

**Performance Evaluation of Staff of Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation: A Comparative Analysis between Conventional and Distance Mode Accounting Graduates.**

**Getnet Eshete and Maru Shete<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract**

*Distance Education (DE) is defined as any educational or learning process in which the teacher is separated geographically or in time from his or her students; or in which students are separated from other students or educational resources (Reddy Venngopal, 1999). On the other hand, Conventional Education (CE) is defined as a mode of learning which is based on the ordinary classroom teacher-students interaction. It is a widely accepted reality that DE increases access to learning opportunities compared to CE. Although well organized distance learning accommodates multiple learning styles, creates access to learners who are not likely to attend conventional classroom instruction (effectiveness), serves to accommodate as many learners per dollar spent (efficiency) and helps to attract and serve low income learners (equity), DE is generally blamed for its poor quality, especially in developing countries like Ethiopia where there is low level of infrastructure development. This study was initiated to compare the performances of graduates from the CE and the DE mode.*

*The study was conducted at Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation (ETC), which is structured into six zones and eight regions. To arrive at the specific zones and regions on which data collection was to be carried out and to select sample employees, multi-stage random sampling technique was employed. Accordingly, North and West Addis Ababa Zones, and Northwestern, Northeastern and Western Regions were selected randomly for the data collection exercise. The study purposively focused on diploma accounting graduates from the CE and DE modes who are currently working at ETC. This was done for the purpose of getting adequate samples from the two learning modes as accounting profession was started by different institutions in Ethiopia earlier than the other disciplines. Accordingly, a total of 59 diploma accounting graduates who pursued their studies either through DE or CE modes, and working in the corporation were randomly selected. Structured questionnaire was prepared and mailed for the concerned offices so as to generate data. Statistical tools like paired, and independent t-test, one way ANOVA, correlation techniques were employed to analyse the data gathered.*

*The findings of the study revealed that there is no statistically significant variation between the performances of DE and CE accounting graduates, and there is variation among the different higher education institutions in terms of academic performances of graduates expressed in terms of earned CGPA. There is evidence that there is statistical variation between the CGPA of the distance and conventional mode graduates with the later having marginally higher CGPA. But, the standard deviation of the CE CGPA marginally higher than that of the DE CGPA, indicating CE mode better*

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<sup>1</sup> Getnet Eshete is Manager, North Addis Ababa Zone, Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation and Maru Shete is Lecturer and Research Officer, St. Mary's College.

*discriminates students academic performances than that of DE. In addition, there is significant correlation between years of work experience and performances of the employees in the case of DE graduates, but not in the case of CE graduates. This implies that the training package provided at colleges gives little opportunity to prepare students to the world of work. More over, the study revealed that there is weak correlation between students CGPA and their average performance points in both of the two training modes indicating that either/both academic evaluation mechanism or/and, the performance evaluation mechanisms or/and the curriculum adopted has/have some deficiencies, which suggest further study.*

## **1. Introduction**

Distance Education (DE) is defined as any educational or learning process in which the teacher is separated geographically or in time from his or her students; or in which students are separated from other students or educational resources (Reddy Venngopal, 1999). On the other hand, Conventional Education (CE) is defined as a mode of learning which is based on the ordinary classroom teacher-students interaction.

There are two distance education delivery system categories - synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous instruction requires the simultaneous participation of all students and instructors. The advantage of synchronous instruction is that interaction is done in "real time" and has an immediacy. Examples include interactive TV, teleconferencing and computer conferencing, and Internet chats. Asynchronous instruction does not require the simultaneous participation of all students and instructors. Students do not need to be gathered together in the same location at the same time. Rather, students may choose their own instructional time frame and gather learning materials according to their schedules. Asynchronous instruction is more flexible than synchronous instruction. The self-paced format accommodates multiple learning levels and schedules. Examples of asynchronous delivery include e-mail, audiocassette courses, videotaped courses, correspondence courses, and WWW-based courses.

The advantages of asynchronous delivery include student choice of location and time, and (in the case of telecommunications such as email) interaction opportunities for all students. A disadvantage to consider with email-based interaction is the considerable written exchange, which could really pile up.

In either of the two categories, it is a widely accepted reality that DE increases access to learning opportunities compared to CE. Although well organized distance learning accommodates multiple learning styles, creates access to learners who are not likely to attend conventional classroom instruction (effectiveness), serves to accommodate as many learners per dollar spent (efficiency) and helps to attract and serve low income learners (equity), DE is generally blamed for its poor quality, especially in developing countries like Ethiopia where there is low level of infrastructure development like tele and computer conferencing, Internet and email services, audiocassette and video courses, etc.

### **1.1. Objectives of the Study**

This study was generally initiated to compare the quality of professionals trained in CE and DE learning mode by tracking the graduates who are currently working at Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation (ETC). The specific objectives of the study include:

1. To identify whether there is variation in the performances of graduates of CE and DE programmes,
2. To describe whether the CGPA of graduates in the two learning modes correlates with their job performances,
3. To see whether there are variations in terms of the performances of employees who are graduates of different institutions

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 The Concept of Distance Education and Conventional Education**

A publication of Indira Gandhi National Open University (2001) contrasted distance and conventional education program, and underscored the following differences.

- In the conventional mode of education, students' and teachers' actions are predominantly determined by social norms, whereas in the case of distance education, it is predominantly determined by technical rules

- In the conventional mode of education, the medium of interaction between students and teachers is ‘the inter-subjectively shared every languages’, whereas in the case of distance education, it is ‘context free language’.
- The focus of learning, in the case of conventional education, is on internalization of rules; whereas the focus of learning in the distance mode of education is skills and qualifications
- Conventional education teaching aims at preserving the institution, whereas distance education teaching aims at problem solving, attainment of objectives by applying means to an end principle.
- In the case of conventional education, students fail because of decisions made by the authority (teachers, headmaster, director of education etc), whereas in the case of distance education, students fail because of their inability to cope with the reality of learning at a distance.

On the other hand Kung (2002) contended that distance learning offer variety of strategies to acquire knowledge outside of the classroom environment. Career development may have been the main factor persuading students to take distance-learning courses. Factors like time constraints, distance, and finances are reasons why students enroll in distance education. Other motivators could include the quality of the instruction and the material provided. He also contended that the most significant factor affecting the decision to take a distance learning class was course topic and revealed that problems continue to exist in development of distance learning courses.

However, there could be other variables involving distance-learning success such as age or gender (Brown, 1998 and Lintner, 1997). Brunner (1991) indicated that female students earned marginally higher grades than male students.

As Bower B.L. (2004) indicated quality of instruction in higher education is measured in many ways. Quality must include access to resources such as library, labs, and faculty. Quality should also include life experiences designed for students’ socialization and effective development via student-to-student interaction. Both of these quality issues are areas in which distance learning has been vulnerable to criticism. Daniel, J. (1997), on the other had, highlighted four basic ingredients of distance education (high quality multimedia learning materials, dedicated academic support, efficient logistic and strong research base) for achieving quality standards. High quality learning materials prepared by professionally competent teams of distance educators assure the learner of positive

learning experience; dedicated support services help learners through counseling, tutoring, assignment marking and final evaluation; efficient logistic assure the learners the receipt of study materials, evaluated assignment responses and other required information in time; and strong research base helps the academics in updating the course materials and alert the policymakers about what is required to respond to the new developments and changing needs.

## **2.2 The Concept of Performance Appraisal and Quality of Education**

According to West, Noden and Gosling (2000), the Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework is often used to analyse quality of education delivered by higher education institutions. The 'Input' refers to the entry requirements, the 'Process' refers to the teaching and learning process and the 'Output' refers to the employability and academic standings.

Applying the consumer behavior theory in education, one deals with different groups of customers. Students can be regarded as the primary consumers purchasing the services provided by education institutions; higher education institutions in turn view the students as their primary customers who receive the educational services. On the other hand, parents are customers who pay for their children's education, and corporations/employers are the other group of customers who hire the students (Madu and Kuei, 1993 cited in Chua Clare, 2004). In this regard, the satisfaction of the different categories of customers depends on the quality of services rendered to them by educational institutions. To be more specific, the satisfaction of employers/corporations depend on the performances of their employees in doing the jobs assigned to them in a more efficient and effective manner.

Performances of employees are measured by a performance appraisal system. Performance appraisal is the periodic evaluation of an employees' job performance measured against the job's stated or presumed requirements. It is a means of evaluating the extent to which a shared objective has been achieved collectively or individually. The result could be used to promote, reward or propose ways of increasing performance through training (Terry, G. and S. Franklin, 2002). Performance appraisal has its historical roots of development in line with human civilization. It is said to have been started since human being started to divide labor. However, there has not yet been a comprehensive method developed to solve job appraisal issues. There exist different types of performance evaluation

methods. These could be broadly classified in to two: namely, traditional and contemporary. The traditional method deals with the behavior, and the charisma of people. Hence, the evaluation system in this method specifies the behavior required accomplishing the required job, and it measures the conformity of individual behavior to the specified behavior. This type of evaluation method failed to measure achievements. The contemporary or the modern approach to performance evaluation deals with measurement of results. This type of evaluation system specifies plan, indicates the resources (human, material, time) required to execute the job, mentions the achievement criteria before the job is started, has tracking and following up of activities, and measures results rather than behavior. This type of evaluation system some times is called Management By Objective (MBO) or Result Oriented Management (ROM).

### **2.3 Performance Appraisal Practice of Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation**

The type of performance evaluation system adopted by ETC up until 1992 EFY is said to have been a traditional type (ETC, 2005). From then, it has been using of a combination of contemporary and traditional type evaluation criteria, where it was not successful in implementing a purely performance related evaluation system yet. The existing evaluation system has the following characteristics:

The evaluation system gives considerably high points to indicators of performance (like quantity, quality and speed of work up to 50%). It also gives some points to behavioral qualities like ‘motivation to work’, ‘Ethics’, and ‘time management’, which are difficult to measure.

For those jobs which could be easily planned, managers and subordinates could plan their jobs together.

Resources necessary for the execution of the plan could be incorporated with the plan.

Initially, the overall execution of the plan is calculated from 100%, and then converted to an overall grading of 5 points in proportion.

Those activities said to have been not convenient for planning are evaluated under the traditional system

Noting the shortcomings of the current evaluation system, the company is in the process of implementing performance related (contemporary) evaluation system. Rigorous training was given to higher management and employees in 2004. Implementation was delayed due to some clarity issues

on the evaluation system. Second round training program to top level management and labor union leaders is started, and the training is expected to reach every employee.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Sampling Design and Data Collection Techniques**

The study followed a case study research design. The study considered ETC as its focus. The whole purpose of selecting ETC as the focus of the study was the presence of better opportunity of getting adequate number of graduates in the two learning modes viz. DE and CE. Again, from a wide variety of disciplines, Accounting profession at diploma level was selected as a focus of the study because of the inception of the profession in most of Ethiopian higher learning institutions much earlier than other disciplines. This would give better opportunity of getting adequate sample of graduates who are trained in both of the two learning modes.

ETC is organized into six zones and eight regions. To arrive at the specific ETC zones and regions, probabilistic sampling design, more specifically, random sampling technique was employed. Accordingly, north and west Addis Ababa zones were selected out of the six zones, and northeastern, western and northwestern regions were selected out of the eight regions of ETC. From these branches of ETC, a total of 59 diploma accounting graduates who pursued their studies either through DE or CE modes, and working in the corporation were randomly selected. Structured questionnaire was prepared for the purpose of data collection and administered through mailed interview.

#### **3.2 Data Analysis Techniques**

To analyse the data gathered different statistical tools were employed. This includes One-Way ANOVA, Correlation, Paired and Independent t-test.

### **4. Results and Discussion**

Corelation analysis between CGPA and performance evaluation point of employees showed that there is no statistically significant association ( $P=0.25$  and  $r^2= -0.159$ ) between average performance appraisal point and CGPA of employees. The magnitude of relationship, though not significant, is negative implying those employees with relatively better on the job performance had lower CGPA. In a nut shell, however, it means that those employees with higher graduation points at higher

institutions do not necessarily get higher performance evaluation points at the company or in other words those employees with lower CGPA at higher institutions could get higher performance evaluation points at the company than those employees with higher CGPA at higher institutions (see Table 1). This could lead to further study either/both on the grading system of the higher institutions or/and the evaluation system of the company. The company has already identified its evaluation system as ineffective, and is trying to implement performance oriented evaluation system.

**Table 1:** Correlation Analysis between CGPA and Performance Evaluation Point of Employees

Description	Criteria	Cumulative GPA of Employees	Performance Evaluation Point
Cumulative GPA of Employees	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-0.159
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.250
	N	54	54
Performance Evaluation Point	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	-0.159	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.250	
	N	54	59

In a more disaggregated manner, correlation analysis between performance evaluation point and CGPA of employees of distance education graduates and conventional education graduates showed that there is no statistically significant association between the variables. This finding confirms that those employees at higher CGPA both at DE and CE do not necessarily get higher performance evaluation point at the company and vice versa (see table 2 and 3).



**Table 2:** Pearson Correlation Analysis between Performance Evaluation Point and CGPA of Employees of Distance Education Graduates

Description	Criteria	Performance Evaluation Point	CGPA of Employees
Performance Evaluation Point	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-0.246
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.161
CGPA of Employees	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	-0.246	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.161	
	N	34	34

**Table 3:** Pearson Correlation Analysis between Performance Evaluation Point and CGPA of Employees of Conventional Education Graduates

Description	Criteria	Performance Evaluation Point	Cumulative GPA of Employees
Performance Evaluation Point	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-0.086
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.719
	N	24	20
Cumulative GPA of Employees	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	-0.086	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.719	
	N	20	20

Correlation analysis between performance evaluation point and experience of employees at present position showed a positive association with  $P < 0.05$  and  $r^2 = 0.3$  (see Table 4). This analysis showed that those employees with higher work services in the company in their present position tend to get higher evaluation points irrespective of the differences in their cumulative GPA at graduation from higher institutions. This indicates that what is important to perform better is work experience rather than better academic achievement in the higher learning. But, there could be a chance of biasness for evaluators towards those employees who worked for the company many years than those workers who joined the company recently. This requires further scrutiny/study.

**Table 4:** Correlation Analysis between Performance Evaluation Point and Experience of the Employee at Present Position

Description	Criteria	Performance Evaluation Point	Experience at Present Position
Performance Evaluation Point	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.302
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.020
	N	59	59
Experience of the Employee at Present Position	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0.302	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.020	
	N	59	59

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 Level (2-tailed)*

Disaggregated analysis to see the presence of association between performance evaluation points and experiences of the employees at their present position in the distance mode revealed that there is statistically significant association ( $P < 0.05$ ) between the variables regardless of their academic achievements (see the table below). This may be due to the opportunity that the distance mode graduates have to link the theoretical underpinnings thought in their courses of instructions to the situations prevailing in the world of work.

**Table 5:** Correlation Analysis between Performance Evaluation Point and Experience of the Employee at Present Position for Graduates of Distance Mode of Education

Description	Criteria	Experience of the Employees	Performance Evaluation Point
Experience of the Employee at Present Position	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.346
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.042
	N	35	35
Performance Evaluation Point	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0.346	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.042	
	N	35	35

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

However, the disaggregated correlation analysis between performance evaluation points and experiences of employees at their present position for graduates of ETC employees from the conventional mode revealed that there is no statistically significant association between the two variables. This indicates that in the conventional mode, neither their CGPA nor their experience at present position govern their performances, which imply investigation of other factors that would govern their performances (see table below).

**Table 6:** Correlation Analysis between Performance Evaluation Point and Experience of the Employee at Present Position for Graduates of Conventional Mode of Education

Description	Criteria	Experience of the Employee at Present Position	Performance Evaluation Point
Experience of the Employee at Present Position	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.223
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.295
	N	24	24
Performance Evaluation	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0.223	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.295	
	N	24	24

Analysis was also made to know whether such differences in results with regard to the association of job performances and work experience between the distance and conventional mode are due to difference in years of work experiences and age between distance and conventional mode of education graduates. The results, however, revealed that there are no statistically significant variation in age (mean ages for distance and conventional graduates were 32.8 and 33.26 respectively, with F value and significance level of 0.435 and 0.512 respectively) and work experiences (average years of work experience for distance and conventional graduates were 2.83 and 3.69 respectively, with F value and significance level of 0.061 and 0.8 respectively) between distance and conventional mode accounting graduates.

An analysis of differences in CGPA between Conventional and Distance mode of graduates working in the company indicated that there is significant variation ( $P < 0.1$ ) in their mean CGPA. The result

disproved the informal view of the public that the distance mode of education gives more inflated grades to the students than the conventional mode of education. However, the same analysis revealed that the standard deviation of the conventional mode is marginally higher than the distance mode of education. This indicates that the conventional mode relatively discriminates among students in its evaluation system (see table below).

Table 7: Examination of Difference in CGPA between Conventional and Distance Mode Accounting Graduates

Description	Mean	Mean Differences	N	Std. Deviation	t- value	Sig. Level
CGPA of Conventional Mode Graduates	2.8030		20	0.4857		
CGPA of Distance mode Graduates	2.5075		20	0.3706		
Difference between CGPA of conventional mode graduates and CGPA of distance mode graduates		0.2955	20	0.6592	2.005*	0.059

\* Significant at 10%

Further analysis was also done to see whether there exists variation on the job performances between distance mode graduates and conventional mode graduates of ETC employees. The independent t-test analysis presented below indicated that there is no statistically significant variation between the two modes graduates in their on the job performance evaluation points strengthening the fact that performance evaluation points are more correlated to experiences at the present position of employees than differences in CGPA (see table below).

Table 8: Examination of Difference between Performance Evaluation Points of Conventional Mode and Distance Mode Graduates

Educational Program	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Distance Mode	35	4.429	0.1890	0.03195
Conventional Mode	24	4.463	0.1961	0.04

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances (F-test)	Sig. Level	t-test for Equality of Means	Sig. Level (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Performance Evaluation point	Equal variances assumed	0.004	0.950	-0.827	0.412	-0.042
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.821	0.416	-0.042

The study also tried to see whether there exists difference in the academic performances of different higher learning graduates working at ETC. Results of One Way Analysis of Variance indicated that

there is statistically significant variation ( $P < 0.05$ ) in the academic performances of graduates of the different higher learning institutions, which are considered in the study. The academic performances of graduates of Jimma University comes in the first position followed by Bahir Dar College of Teachers' Education, Alpha Distance Education Institution, Unity University College, and Kotebe College of Teachers' Education in their order (see Table below).

**Table: 9** CGPA Difference Among Graduates of different Higher Learning Institutions of ETC Employees

Ser. No.	Name of Higher Learning Institution	Mean CGPA of Employees	F value	Sig. Level
1	Jimma University	3.052	2.697*	0.02
2	Bahir Dar College of Teachers' Education	2.782		
3	Alpha Distance Education Institution	2.602		
4	Addis Ababa Commercial College	2.488		
5	Unity University College	2.27		
6	Kotebe College of Teachers' Education	2.115		

\* Significant at 0.05

As a follow up, analysis was also carried out to see whether there is variation on the job performances of graduates of different higher learning institutions. Results of One Way Analysis of Variance indicated that there is no statistically significant variation on the job performances of graduates of different higher learning institutions examined in the study. But, one would naturally expect that if there is significant variation among the academic performances of different higher learning institution working in the company, the same would be reflected on the job performances of the different higher learning institutions examined in the study. Such inconsistency in the result may be the outcome of deficiency either/both in the curriculum, or/and current evaluation system employed by higher learning and/or the performance evaluation system employed by the company (see table below).



**Table 10:** Performance Differences Of ETC Employees Who Are Graduates Of Different Higher Learning Institutions In Ethiopia

Description	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.381	0.0545	1.59	0.158
Within Groups	1.743	0.03418		
Total	2.125			

Gagne M. and M., Shepherd (2001) made a comparison between a distance and a traditional (conventional) graduate accounting classes by taking some demographic, performance outcome and student evaluation parameters. The authors analyzed the data through one-way fixed effect analysis of variance. The findings of their study revealed that the performance of students in a distance course was similar to the performance of students in the on-campus course for an introductory accounting graduate class. However, their investigation uncovered that students in the online course were less satisfied with instructor availability compared to the in-class students.

Russell (1999), on the other hand, reviewed 355 studies on distance education produced from 1928 to 1998, and students were compared on test scores, grades, and performance measures. His investigation revealed that there is no statistically significant difference between the comparison groups. His conclusion was “there was nothing inherent in the technology that elicits improvements in learning”, implying that learning is not caused by the technology, but by the instructional method embedded in the media. In other words, his findings imply that no matter how it is produced, how it is delivered, whether or not it is interactive, low tech or high tech, students learn equally well. The findings of Russell was also supported by the findings of Sener, J. and Stover, M (2000); Miller (2000); Ryan (2000), Serban (2000) and Mulligan and Geary (1999).

The way of delivering courses in the distance mode of education in Ethiopia, including accounting program, is based on course materials (modules) distribution, supported by tutorials and assignment, with a low-tech provision. There is little use of technology for online course instruction (like

teleconferencing, e-mail, voicemail messages, bulletin board posting etc). If technology had impact on the achievement of students, little use of technology in the Ethiopian distance education system would have undermined the performances of the distance mode accounting graduates compared to the conventional mode accounting graduates. In any case, the findings of this paper are consistent with the findings of that of Russell (1999) and Gagne M. and M., Shepherd (2001).

#### **4. Conclusion**

Quality of education is a very generic term, which is very difficult to give single and comprehensive definition. The challenges of understanding the concept of quality of education emanates from its multi-dimension nature, and the different perception of the concept by different individuals. As a result, analysis of quality of education is not without problems. West, Noden and Gosling (2000) developed and used the Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework for the analysis of quality of education in the higher education system. This study focuses on comparative analysis of quality of education between distance and conventional/traditional mode of education, adopted the IPO framework emphasizing on the output aspect of education. Accordingly, academic and job performance data have been collected from distance and conventional mode accounting graduates of employees working in ETC. The data were subjected to different statistical analysis, and arrived at the following conclusions:

- ✚ There is no statistically significant association between academic performances and job performances of the employees who pursued their studies either in the distance or conventional mode of education. This implies that there is/are problem(s) either/both in the academic evaluation system of higher education institutions or/and in the performance appraisal mechanisms employed by the company, which demand further studies.
  
- ✚ There is statistically significant association between job performances and experiences of the employees who pursued their studies in the distance mode of education but not in the conventional mode of education. But, the study found out that there is no statistically significant difference in age and work experience parameters between distance and conventional mode accounting graduates of the employees. This implies that work experience contributes to enhanced work performances more for the distance mode graduates than the

conventional mode graduates. This may be due to the opportunity that the distance mode graduates have to link the theoretical underpinnings thought in their courses of instructions to the situations prevailing in the world of work.

✚ The study also investigated that there is statistically significant difference in Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) between distance and conventional mode graduates working in the corporation. The variance in CGPA for the two modes of graduates indicated that there is larger variation among graduates of the conventional mode graduates than the distance mode graduates. This indicates that the evaluation system employed by the conventional education system discriminates the academic performances of the students than the distance mode. In other words, students of the distance mode of education may work together different assignments given to them, and score similar marks, which is a reason for less variation in their CGPA.

✚ Analysis of difference in job performances between conventional and distance mode graduates of the company revealed that there is no statistically significant variation. The finding disproves the informally held opinion of the public that distance mode graduates have less work performances than conventional mode graduates. The result is consistent with the findings of Russell (1999) and Gagne M. and M., Shepherd (2001).

The study sum up its investigation by suggesting further studies on the strengths and weaknesses of performances appraisal mechanisms employed by various institutions, the strengths and weakness of academic performance evaluation mechanisms of distance and conventional mode training institutions, and the curriculum of higher learning institutions in terms of preparing students to the world of work. It is also suggested that concerned higher learning institutions delivering education in either of the distance and conventional mode, and ETC need to focus on the major points investigated, and adopt strategies to overcome the challenges.

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