials also claim that some officials are receiving special treatment from the management; hence their views and ideas are taken into consideration. Officials must receive the same treatment on various aspects within the institution.

In Chapter 2, Pozdnyakova and Pozdnyakov (2017:243) state that, participation is essential because it can resolve some of the persistent challenging concerns in distance HE. Institutions offering distance HE programmes are encouraged to engage academic officials and faculty officers in the strategic planning process. Successful integration and practice require faculty participation in the development of the curriculum for multimedia delivery, and for this, training faculty members in integrative processes and specific media of instruction become essential prerequisites. Such an approach in management instils a sense of belonging and teamwork amongst staff members. Additionally, participation advocates that officials be involved in the decision-making process of distance education. This will allow officials, especially those at the bottom of the pyramid, to apply robust strategies and advice to the management thereof.

The research findings revealed that approximately 91.6% of COLL staff members indicated that COLL management involves staff members in the development of the strategic plan. It is also evident that COLL officials organise most of COLL academic and administrative activities. Management is also open to ideas recommended by the centre officials. About 58.3% of the staff members concurred that COLL management allows them to play a role in achieving the goals and vision of NUST.

Other stakeholders involved in important concerns concerning distance education are the government, students, and industry players. Students participate in the system through following their schedules and the use of e-mail, audio cassettes, videotapes, correspondence, and the Internet. The Namibian Government acts as an important stakeholder by providing funding to higher learning institutions. Through various acts, appointed officials get to work on specific areas that affect service delivery. Industry players play a pivotal role in identifying much-needed skills and programmes in line with job market requirements. Such collaborations and engagement encourage all stakeholders involved to play a part in the attainment of institutional goals and objectives.

5.2.3   Transparency

Transparency is one aspect of good governance that aims to reduce ambiguity and uncertainty, thus contributing towards the eradication of corruption and reduction of legislation ambiguity. Transparency refers to the availability of information concerning all aspects of the operation and management of an institution (Khanna, 2016:6). If transparency is not well executed or embraced by institutions of higher learning, it will cause concern and doubt within societies. A lack of transparency destroys the practices of institutions and prevents them from thriving and succeeding. Transparency is, therefore, associated with disclosure, clarity, and participation (Daibes, 2004:26).

Distance higher learning institutions need to embrace transparency to build confidence and trust amongst learners. A lack of face-to-face interaction can instil some level of mistrust between the institution and learners. Transparency promotes the way information is constructed or reviewed and includes how learning is transformed in this process. Siemens (2009:50), "when someone decides to share their thoughts and ideas transparently, they become a teacher to those who are observing".

Siemens (2009:52) further notes that social technology, such as Twitter, blogs, and Facebook, opens the door to sharing the process of learning through distance education. In these environments, the social dimension of each interface is transparent, extending beyond any traditional learning space and allowing for dialogue amongst peers and between the teacher and learner in new ways. Web 2.0 technologies, such as blogs and microblogs, such as Twitter, Wikis and social media expand learning spaces beyond the confines of traditional classrooms. Open learning creates a community of peers and places the learner in contact with experts in the field who blog or tweet about scholarly or topical concerns. The learner is also free to share observations and to contribute based on an ongoing dialogue with others and through independent or collaborative research online.

Collis (2005:128) explains that governances are structures and processes designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, the rule of law, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation. Transparency is essential in distance education

because it provides openness to student information, results and assessments, and student activities. Transparency is a catalyst for interaction and participation that supports open learning in multiple disciplines and institutional contexts (Mackey, 2011:1).

It must be noted that applying transparency encounters obstacles which vary depending on the nature of the organisation and the degree of awareness of officials and individuals. Despite the importance of participating in decision-making in the organisation, this participation must be within specific controls, to allow management to take the appropriate decision, which fits with the existing data in the enterprise. Conversely, the presence of negative legacies of previous administrative systems means that it requires a long time before starting the advancement of society and its institutions. The misinterpretation of information by its users, constitute an obstacle to the application of transparency (Fung, Graham & Weil, 2007:86).

From the qualitative data gathered during the survey conducted, students expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of prompt feedback received from tutor markers and yet distance learners need to get feedback on their assessments on time. Nsiah and Oti-Boadi (2015:112) reiterated the importance of distance education, which bridges the educational gap through the provision of education anytime and anywhere. Dahl (2004:66) discussed various strategies that could be used to retain students in distance education systems, for example, instructors' presence and grading student assignments with constructive suggestions. Therefore, tutor markers should be aware that distance students can easily get discouraged attributable to delays in communication and feedback on assessments.

From the findings outlined in Chapter 4, it appears that there are currently no suggestion boxes for students to be able to report their grievances to management. Such mechanisms foster improved communication between management and the distance learners and thereby facilitates the resolution of pertinent concerns that may affect student learning and performance. Several students also indicated that NUST policies and regulations regarding their studies were clearly explained to them. Orientation allowed distancing students to familiarise themselves with the rules and regulations of the institution.

5.3 Management challenges in distance higher education

This section discusses the evaluation of management challenges in distance HE. From the conducted survey, several management challenges currently encountered at COLL were identified. Challenges encountered by academic officials at COLL include a lack of experienced human resources, inadequate technology infrastructure, absence of robust student support services, and unsatisfactory study materials mostly delivered late.

5.3.1 Human resources challenges

Students indicated that they felt the need to establish a committee that works directly with the development of both print-based and online courses. The established committee should be mandated to offer capacity-building training programmes earmarked for strengthening the provision of support services about online and print-based learning. Adopting such a strategy may require COLL to consider recruiting additional experienced staff members to share the workload.

When students experience technical problems with the online systems, the first point of contact is the marker tutors. Although marker tutors' primary responsibility is to teach students, they may find themselves in situations where they have to assist students with technical matters relating to access to COLL off-campus system. Imparting such skills to marker tutors will contribute immensely to the provision of quality services to distance learners.

5.3.2 Technology infrastructure

Several students expressed disappointment with the reliability of Internet services at regional centres across the country. The erratic Internet services interfere with distance students' workload, which poses an inconvenience when students must submit their assignments or check online study materials. The findings further revealed that COLL invested moderately in technology infrastructure. Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2001:32) pointed out that technology on its own has a direct influence on the display, interaction, cost, and design of the educational outcomes. Therefore, NUST should channel adequate resources into improving the infrastructure which is vital in creating, maintaining, and running distance education programmes and operations in a more professional approach.

5.3.3 Lack of robust student support services

The research conducted revealed that students suggested the need for management to build a more supportive learning environment as one of the strategies needed to enhance distance education learning. Such supportive activities may involve counselling of students regarding choice of courses, availability of reliable Internet services at libraries, and availability of technical experts to assist students with online system operations. Despite having a support services unit for distance education at COLL, students still feel that there is a need for improvement.

Student support services are crucial for distance HE success as learners get insecure in the absence of traditional classroom-teaching. This is exacerbated by the lack of constant feedback on performance. Moreover, the student becomes more insecure if the direction of the course is not well-

structured. This explains why the dropout phenomenon is much more common in distance education than conventional education.

5.3.4   Study material quality

One of the researcher's objectives was to establish the perception of distance students on COLL student support services. Most students expressed dissatisfaction with the study material provided. It is management's task to ensure that training material meets the required standards and distribution to various distance education centres should be done timeously.

5.4 Challenges encountered by distance education students at the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning

Based on qualitative responses, distance students complained about the slowness of tutor markers in giving feedback on student queries, poor customer service, and communication challenges between the tutors and the students.

5.4.1   Communication challenges

Communication between marker tutors and distance learners is fundamental in a distance HE learning environment. Distance education is often perceived and experienced as a lonely way to learn (Anderson, 2008:127; Duffy & Kirkley, 2004:68). Student interest can be negatively affected by delays in responses and feedback regarding assessments which, in turn, instil feelings of frustration and loneliness. Previous research signalises isolation is a major problem in distance education (Contreras-Castillo, Favela, Pérez-Fragoso & Santamarıa-del-Angel, 2004:102). Moreover, text-based media cannot fully deliver body language and tone of voice (Hrastinski, 2006:42), and does not allow for easy exchange which is crucial to delivering clear meaning (Duffy & Kirkley, 2004:69). As a result, finding ways to maintain the benefit of maximum student participation and engagement have become the greatest challenge in distance education for some researchers (Anderson, 2008:5). Marker tutors must receive training on various aspects of distance education, and COLL needs to consider introducing video conferences, employing additional staff, providing e-books, promptness in the provision of feedback on assignments, ensuring that the student support system is highly supportive, and making sure that there is an improvement in the levels of accountability and performance of the employees.

5.4.2   Tuition fees

COLL students are generally not satisfied with the tuition fees payment imposed on them. Provided the unfavourable prevailing economic conditions, it is predictable that even slight tuition fee increases will be met with stiff resistance from the surrounding communities. Chapter Three outlined

the provision of the Namibian Constitution, which makes provision for the right to education for every Namibian citizen in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions (Goitom, 2016:1). Regrettably, such rights can only be exercised by privilege citizens who can afford such high, exorbitant tuition fees. This is quite a predicament as the purpose of distance education establishment is to provide education across the country by reaching out to isolated and marginalised communities to promote education in cities, rural areas, and farms.

5.4.3   Lack of suggestion boxes at regional centres

It was noted during the survey that there are no suggestion boxes at COLL regional centres. Nevertheless, they form one of the oldest and cheapest suggestion systems. The installation of suggestion boxes at COLL regional centres can be one way of encouraging communication between distance students and management. Such a development is a true reflection of a democratic approach to distance HE administration as it offers students an ideal opportunity to express their views, complaints suggestions, or any other information they deem necessary for COLL administration without fear of victimisation. This is not only beneficial to COLL students but also management as they will have easy access to information. With suggestion boxes installed at regional centres, students have no reason to silently complain or resort to unlawful strikes, in most cases, destructive. Management will, therefore, have an opportunity to address raised concerns before they get out of hand to protect the image of the institution. COLL officials will need to continually check the suggestions and immediately resolve burning concerns where possible.

5.5 Governance challenges encountered by distance higher education marker tutors

5.5.1   Lack of regular capacity-building training programmes

Despite students expressing their satisfaction with the level of education for tutor markers, there is a dire need for professional development programmes to empower them with essential skills that promote usage of various distance education teaching methodologies. Distance education is quite distinct from what exists in on-campus education. Tutors and learners have to realise this and strive to create new knowledge and practice better suited to distance education. Body language and tone of voice cannot be delivered through text-based media, and that makes distance education unique and different from contemporary education systems (Hrastinski, 2006:25).

COLL marker tutors should possess knowledge and awareness of students and their experiences, backgrounds, learning styles, and expectations from the course. All the above aspects should be reflected in the activities and lessons imparted to the students in distance education. Unless marker tutors receive adequate training and remain motivated, COLL regional centres across the country will fail to serve the purpose for which they were established. In the discussions concerning faculty

perceptions and participation in distance education, faculty training provides them with the necessary support and incentives required to transform distance education into a more effective intervention. Graphics, interactive materials, and simulations may appeal to various student learning styles, thereby enhancing instructional flexibility.

5.6 Higher education regulatory framework

All stakeholders should strive to act by the SRR of NUST as stipulated by the legislative framework discussed in Chapter Three. One important aspect of policies in HEIs is to focus its management practices on an evidence-based approach. Evidence-based policy is a pejorative concept which refers to the commissioning of research to support a policy which has already been decided upon. Additionally, policy-based evidence is based on the premise that policy decisions should be better informed by available evidence and should include rational analysis. Universities are at the forefront of conducting research that may advise on better policies that will govern universities. It is also observed that NUST has no policy guidelines that manage distance education programmes and activities. COLL policies derive from the SRR. COLL needs to develop policies that manage distance education activities. The ensuing section discusses the funding of HE in Namibia.

5.6.1   Higher education funding

Although the HE Act makes provision for allocation of adequate funding to Namibia public universities, there exist funding challenges within these universities. This poses challenges to the implementation of projects and programmes to steer development and growth that foster quality service provision at COLL. For COLL to achieve its objectives, specific systems and mechanisms should be implemented. These mechanisms may include a reliable monitoring and evaluation system. COLL, over the years, still do not have a monitoring and evaluation section. Once these systems are incorporated, they provide commendation to NUST on how COLL should be funded and introduced to new regional centres. Over the last two years, NUST undertook austerity measures as cut-cost measures. This aspect prompted the university to underfund specific departments. Conversely, students also find it difficult to pay their tuition fees, which has been the fundamental cause of student dropouts. Government funding will not accommodate to fund individual students.

Subsequently, there has been pressure on the government to introduce free education to ease the financial burden encountered by many. The government introduced the Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) to coordinate student funding. Many students are underfunded because they do not meet the requirements of NSFAF. After all, the institution focuses on priority fields, such as science and technology. Provided the challenges currently encountered by the Namibian Government, such commitment to providing free education to all may strain the already scarce

financial resources. It can be maintained that adhering only to policies may not bring changes to education systems. Certain factors, such as budget constraints, hinder the growth of distance HE in Namibia.

5.7 Evaluation of distance education practices

Distance education is a common mechanism that addresses HE concerns. Distance education institutions are complex in their management because of unproductiveness, administration challenges, inadequate infrastructure, and weak delivery systems. The fundamental problem with distance education is the lack of management strategies. Management strategies are techniques that direct and control institutions in achieving their goals. These strategies are aspects, such as innovation, leadership, administration, and execution. NUST distance education department may encounter management problems if these strategies are not implemented or well enforced. Some of these strategies may tackle the concern of resistance to change at the university because of new trends that may arise. These strategies are essential in the distance education environment.

The findings outlined in Chapter 4 reveal that management ensures that all staff members have access to policy guidelines and knowledge of the vision and mission of COLL. Of the total of 80% of the employees indicated that they have access to relevant guidelines and policies at COLL. This implies that various functions, such as human resources, quality assurance, finance, procurement, marketing, and logistics adhere to related policies and regulations, as outlined in Chapter Three.

5.8 Quality management

From the literature review, it is apparent that NUST has a quality framework that describes the holistic approach and processes, and related systems and devices that manage and control the quality of distance education centres (PON, 2014:2). Such a framework presents the institution with structures, key features, guidelines, procedures, and roles and responsibilities pertinent to the management of institutional quality.

Various factors pose a threat to the QM of COLL activities. Such factors include inadequate funding to implemented and an ICT infrastructure that suits the learning system of quality distance education provision. The separation of student and teacher imposed by distance removes a vital link of communication between the two parties. The link must be established through e-mail, telecommunication, and postal mail by integrating these into the delivery of the course to provide the missing interactivity. Support and services, such as providing tutors, academic planners and schedulers. Technical assistance for distance learners should not be neglected whilst planning distance education programmes. Students need tutors and academic planners to assist them to complete courses on time and to act as a support system when stress becomes a problem.

Geographical isolation is also one of the major problems of distance HE. The inability to interact with other students can lead to a feeling of inadequacy and insecurity, and a lack of confidence in their abilities. Therefore, a sense of personal involvement between the student and the institution should be developed and fostered. Distance education programmes are dependent on excellent communication for successful learning to take place. Good communication presents needed interaction which is essential to student learning and the success and effectiveness of distance education.

5.9 ICT usage

The purpose of the ICT policy for NUST is to outline the sustainable use of computer equipment and software of the university. The rules protect the university from cyberattacks that may be caused by end-users. Section 3 of NUST ICT policy states that the policy applies to employees, students, contractors, consultants, official guests and visitors, contract- and part-time officials, and all personnel affiliated with third parties.

Such policy needs to be backed with strong capacity programmes as a quest to build a knowledgeable community. For example, a study conducted at the UNAM on ICT usage indicated that the respondents lacked training in ICT pedagogy, technical know-how in ICT applications, technical support at their campuses; time to learn and incorporate ICT skills and devices into lessons, and lastly, was exposed to insufficient budget allocation in the procurement of ICT devices, such as hardware and software. The above scenario hinders policy execution, and COLL should ensure that established policies are always backed by knowledge transfer amongst users.

5.10   Student plagiarism

Despite NUST having a plagiarism policy that stipulates the consequences of plagiarism, there is still high levels of plagiarism amongst distance students. Introducing software, such as Turnitin only, cannot eliminate plagiarism. Various factors leading to increased levels of plagiarism have been cited, such as inadequate time to study, fear of failure, a belief that students will not be caught because lecturers do not have time to extensively read the assignments because of work pressure, studying too many courses that result in students feeling an alienation by colleagues, and individual student factors, such as age, average grade point, and gender, amongst others (Gullifer & Tyson, 2010:465). Betts, Bostock, Elder and Trueman (2012:36) also investigated factors that encouraged student plagiarism behaviour. They maintained that if the students are not well integrated into the academic community, a lack of orientation on the ethics of academia can lead to plagiarism. It is challenging to integrate a community of distance education learners. Other factors cited include part-

time jobs which affect student study time, a lack of study skills, and good student-lecturer relationships where lecturers are unlikely to punish them for academic dishonesty.

Apart from using plagiarism policies and software to address academic dishonesty, NUST should shift its focus from detecting to addressing the problem through the introduction of an academic writing skills course. Pecorari and Petrić (2014:287) recommended that the best way to address plagiarism is by "educating students explicitly about plagiarism … teaching source use and referencing in greater depth". Spending time on ways to combat plagiarism amongst students is worth the effort as it affects the integrity of institutions and intellectual growth (Batane, 2010:37).

5.11   The assessment systems of distance education practices

COLL should put more emphasis on the standardisation of marks and marking guidelines. The role of COLL is to ensure that marker tutors comply with their assessment policy. Students sometimes may submit similar assignments without being detected, and they realise the gap in the symbol obtained. Provided this scenario, COLL should introduce similarity check software to avoid such discrepancies. This will assist COLL as a centre of distance education in preventing students from submitting assignments with similarity.

5.12   Positive governance concerns identified at the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning

Despite some governance challenges outlined at COLL, the researcher identified positive developments that the institution can tap into to improve distance HE services. Such positive developments are discussed below.

5.12.1 Marker tutors' level of education

Generally, students are happy with the level of education of marker tutors and believe that they are qualified to offer distance programmes. It was also noted that these marker tutors provide academic support to students.

5.12.2 Policies and procedures

Concerning policies and procedures, 91.7% of the respondents indicated that there exist adequate policies and procedures to guide distance education staff members and students. Students are provided with an orientation before commencing with their studies. Approximately 75% of COLL officials indicated that these policies are followed and implemented. COLL, as the distance education provider, should adhere to the legislative framework outlined in Chapter Three to attain its objectives. A total of 75% of the respondents agreed that COLL has a policy in ODL. Another 91.7% of the respondents agreed that COLL recorded improvements over the last five years.

5.12.3 Management strategies

There is confirmation from the respondents that COLL strategies are implemented for the management of distance education activities. COLL management visits departments and regional centres and interacts directly with regional officials. COLL management also ensures that officials of the university understand the vision and mission of the institution. From the survey conducted at COLL, 91.7% of the staff members indicated that the performance of student support officers, instructional designers, and coordinators are assessed regularly to establish whether they have met their targets.

5.12.4 Technology infrastructure investment

On technological investment, about 83.3% of the official's members agreed that COLL invested in technology to improve governance mechanisms and processes within NUST. The importance of technology in distance education cannot be underestimated. To the statement that COLL management visits departments and regional centres and interacts directly with officials, 83.3% of the respondents agreed. This control mechanism is essential to enforce good practices at COLL regional centres. In addition, 91.7% indicated that COLL management directly oversee the actions of employees and rectify them as and when necessary. To the statement that the performance of COLL officials, such as student support officers, instructional designers, and coordinators, are assessed regularly to establish whether they have met the targets of their work per semester.

5.13 The pedagogy challenges

The course design challenges students to critically reflect upon the role of management and organisation, structures of power and control and, as illustrated, to question their position and individuality (Reynolds and Vince, 2004). For many students in the course, action learning is an unfamiliar practice, since the experience of undergraduate classrooms has largely been of a 'traditional', teacher-centric didactic pedagogy approach. The challenge for educators and instructional designers is to develop web-based distance education courses, inclusive and not exclusive (Schwier, 2002:16).

Subsequently, critics of online courses emphasise the isolation of learners through the lack of communication. Communication is particularly important in the virtual learning community; it is the "actual brick and mortar of the community" (Schwier, 2002:7). The online instructor must be conscious of this reality and stay in communication with the learner. It is also important that various forms of communication be fostered between learners, not just between the instructor and the learners. Chapter two and four replete detail various barriers to distance education. Communication

obstacles can arise at all stages of the distance education process: in the design, development, delivery, or implementation of distance education courses (Berge, 2013:374).

5.14   Chapter summary

This chapter evaluated the results of the data presented in Chapter 4. The evaluation employed governance theories and principles outlined in Chapter 2. Themes about challenges in distance education governance, management challenges, legislative framework evaluation, and evaluation of distance education practices were outlined and assessed. Challenges and positives at COLL that were identified during the survey formed part of the last section of this chapter. Lack of funds creates loopholes within the HEI. Universities are underfunded by the government and this is a challenging situation to students and the entire university administration. Though the public has been advocating for free HE system in Namibia this will create more problems as far as HE in Namibia is a concern.

COLL needs to revamp its policies and procedures of distance education so that it speaks to the demand and supply of HE in Namibia. Additionally, the monitoring and evaluation unit is absent at COLL. NUST must introduce a monitoring and evaluation unit that will be linked to the quality assurance unit. This will assist the university to assess its programmes and student performance. No system of communication link students and COLL management. A suggestion box has been recommended at regional centres for students to air their views or challenges encountered These challenges may range from a lack of academic to student support. The subsequent chapter discusses the normative approach to management challenges.

CHAPTER 6: NORMATIVE APPROACH TO MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

6.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to institute relevant plans and interventions to ensure that the various challenges, which COLL encounters concerning ODL are addressed effectively and efficiently. Based on the findings of the study, some of the notable challenges COLL experiences include human resource challenges, infrastructural challenges, and administrative challenges. As a result, there is a need for the institution to have various measures implemented to ensure that they are addressed effectively and efficiently. The efficacy of COLL management will assist to improve service delivery in distance HE.

6.2 Governance in higher education

Huisman (2009:82), governance in HE can be defined as how the HEIs are organised and operate internally and the relationships that they have with the external entities to secure the objectives of HE as a realm of enquiry, and critique. Austin and Jones (2016:44) stated that one of the critical applications of good governance at global levels is the promotion of economic growth and eradication of poverty (Amaral, Bleiklie & Musselin, 2009:48). Good governance practices at institutions of higher learning provide mechanics for universities to be at the forefront of societal development.

The fundamental rationality of universities is to conduct research and engage with the community (Ahmed & Iqbal, 2014:169). Good governance at universities may be used as an instrument that supports economic reform in countries affected by poverty and other social dimensions. Significantly, good governance at universities is a prerequisite for national development. Another practical application of good governance at institutions of higher learning is to provide capacity-building and institutional-building. The capacity-building provides an understanding to organisations working towards improving situations and challenges of society (Zirkle, 2006:193).

Ahmed and Iqbal (2014:167) opine that even though there is no collectively agreed definition of governance in general or governance in the domain of HE, there are some features of governance, prevalent in most of the definitions. Governance is linked to structures and processes, used for decision-making. HE governance addresses national-, supranational-, regional-, and institutional processes (Austin & Jones, 2016:43). Although HE governance has some industry-specific traits, it is also sharing numerous developments with the general public sector governance. This is depicted through the numerous conceptual approaches employed in HE studies where governance have its origins in public administration, political science, public policy or organisational studies (Amaral *et al.*, 2009:97).

Other scholars, such as Zirkle (2006:193), opine that HE governance institutions include various aspects, such as how the human resources are managed within the institutions, funding, quality assurance, internationalisation, and academic- and scientific planning, amongst others. Governance in HE also encompasses the internal working of the HEI, the relationship between the institutions with various external bodies, maintenance of academic freedom, and the pivotal role of HE, and the need to maintain and reinforce public trust in HEI.

6.3 Nature of governance in higher education

Middlehurst (2004:258), governance in HE refers to how HEIs are formally managed and organised. Altbach (2005:54) defines university governance as to how universities are operated. Kezar and Eckel (2004:375) define governance as the internal organisation, structure, and management of autonomous institutions. As Middlehurst (2004:258) points out, the central administration in most cases is a powerful force concerning governance in HE. This is especially the case in HE systems having minimal entrepreneurial structures. In several universities, the position of the vice chancellor, president or chief executive officer is always established. These positions oversee the day-to-day management of universities (Altbach, 2005:54). As a result, they are always responsible for various administrative tasks within the provided universities. Some of the leading roles which they serve include ensuring the effective implementation of goals, spelt out by the legislative authority or by the governing boards, and decision-making roles based on the institution's strategic framework (Kezar & Eckel, 2004:371).

6.4 Accountability in higher education

It is worthwhile to signalise that official at HEI should display a sense of responsibility when performing official duties. Carey and Schneider (2010:2) in Chapter 2 signalise that accountability must be at the forefront to solve concerns of HE by harnessing institutional self-interest, and making what is right for universities and what is good for society. Cloete (1998:97) state that official in HE must be above reproach. The actions of each university official should be to the benefit of students and stakeholders or must add value to the institution. If accountability is to be manifested officials of universities should not have any ulterior motives when deciding on what cause of action to follow. Universities received funds from the government and other significant private donors. HE institutions must be accountable to these monies. If officials are not responsible for public funds, it creates pressure in the direction of transparency because the public wants to know how funds are employed. Significantly, universities introduce a mechanism of monitoring and evaluation. This is in the quest to increase financial control such as:

- Increasing the number of government regulations regarding the assessment of quality, curriculum, and teaching official of the university,
- New public established universities to undergo the mandatory process of accreditations, and
- Promote reporting effectiveness and assessing the performance of spending of funds by universities,

6.5 Conceptual framework of managing ODL institutions

The framework below can be used to improve governance at COLL. A thorough explanation of each factor is provided in the subsequent sections.
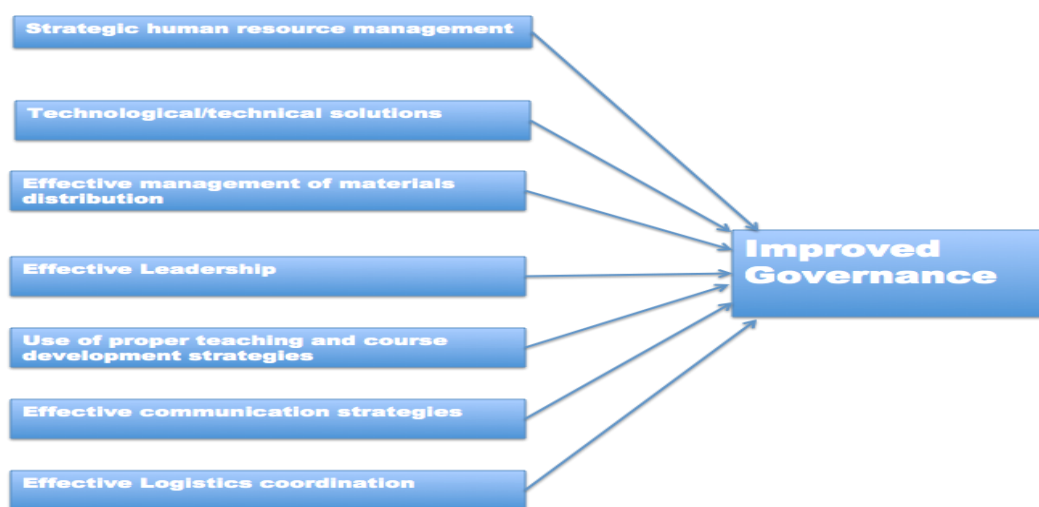
Figure 6.1: Framework for improving governance at the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning

Source: (Authors own work)

6.6 Solutions to distance education challenges encountered by the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning

Various strategies can be embraced with a view of improving how various aspects are managed. Based on the findings of this study, some of the main strategies, which can be adopted, include the proper management of human resources, adoption of various technological devices to improve how various activities are performed, and having implemented highly effective leadership.

6.6.1 Strategic human resource management

One of the challenges, which COLL encounters, is the ineffective management of human resources. As a result, strategic human resource management is one of the main strategies, which the institution can use. As Lapworth (2004:299) signalise, human resource management mainly focuses on the

recruitment and hiring of the best employees and offering them the necessary benefits, compensation, training, and development, which they need to be successful within an organisation. Strategic human resource management, conversely, takes these responsibilities one step further through ensuring that they are properly aligned with the goals of the other departments and organisational goals (Siswanto & Aldridge, 2005:49).

The institution needs to ensure that strategic human resource management is used. Other scholars define strategic human resource management as the practice of developing, rewarding, and retaining staff for the benefit of both the staff as individuals and whole organisation (Barrett, 2017:51). The human resource department within the institution should interact with the other organisational departments to understand their goals and then create strategies, which align with the objectives of the organisation (Chou & Ravinet, 2016:271). The main aspects of strategic human resource management, which the institution should lay much emphasis on, include the use of highly effective recruitment and selection strategies, staff development, and training and development. NUST should use robust strategies to create a well-managed human resource system that attracts the best employees.

The robust strategies include aspects, such as employing an online system where potential employees present their CV (Curriculum Vitae) online and interact with HR (Human Resource) officials of NUST. Their remuneration and benefits must be transparent to potential employees as the quest for best candidates. These benefits may also help to maintain and boost staff retention. Aspects, such as staff coaching, and staff wellness are significant aspects of the essence that employees' health is considered. Staff development and training is the most fundamental device in the HR of any organisation. NUST should invest more funds for staff development and training projects.

6.6.1.1 Recruitment and selection

The institution should ensure that they have implemented proper recruitment and selection strategies, which should enable them to attract the right candidates for the jobs. This is both for academic- and non-academic roles. COLL's top management should ensure that it recruits adequate HRs (Lapworth, 2004:299). Regional centres need more officials to manage the activities of distance education. Based on the findings of the study, currently, regional centres are understaffed, and as a result, service delivery has been negatively influenced. Understaffing results in lower work quality. It places much pressure on the officials, and this lowers their morale and motivation (Siswanto & Aldridge, 2005:54). It also results in poor service delivery, which can reduce the institution's reputation. Attributable to a lack of inadequate employees at the regional centres, there will be an increase in the stress levels of the employees (Barrett, 2017:41).

An increase in the levels of stress amongst employees will significantly lower the levels of their morale and job satisfaction, which, in turn, will affect service delivery. NUST should ensure that regional centres should have adequate officials with the same workload with the officials of the main campus. Therefore, adequate officials will assist COLL to improve its activities at regional centres. Nepotism is another aspect at NUST and may create dysfunctions and deficiency because managers and executive may recommend people close to them who lack experience and qualifications. The institutions must use external agencies in the recruitment and selection process. These agencies can only be used in a key strategic position, such as vice chancellor and deputy vice chancellors. The other position can be done internally on campus with close monitoring of trade-unions and Senate members.

6.6.1.2 Staff development

Staff development is one of the leading HR measures, which can be implemented. In particular, the institution should embrace strategic HR development. Chou and Ravinet (2016:271) signalise that HEIs should also adopt strategic HR development policies regarding distance education for teaching. The considerable role, which is played by staff concerning the creation, existence, success, and progress of organisations including educational institutions, such as distance education, providers cannot be overemphasised (Botham & Mason, 2007:50). Despite the rapid technological advancement, the faculty plays an essential role in distance education. The faculty ensures institutional quality and the improvement of learning. Mayes, Luebeck, Ku, Akarasriworn and Korkmaz (2011:166) also note that institutions should have highly effective strategic human resource development policies regarding distance education for teaching-, technical-, administrative officials, and part-time officials.

Institutions should invest in officials to ensure their employees' individual professional development and institutional effectiveness (Oladokun & Aina, 2011:175). The institutions ought to ensure that all the new employees got through a thorough induction programme on various areas of distance education, institutional strategic goals, and operations before placement. Employees should be appraised regularly (Aktaruzzaman & Plunkett, 2016:224). There should be continuous training or updating on areas of IT, and staff members' specific training needs. There are several benefits, which will be gained because of employee training. Some of the main benefits include an increase in the levels of job satisfaction, morale, and motivation of the employees, and an increase in the levels of efficiencies in organisational processes, capacity to embrace newer methods and technologies, and increased innovation in strategies (Allen & Seaman, 2017:23).

Temple (2012:39) also notes that the teaching staff directly in contact with the learners in teaching, tutoring, and learner support roles should be highly competent. Some of the main competencies and

attributes that they need to possess generally include being at ease with the learners, awareness of the needs and circumstances of the learners, being highly skilled in the provided subject areas or discipline, being highly knowledgeable on the workings of ODL, and the types of resources and timeframes required for ODL course delivery (Vergera & Javier, 2010:120). The teaching officials should also be able to work as a team member, possess knowledge of administrative systems in their organisations, be open to new ideas and new perspectives, and willing to learn newer teaching and learning approaches besides being able to balance the demands of discipline with the needs of the learners (Estermann, Nokkala & Steinel, 2011:74).

6.6.1.3 Training strategies

The institution should ensure that the new, and the existing officials, are properly trained to ensure that they have the competencies that they need to execute their roles properly within the organisation (Aktaruzzaman & Plunkett, 2016:223). The senior managers within the institution should observe training as an investment instead of just seeing it as a cost (Temple, 2012:43). Adequate resources need to be allocated to ensure that employees are trained and developed. After the provision of training, the newly acquired knowledge and skills should be used for the growth of the organisation. Employees should constantly learn new skills and work practices (Allen & Seaman, 2017:76). Proper training will ensure that they adapt to newer ways of teaching and communicating, making them able to use new technologies that can alter the standard teaching and communication processes. The acquisition of new skills and competencies will make officials responsible for supporting learners at a distance. Development of knowledge of the academic faculty will also play a key role in improving their teamwork skills and coordination skills besides enabling them to properly manage their schedules (Anderson & Dron, 2011:97).

The institution should ensure that all the newly appointed employees are provided proper induction and training to equip them with the required knowledge and skills to perform their functions (Baran, Correia & Thompson, 2011:439). The other group of people who should be trained includes the employees who take on newer responsibilities and roles of existing employees. Training can also be provided to all officials periodically to ensure that they maintain their standards and skills and to ensure their continuing professional development. Training should also be provided to employees facing specific changes in their work because of various changes in the organisation (Cohen & Kisker, 2010:42).

To ensure that training is performed in the right manner, various measures need to be implemented by the organisation. The organisation needs to ensure that there is a proper allocation of the right resources or training processes. The top management of the institution should also be highly committed to the training process (Beese, 2014:306), and training programmes should be consistent.

The institution also needs to ensure that there is prompt development of plans and policies for staff training, mainly for part-time and field-based staff. There should also be proper integration of the training programmes with the institutional plans and policies (Cohen & Kisker, 2010:306).

There are various steps, which need to be implemented to ensure that the training programmes are implemented effectively and efficiently. For instance, as Blumenstyk (2014:93) points out, there should be proper definition and agreement within the organisation regarding the training needs based on a systematic needs' analysis. Reviewing possible ways of meeting needs and the availability of financial resources should follow this (Dobbins, Knill & Vögtle, 2011:683). After this, what needs to take place include the establishment of priorities, selection of appropriate training events and interventions, construction of a coherent training plan based on the available resources, communication to all the concerned individuals, and building a highly supportive training climate (Blumenstyk, 2014:93). When these have been implemented, there is a need for the preparation of an evaluation approach and plan that can guide the whole process. The training should after that be provided, and its efficiency and effectiveness evaluated. After this, the evaluation data should be used for the evaluation of its influence to improve training provision and inform plans (Blumenstyk, 2014:93).

There are various training methods, which can be used. They include on-the-job training, face-to-face training sessions, and courses offered face-to-face and at a distance. Regarding on-the-job training, highly experienced or senior staff can be assigned to work with the new or the junior staff on various projects to mentor and assist them (Enders, 2004:382). Regarding face-to-face training sessions, it may take place one-on-one or in small groups, using in-house or imported trainers. They are primarily formally structured and scheduled (Bao, 2013:467).

The institution can also rely on face-to-face or distance training. The employee will always need to travel to the site where the courses are provided. Some of the courses can also be provided online (Temple, 2012:42). There are three primary levels at which the training needs analysis can be performed, indicating the 1) organisational level, 2) job level and 3) individual level (Altbach, Gumport & Berdahl, 2011:54).

A highly effective strategy entails starting at the organisational level and after that working towards the individual level although the diagnosis of the training needs at an organisational level needs highly sophisticated analysis-, evaluation-, and diagnosis skills, and access to a wide array of information (Amaral & Magalhães, 2013:59). When done at the organisational level, some of the main sources of data that the institution should rely on include staffing plans and projections, auditing the skills and knowledge of staff, identification of any shortages (present and future), and indicators of efficiency and organisational output (Vergera & Javier, 2010:120). The sources of data when it is

done at the job level include job descriptions and specifications, the objectives, standards, and targets that have been set, and the priorities that have been identified, and lastly, work sampling or job observation. At the individual level, the sources of data include performance appraisal and identification of the employee development needs. It can also be done using interviews and questionnaires (Estermann *et al.*, 2011:67).

6.6.2   Technological solutions

There are various technical problems currently encountered by the institution, which hinder the effectiveness of the ODL programmes. Technical problems, which might be encountered by the students, ought to be addressed and planned for before happening. One of the main solutions to the problem includes upgrading the computers and the Internet at the institution. The level of effectiveness of distance learning is pegged on the ability of both the students and instructors to use technology comfortably. The technological systems used should be adapted to ensure that they meet the needs of the students (Anderson & Dron, 2011:97). COLL centres need to train students on how to employ computers and Internet facilities when courses are delivered online. COLL should train students in ICT-related applications. COLL centres need to ensure that all the technical concerns are addressed effectively and efficiently.

The students should be provided with broad bandwidth or strong Internet connections, which is required for the ODL. They should also provide technical support to students and organise computer literacy classes for all students before the commencement of the learning processes. Even though most of the students are generally tech-savvy, a lack of computer literacy is a major concern amongst some of the students. Some of them are not able to operate basic programs, such as Microsoft Word and PowerPoint and hence, they are not able to handle their files. Additionally, some students find fixing basic computer problems troublesome because they do not know about this area. Technological proficiency will enable students to manage their assignments and courseware in an organised manner without struggling. Basic courses in computer literacy will play a key role in enabling students to easily participate in online classes without any interruption and hindrance (Baran *et al.*, 2011:439).

6.6.3   Effective management of materials distribution

Proper management of materials distribution is also crucial in ODL (Beese, 2014:306). In comparison to the conventional institutions, the study has found that ODL presents some unique challenges concerning providing the learners with instructional materials. Some of the main techniques, which can be used for the distribution of the study materials include allowing learners to collect the materials themselves from learning centres. The institution should ensure that it has adequate staff to ensure

that there is proper distribution of learning materials. COLL should also consider the use of postal systems, exceptionally reliable. This will ensure that the materials reach the students promptly. They can also make use of courier services, which will ensure that there are faster delivery and door-to-door services. Whilst this may have various cost implications, it is more efficient (Dobbins *et al.*, 2011:683).

White and Frederiksen (2005:223), for ODL programmes, which use computer-mediated communication extensively in their delivery system, the chance exists to forego the generation of 'hard copy' materials. The institution should consider the use of electronic delivery for dispatching materials (Krause & Lowe, 2014:57). For instance, it can supply study materials to the learners on a compact disc, from which the learners could print out hard (paper) copies or work directly from the disc itself (soft copies). The institution should also consider allowing learners to download the course materials directly through e-mails or the World Wide Web (Simpson, 2013:119). There are several advantages, linked to dispatching these 'paperless' modes of study materials. First, they will result in a decreased need for warehousing space and dispatch staff. Second, it will play a role in reducing postage or transport costs, saving the institution costs.

Subsequently, this option is highly flexible since learners have the choice to print only selected portions of the study material or can leave the material in electronic/soft format (Barajas, 2002:28). The other notable benefits include ensuring that there is 'just-in-time' delivery to the learners because it will enable learners to access the learning materials when they need them. It also enables the integration of various media, which include graphics, text, videos, pictures, audio, and World Wide Web courseware. When the materials are placed on the World Wide Web, it can easily be accessed by many students.

For these benefits to be gained, there will be a dire need for training officials concerning the development of materials appropriate for these media (Guglielmino & Guglielmino, 2004:39). The staff also needs to be trained on the effective use of technologies to support the learners. The institution will also need to ensure that the learners are well-trained for them to be able to use the media in a highly effective manner. The institutions should also ensure that there is reliable and affordable access to these technologies to both learners and COLL officials. The institution will also need to continue supporting the learners and COLL officials concerning the use of the technologies (Ku & Ho, 2010:267).

6.6.4 Effective leadership

Various leadership challenges are always encountered, and these generally hinder service delivery (Hou, Hill, Chen, Tsai & Chen *et al.*, 2017:24). In ODL, the leaders ought to be highly competent. In successful ODL programmes, there should be key individuals with the influence, vision, and requisite leadership skills to ensure that all the activities are executed effectively and efficiently. The leaders in charge of ODL should have the vision of the scope, rationale, and potential influence of ODL programmes in their own context (Garrison, 2009:104). Besides, they should have a clear view of the prospective participants and their needs. Similarly, they need to be able to assess financial- and human resources, and decision-makers having access to those resources. The leaders should have a proper grasp of how the ODL works (Krause & Lowe, 2014:39).

They should have sound planning and resource allocation skills. They should also have a proper understanding of the way their organisations work and how ODL can affect existing systems. The leaders should possess excellent communication- and coordination skills as this will be pivotal in the management of various aspects of distance learning (Vasilescu, Barna, Epure & Baicu, 2010:418). They should be able to convey the value of ODL besides having the ability to identify training needs and providing learning opportunities about ODL processes to the teaching staff and administrators responsible for the implementation of various ODL projects (Williams, 2003:57).

6.6.5 Use of proper teaching and course development strategies

Nasongkhia, Thammetar, Chen and Hotipussa (2015:15) signalise, in ODL, teaching responsibilities are often divided into two main phases, which include the 1) development of the courses, which entails preparing the course materials, and 2) tutoring, which entails the provision of instructional support to the learners whilst they are using the materials. Course development can be subdivided further into the provision of subject matter expertise and instructional techniques appropriate to ODL (Cohen & Kisker, 2010:76). A wide array of competencies is needed for the various components of course development, with some specific competencies necessary for the subject matter specialists and instructional design specialists. Those initially involved in course development should share the vision of ODL (Blumenstyk, 2014:91).

The programme leaders need to possess a wide array of competencies. For instance, they should be fully aware of some of the primary needs and circumstances of the learners. They should also possess exquisite planning, scheduling, and implementation skills for labour-intensive tasks. They should have a proper grasp of how ODL works, and about the various types of timeframes and resources required for the development of the courses. Team management skills are also crucial for programme leaders (Bao, 2013:467).

The course developers and subject matter specialists, hired by the institution, should be open to newer ideas and perspectives regarding their discipline. They should also command expertise in the subject areas or disciplines, and in teaching the provided subject areas or disciplines. Furthermore, they should be willing to learn newer approaches to teaching and learning (Amaral & Magalhães, 2013:76).

6.6.6   Effective communication strategies

Based on the findings of the study, there are various communication challenges, currently encountered, which hinder the effectiveness of communication. Effective communication is one of the key features, which ought to be possessed by the academic faculty. They should be able to communicate the various needs of the learners to the institution and its perspective to learners. They should also have proper interpersonal skills in learner advising, counselling, and problem-solving (Temple, 2012:63). ODL significantly depends on the communication between tutors and learners. There need to be highly effective communication channels between the learners and instructors, learners with their fellow learners, and learners with the learning materials. The institution should thus make use of various technological advancements to ensure that there is effective communication (Temple, 2012:63). This will result in significant improvements in the performance of the institution on matters to do with ODL.

6.6.7   Effective logistics coordination

Proper logistics coordination is also needed for ODL. The institution should ensure that the people acting as logistics coordinators are highly competent in several areas (Altbach *et al.*, 2005:10). They should be able to plan and foresee various logistical needs of ODL. Proper scheduling and allocation of resources are also needed. Besides, they need to anticipate potential difficulties (Vergera & Javier, 2010:120).

They should be in a position to communicate well with the learners, clients, and teaching and administrative employees within the institution to address the concerns and problems of concern to ensure that they are resolved effectively and efficiently (Siswanto & Aldridge, 2005:76). They should also be able to not only organise but also direct the work of others and communicate the significance of accuracy and timeliness. Logistics coordinators should also be able to ensure proper coordination with other organisations and institutions to set up study- and examination centres (Barrett, 2017:59). They should possess knowledge of general administrative- and financial systems, and stock control systems and production lead times required to ensure that the levels of stock are adequately maintained (Lapworth, 2004:314).

6.6.8 Proper research and evaluation

As Barrett (2017:59) and Chou and Ravinet (2016:271) signalise, in ODL, research and evaluation are important competencies. The research and evaluation officials should have a proper comprehension of the main goals and procedures of research in education and be able to signalise the aspects of ODL programmes that require continuous monitoring procedures, and that need a specific research project (Botham & Mason, 2007:77). The development of needs analysis processes to determine the various courses and services which ODL units ought to offer is also another key competency, which they need to possess (Oladokun & Aina, 2011:177). Being highly skilled in design monitoring procedures, which can be incorporated easily into normal administrative processes, is also a competency they require (Mayes *et al.*, 2011:166).

6.6.9 Proper design of the teaching and assessment strategies

6.6.9.1 Learning outcomes

Baran *et al.* (2011:439) opine that learning outcomes are crucial, as they can predict the type of teaching and assessment strategies that should be developed. At the same time, they offer various kinds of opportunities for learners to develop their capabilities (Beese, 2014:306). As a result, it is essential that when defining, designing, and specifying the learning outcomes, critical assessment of the nature and context of ODL need be considered. It is worth pointing out that the design of highly effective learning outcomes should not be detached from the development of the teaching and assessment strategies (Dobbins *et al.*, 2011:683).

The learning outcomes ought to indicate the content that the students should be aware of at the end of the lesson. Learning outcomes generally refer to the written statements concerning what the students are required to understand, know, and be able to do following the completion of a provided learning unit (Enders, 2004:382). The institution should ensure that the learning outcomes are appropriately connected to the purpose, and the rationale of the programme. Besides, the institution should ensure that they consider the mode and nature of learning and teaching targeted at ODL students. The institution should also ensure that they develop good learning outcomes, which should be realistic, smart, applicable, meaning manageable, transparent, time-bound, and transferable. It is also worth pointing out that technological consideration is highly essential when designing the learning outcomes, and as a result, it should be taken into consideration (Temple, 2012:65).

6.6.9.2 Teaching strategies and activities

Botham and Mason (2007:65) noted that the development of well-designed elements of pedagogical practices, such as teaching and learning strategies is highly crucial, primarily in ODL settings. These

teaching strategies and activities ought to be guided by the learning outcomes, which have been adequately defined right from the onset. The institution should ensure that the learning, teaching, and assessment strategies are illustrated by relevant activities, which should aim to assist students in attaining well-defined learning outcomes.

Mayes *et al.* (2011:166), it is apparent that teaching in the ODL environment is performed differently from that of traditional universities or other institutions of higher learning since the students are generally not in classes on a full-time basis. They are always geographically detached from the classes. The institution needs to consider that teaching in these contexts implies that learning environments differ because they always encounter various barriers and challenges (Oladokun & Aina, 2011:177). As a result, teaching ought to adopt diverse strategies and approaches, which can make learning easier. In their pedagogical practices, the teachers should bear in mind the principles of technology-driven- and constructive-alignment curricula.

6.6.9.3 Assessment strategies and activities

In the ODL curriculum, assessment is essential (Aktaruzzaman & Plunkett, 2016:224). During the administration of the assessments, academics should ensure that the process improves the learning experiences of the students and their academic achievements. Assessment of the students is a highly significant element of the teaching and learning process. It is beneficial for identifying the weakness in the teaching processes, and the areas that need improvement (Allen & Seaman, 2017:65). Assessment is also highly beneficial as it makes the students more reflexive and self-regulated. It also makes them independent people with the necessary skills to exercise high-level assessment on their own and others' work, which improves lifelong learning (Anderson & Dron, 2011:97).

6.7 Policy framework

Distance education policies and strategies may assist COLL to improve its delivery system. It is vital that for COLL to enhance its capacity-building. COLL policies should be well articulated and well implemented. Good policies may improve the efficacy of managing ODL systems. As already alluded in the previous chapters, COLL lacks policies to manage the activities of distance education. COLL need to introduce various policy aspects, such as training policies, standardisation policy, plagiarism policy, academic and administration policies. These policies should be implemented and well administered.

Additionally, future policies are relevant to structural reform and limitation in the expenditure of distance education. Good policies may assist COLL to cut on costs. COLL as the centre for delivering distance education at NUST must have policies that speak with a national framework of distance

education in Namibia. Within the framework of policies and priorities, COLL should contribute to capacity-building of open and lifelong learning. COLL is in the process of introducing online courses it is imperative to establish policies relevant to online learning. The support system must come from governments and other stakeholders to safeguard a sustainable financial and legal framework for open and distance. The implemented regulatory framework at COLL should be reviewed to determine whether reform is essential. COLL should set up a robust policy framework and strategies for open and lifelong learning, to allow it to realise its full potential and contribute to the solution for the mounting education demand nationally.

6.8 Suitable models to adopt

The review of distance education models in Chapter 2 of this report illustrated that there are many existing models of governance. These governance models include (university as a cube, university as a political model, university as a collegial model, university as a bureaucratic model) and models for structuring governance at universities (shared model of governance, corporate as a model of governance, trustee model of governance) for quality assurance of open, distance, flexible and online education, including e-learning. They share many common features, and many are designed to offer flexibility for institutions to adapt to suit national and institutional contexts. The most common structure encountered presents criteria for performance in aspects of institutional management, curriculum design student support and other elements of governance educational provision, further subdivision into performance indicators and indications of sources of evidence.

The most general categorisation of activities is governance structure and systems (Institutional strategy, visions, and resourcing) Products (processes of curriculum and module development) and Services (student, and staff support, information resources etc.). Differences between the models reviewed lie in the grouping of criteria and the granularity of the detail applied at the performance indicator levels rather than the inherent approach to governance. Some models apply numerical scoring criteria with target performance levels others rely on more subjective assessment of performance. The originators of the models have each made judgements on the trade-off between generality and specificity in the breakdown of activity to be reviewed. Many are designed to integrate with national systems for the governance of HE, based on peer review and interrogation of institutional self-assessment documents.

The influence of governance models is difficult to assess, although studies on this subject have been undertaken. It is not just a question of drafting these texts, but rather of ascertaining whether the institution's leadership and members are committed to them. Evidence from HE systems where the governance models have been implemented is rather scarce and it is difficult to distinguish this area from other measures, such as systemic reforms performed in certain countries including Namibia.

The discussed models can be effective in strengthening governance concerns at NUST. A combination of the university as a collegial model and corporate as model governance is best suitable for NUST considering the findings in Chapter 4 of this report.

The adoption of the collegial model will confirm the perceptions of collegiality which remain relevant because individuals intend to work inclusively; there is a need for more collaboration than ever before, especially in the aspect of distance education. Conversely, the corporate model will establish the middle ground by adopting this amalgamated model of governance in which corporate governance is employed in tandem with other governance models. One reason is that these two models affirm what in many institutions had been addressed anyway. Another reason is that they foster conformity, especially of governing boards, thus failing to recognise the individual culture of institutions or the diversity of these within the system.

6.9 Areas for further research

The main aim of this study was to analyse the theories and models of governance and management in distance HE. To analyse policy framework aspects in place for managing or guiding HE processes in Namibia, to analyse management concerns of distance education in Namibia at COLL of NUST and explore solutions/strategies that may enhance the management of distance HE in Namibia.

6.10   Solutions to pedagogy challenges

Berge (2013:374) as cited in Keegan (1986) maintain that a critical link in communication in distance education was missing, caused by the geographic separation between students and tutors. Universities need to apply strategies of communication as a quest to strengthen the linkages of communication. These robust strategies of communication can be evidenced-based pedagogies, as discussed in Chapter 2. Aspects of evidenced-based pedagogies show that education can be delivered through online using various types of devices. Students needed to be introduced to technological devices of teaching and learning, such as the iPad and Podcast. In the perspective of NUST, it is essential to assist students to access devices, such as laptops and pockets Wi-Fi, as a quest to expand and promote learning in remote areas. Several pedagogy challenges were mentioned in the previous chapters and one of the fundamental solutions to these challenges is that university needed to adapt to the utilisation of advanced technologies and specifically the implementation of web 3.0 in learning. These applications will promote communication amongst university students and academic tutors thereof. Facebook, Videoconferencing and YouTube amongst many should hit the education fraternity.

6.11   Chapter summary

This chapter has presented some of the main strategies, which COLL can adopt to improve its performance concerning governance. Several recommendations have been offered, which include strategic HR management, which entails making sure that there are proper recruitment and selection strategies and ensuing strategic HR development. For the technological challenges currently encountered at COLL, one of the primary measures which can be implemented include upgrading the computers and Internet at the institution and making sure that the students and staff are adequately trained on the use of various technological devices within the institution. The other strategies, which have been recommended in this section, include effective management of materials distribution, effective organisational leadership, the use of proper teaching and course development- and communication strategies, effective logistical coordination, and proper design of the teaching strategies, assessment strategies, and learning outcomes for improved student success rates. Adoption of these strategies will significantly improve the performance of COLL concerning governance.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE ON DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENTS

(A) SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

1. What is your gender?

○ Female

○ Male

2. What is your age?

○ 18-20 ○ 21-29 ○ 30-39 ○ 40-49 ○ 50-59 ○ 60 or older

3. For how many years have you been a student at NUST?

○ 1 year ○ 2 years ○ 3 years ○ 4 years ○ 5 years ○ others

4. Can you indicate the regional centre you registered at?

○ Windhoek ○ Outapi ○ Tsumeb ○ Gobabis ○ Ongwediva ○ Rundu

○ Otjiwarongo ○ Keetmanshoop ○ Walvisbay ○ Katima Mulilo

5. Can you outline and explain the problems you experience at your distance education regional centre?

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(B) PERCEPTION ON STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES:

To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. I am satisfied with the study materials of COLL.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

2. I am satisfied with the Internet facilities of NUST.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

3. I am satisfied with the infrastructures of NUST distance education centres.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

4. I received prompt feedback about my queries concerning material, books and Internet.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

5. I am satisfied with the distribution and delivery of study materials.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

(C) STUDENT PERCEPTION ON COLL MANAGEMENT:

To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. I am satisfied with COLL engagement and support strategies.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

2. NUST policies and regulations with regard to my studies are well explained to me.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

3. I am satisfied with how concerns concerning distance education students are addressed.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree or strongly disagree please explain the concerns not addressed and why is it not addressed?

4. I received enough information from COLL about my studies at the beginning of each semester or academic year.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain the problem why information is not disseminated?

5. I am satisfied with the representation of distance education students in the governance and management structure of NUST.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

6. I am satisfied with the tuition fees imposed on me.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, can you briefly explain why you are not satisfied?

7. Is the off-campus support system flexible enough to cater to the needs of distance education students at NUST.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

a). If you disagree, please explain why?

b). What is the role of management in this regard?

8. Evaluation of the success of distance education courses is quite objective.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

9. Which students support aspects in distance education and terms of management do you feel are neglected or overlooked? Please explain why?

10. Which aspects of the student support system do you feel must be improved by management? Explain why?

‒

11. Does COLL provide distance education students with efficient support and information concerning availability of support academics?

○ Yes ○ No

Can you please share your opinions why you think that way?

12. What are the factors leading to a higher failure rate of distance education students at NUST?

D. PERCEPTION ON MARKER TUTORS OR ACADEMICS

1). Can you rate the level of teaching of distance education marker tutors? *(Tick)* 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest.

○ 1 ○ 2

○ 3 ○ 4

If your ratings are below 2 please explain why?

2. Marker tutors at COLL are qualified to teach distance education programmes?

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

3. Marker tutors provide academic support to distance students regularly.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

4. What other challenges do you experience about marker tutors at COLL?

5. What do you think marker tutors should do to help improve challenges encountered by distance education students?

E). SUGGEST STRATEGIES THAT WILL IMPROVE MANAGEMENT, SUPPORT MECHANISM AND ACADEMICS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

I). MANAGEMENT

1. Suggest strategies that will ensure that there is proper management with distance education students.

2. Suggest strategies that will assist management to improve the quality of distance education programmes.

3. Suggest strategies that will improve the planning and organisation of distance education activities at NUST.

4). Suggests effective management strategies that solve students problems at NUST.

II). SUPPORT

1. Suggest strategies that will improve the support of administrative officials to distance education students.

2. Suggest technological strategies that will improve the support of distance education students.

3. Suggests support mechanism strategies that distance education students can use to report their grievances.

4. The institution should have a committee that works directly with the development of both print-based and online courses.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

5. The institution should have in place experienced human resources, or a department that organises training related to online and print-based learning specifically to distance students.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

III). ACADEMICS

1. There should be strategies that support learning environment to distance students.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

2. Provision of assignment feedback is crucial for the success of distance education students.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

3. The institution should ensure that there are various professional development strategies' and opportunities for tutor's markers to assist them in improving their teaching in distance education.

○ Strongly disagree ○ Disagree ○ Agree ○ Strongly agree

If you disagree, please explain why?

IV) OTHER CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

1. Can you provide any other challenges of distance education at NUST in general?

2. Can you provide any suggestion for improvement or solutions with regard to the above challenges?

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE CENTRE FOR OPEN AND LIFELONG LEARNING STAFF MEMBERS

[1] DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION (WILL ONLY BE USED FOR ANALYTICAL PURPOSES):

a). Age:

○ *21-29* ○ *30-39* ○ *40-49* ○ *50-59* ○ *60 or older*

b). Gender

○ *Female* ○ *Male*

c). Number of years as an official at NUST

○ *5 yrs or less* ○ *6 – 10 year's* ○ *11 – 15 year's* ○ *30-39* ○ *16 – 20 years*

○ *More than 20 yrs*

d). Highest academic qualification obtained

○ *Certificate* ○ *Diploma* ○ *Bachelor* ○ *Honours* ○ *Masters* ○ *PhD*

e). Name of regional centre

○ *Windhoek* ○ *Outapi* ○ *Tsumeb* ○ *Gobabis* ○ *Ongwediva* ○ *Rundu*

○ *Otjiwarongo* ○ *Keetmanshoop* ○ *Walvisbay* ○ *Katima Mulilo*

f). Please indicate your position at COLL?

Student Support Officer	☐
Instructional Designer	☐
Coordinator	☐
Store and Dispatch Clerk	☐

Senior Store and Dispatch Clerk ☐

Regional Coordinator ☐

Others _____ ☐

[2]. GOOD GOVERNANCE

a). What are the policies and procedures that NUST undertakes in distance education?

b). Policies and procedures in distance education are:

☐ Good

☐ Fair

☐ Bad

Please explain why you think so?

c). How would you define the implementation of policies at COLL?

☐ Good

☐ Fair

☐ Bad

Please explain why you think so?

d). COLL invest in the use of technology to improve governance mechanism and processes within NUST?

☐ Good

☐ Fair

☐ Bad

Can you please share your opinion why you think that way?

d). The use of technology in distance education activities at COLL are:

☐ Good

☐ Fair

☐ Bad

Please explain why you think so?

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?

e). Do you agree with the following statement: COLL services promote accountability and good governance.

○ *Strongly disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly agree*

Please explain why you think so?

f). Do you agree with the following statement: COLL services and administration promote good governance.

○ *Strongly disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly agree*

Please explain why you think so?

[3] DISTANCE EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

a). Does COLL have a policy in ODL?

○ *Yes*

○ *No*

If yes, please indicate the policy?

b). Does COLL follow procedures in the practices of ODL?

○ *Yes*

○ *No*

Please indicate the procedures.

c). Did COLL improve over the last five years?

○ *Yes*

○ *No*

 If yes, what are the accomplishments of COLL in the delivery of ODL? Please tick as many that apply.

Increase in enrolments   _____

Increased funding   _____

More trained staff in ODL delivery   _____

More recognition/acceptance of ODL courses in the job market   _____

Application of ICT in delivery of ODL   _____

Improved student support services   _____

Staff development   _____

Quality assurance improved   _____

Others   _____

d). If not, what are the problems?

Please tick

Lack of skilled labour   ☐

Lack of capacity-building   ☐

Poor communication system   ☐

Internet and network problem   ☐

Poor management   ☐

Lack of accountability   ☐

Others _____   ☐

e). Do you think these challenges can be addressed? Please motivate your answer with solutions?

f). Does COLL have strategies in the management of distance education activities?

○   *Yes*

○   *No*

h). If yes, what are these strategies?

g). If no, what strategies that can help to overcome students support challenges at COLL?

[4]. PERCEPTION ON MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS

To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

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(a) Controlling

1. Management of COLL visits department and regional centres and interact directly with officials.

i). ○ *Strongly disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly agree*

ii). ○ Yearly ○ Monthly ○ Weekly ○ Others

2. Management directly oversee the actions of employees and rectify them.

○ Yes

○ No

If yes, explain how?

If no, can you please provide reasons and solution?

3. COLL officials, such as student support officers, instructional designers and coordinators performance are assessed regularly to establish whether they have met their targets.

○ Yes

○ No

If yes, explain how?

If no, provide possible reasons?

(b) Policymaking

1. Policies are implemented and interpreted as per Statutes, Rules and Regulations of NUST.

○ *Strongly disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly agree*

If you disagree please explain why not?

2. Statutes Rules and Regulations of NUST are available and accessible to all employees.

○ *Strongly disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Neither agree nor disagree*

○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly agree*

If you disagree please explain why?

(c) Planning

1. NUST management ensures that officials of the university understand the vision and mission of the organisation.

○ *Strongly disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly agree*

If you disagree please explain why?

2. Management involves COLL officials in the development of the institution strategic plan.

○ *Strongly disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly agree*

If you disagree please explain why?

3. New staff at COLL receive an orientation.

○ Yes

○ No

If you say yes, what type of orientation?

(d) Organising

1. COLL management discuss official expectation regularly.

○ *Strongly disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly agree*

If you disagree please explain why?

2. Academic activities at COLL are organised by COLL officials to achieve the objectives of the department.

○ *Strongly disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly agree*

If you disagree please explain why?

3. Administrative activities at COLL are organised by COLL officials.

○   *Strongly disagree* ○   *Disagree* ○   *Agree* ○   *Strongly agree*

If you disagree please explain why?

4. Management ensures that COLL expenditure does not impede service delivery.

○   *Strongly disagree* ○   *Disagree* ○   *Agree* ○   *Strongly agree*

If you agree, please explain how?

If you disagree, please explain how?

(e). Leadership

1. COLL management is open to ideas recommended by the centre officials.

○   *Strongly disagree* ○   *Disagree* ○   *Agree* ○   *Strongly agree*

If you agree, please explain how?

If you disagree, please explain how?

2. COLL management allows employees to take full responsibility for their work.

○   *Strongly disagree* ○   *Disagree* ○   *Agree* ○   *Strongly agree*

If you agree, please explain how?

If you disagree, please explain how?

3. Management provides regular feedback on weekly reports provided by COLL officials.

○   *Yes*

○   *No*

If no, please explain why?

f). Directing

Do you play a role or influence to achieve the goals and vision of NUST?

○ *Strongly disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly agree*

1). Can you explain how you contribute to the success and goals of NUST vision?

2). What is the solution to the challenges above?

3. Can you provide any other challenges encountered by employees regarding COLL management?

4. Can you suggest solutions on how to overcome such challenges?

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ACADEMIC TUTORS

(A) SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

1. What is your gender?

○ Female

○ Male

2. What is your age?

○ 18-20 ○ 21-29 ○ 30-39 ○ 40-49 ○ 50-59 ○ 60 or older

3. For how many years have you been working as a marker tutor at COLL?

○ 1 year ○ 2 years ○ 3 years ○ 4 years ○ 5 years ○ others

4. What is your highest qualifications?

○ Diploma ○ Degree ○ Honours ○ Masters ○ Doctorate

5. Which is your faculty at NUST?

○ Human Sciences ○ Management Sciences ○ Computing and Informatics

○ Health and Applied Sciences ○ Natural Resources and Spatial Sciences

○ Engineering

○ Others please indicate_____

(B) PERCEPTION ON STUDENTS

1. Based on your experience what specific difficulties do distance education students' experience when writing assignments?

2. In marking assignments, how extensively do you comment on students' assignments?

3. In your position as a marker, how would you describe your relationship with the student whose work you are marking?

4. Which approach do you follow when giving feedback to distance students?

5. In your opinion and apart from academic concerns, what could be missing from distance students that was not addressed by management of NUST?

7. What is your general opinion for students who perform poor in their academic work?

9. Explain how you deal with the concern of plagiarism of academic activities from students?

B) MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

11. In what ways does management support your academic activities?

12. In what ways does COLL management support you in capacity-building programmes?

C). ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

13. What type of support do you receive from COLL support officials?

14. How do you maintain the pressure of returning the marked assignments to COLL?

15. Explain how the standardisation of marking of assignments with other tutors teaching the same course work?

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE FOR THE CENTRE FOR OPEN AND LIFELONG LEARNING MANAGEMENT

A). GOVERNANCE IN DISTANCE HIGHER EDUCATION

1. What do you understand by good governance in both distance education and HE?
2. How are students, officials and the public involved in the governance and management of HE?
3. What mechanism did COLL use to promote participation amongst its students and staff?
4. How do you ensure that there is transparency at COLL?

B). LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK IN TERMS OG HIGHER EDUCATION

1. What are the legislative regulatory and policy framework in place to manage distance education activities in HE?

2. Does COLL have the written policies and procedures in place that manage the administration of distance education at NUST?

a). How effective are policies and procedures?

b). Can you outline challenges in your experience in the implementation of procedures or policies?

3. Do you allow officials to take part in the decision-making process of the department or centre? Can you provide examples of how this is done?

C). MANAGEMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

1. What challenges you encounter in managing distance education centre at NUST.
2. In your view, describe how the management of distance education at NUST must be improved.
3. In your opinion, does the management of distance teacher education influence the quality of education offered through distance education?
4. Describe how you organise, plan, control, organise, lead, directing and evaluate your work priorities?
5. How do you maintain the efficacy management of distance education at NUST concerning the following:

a). administrative services?

b). financial resources?

c). and human resources?

6. Give me an experience that demonstrates your ability to manage your subordinates effectively and maintained labour turnover of:

a). academic officials

b). administrative officials

c). What were the challenges and how do you address them?

7. Describe funding challenges for a distance education centre at NUST.

D). DISTANCE EDUCATION PRACTICES AT NUST

1. What type of support system does the government provide to promote the distance education delivery in Namibia? Can you provide any challenges in this regard?

3. How do you maintain standardisation as the quest for creating a baseline level of quality distance education? Suggests any problems concerning standardisation?

E). STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE DISTANCE EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

1. Describe the strategies in place by NUST to address the changing concerns of technology in distance learning?

2. Explain the mechanism that may improve a better delivery method in distance education?

3. Can you provide any suggestion for improvement or solutions?

APPENDIX E: CONSENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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Office of the Registrar

01 October 2018

Mr Jackpelins Muundjua
Windhoek
NAMIBIA

Dear Mr Muundjua

RE: CONSENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITH THE NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY STAFF AND STUDENTS

The letter dated 11 September 2018 from Prof Frederik Uys from Stellenbosch University and your email received 04 July 2017 has reference.

Approval is hereby granted for you to conduct the research on *"Governance Challenges in the Delivery of Distance Education: A Case at the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning (COLL) of Namibia's University of Science and Technology"* in the Namibia University of Science and Technology. Any information gathered during the research is to be used for the purpose of the study only and must be treated as confidential. The results of the study should be shared with the University. Individual information of staff and students will not be made available, nor will biographical information of students be made available in such a way that individual students can be identified.

You are advised to contact the Director COLL, Dr Delvaline Möwes, to compile a list of possible respondents to your data collection instrument.

I wish you all the best with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Maurice Garde
REGISTRAR

NAMIBIA
UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

P/Bag 13388
Windhoek
NAMIBIA

2018 -10- 0 1

REGISTRAR
OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

CC: Director: COLL
        Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs
        Assistant Registrar: Academic Administration

APPENDIX F: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
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STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are invited to take part in a study conducted by **Mr. Jackpelins Muundjua**, from the School of Public Leadership at Stellenbosch University. You were approached as a possible participant because your knowledge and experience of the research topic.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To explore governance and management challenges in distance education at the Namibia University of Science and Technology.

2. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to answer questions in a simple non-technical language. In addition, if you agree to partake in this research, you will be requested to answer all questions to the best of your knowledge and ability. If you don't understand any questions you can ask the researcher for clarity.

Each interview will take approximately 30 minutes and extra 10 minutes to verify data for each and every participants. The location of the questionnaire survey and interview will be done in Windhoek at NUST main campus and the regional centres.

3. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Please note that the researcher has not established any potential risk/discomfort that could lead to the participant withdrawal.

4. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE SOCIETY

The study will contribute to the body of knowledge. It help NUST to promote and implement better governance strategies. Your participation in this research will help to improve management in the department of distance education (COLL) Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Participants will not be compensated for participating in the study.

Written consent template. REC: Humanities (Stellenbosch University) 2017

- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide, have been explained.

By signing below, I _____ agree to take part in this research study, as conducted by Mr. Jackpelins Muundjua.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   **Date**

DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator,** I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged (and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition I would like to select the following option:

	The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.
	The conversation with the participant was conducted with the assistance of a translator (who has signed a non-disclosure agreement), and this "Consent Form" is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is fluent.

_____   _____

Signature of Principal Investigator   **Date**

APPENDIX G: EDITING CERTIFICATE (APES)

A.P.E.S.

Nr: 0019320

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LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

Research report title:	GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY AT THE CENTRE FOR OPEN AND LIFELONG LEARNING (COLL) OF THE NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (NUST)

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Institution: Stellenbosch University

Date Issued: 20 October 2020

This document certifies that the manuscript listed above was edited for proper English language, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and overall style. Neither the research content nor the author's intentions were altered in any way during the editing process. Documents receiving this certification should be English ready for publication; however, the author has the ability and choice to accept or reject our suggestions and changes.

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