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Influence of Administrative Support on the Performance of Students Enrolled in Distance Learning in Public Universities in Kenya and Senegal

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Abstract
The purpose of this research was to establish the influence of administrative support on performance of students enrolled in distance learning in Public Universities specifically at the University of Nairobi, Kenya and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal. Using the positivism paradigm, the study used a descriptive research methodology to test the hypothesis. The study sample comprised of 240 students enrolled in distance learning programs at UoN and UCAD. The correlation analysis results revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between administrative support and learner performance, Kenya: r (101) = .81, $p < .05$; Senegal: r (135) = .57, $p < .05$. The R square value obtained from the analysis revealed that administrative support accounted for 65% of the total variance in learner performance for UoN and 32% of the total variance in learner performance for UCAD. The study's findings demonstrate that administrative support in distance learning plays a significant role to students' performance.

Keywords: Distance Learning; Student Performance, Administrative Support

1.0 Background to the Study

Distance learning provides various benefits for university students that would otherwise not be available through conventional learning available for university students. Kamraju et al. (2024) and Masalimova et al. (2022) opines that distance learning makes higher education more accessible, flexible, and convenient. It enables students to access educational resources conveniently from anywhere any time they wish, at their own pace, and at a low cost. It also enables students to balance personal commitments with their educational needs effectively. Nuaimy et al. (2021) observes that distance learning allows students to follow lectures from the comfort of their homes providing great convenience and flexibility. Ali (2020) further posits observes that distance learning breaks geographical barriers, cultural and social barriers, and barriers that arises from personal circumstances and lack of physical learning infrastructure. It enables learners to access information equitably irrespective of their location, age, ethnicity, and race. According

to Rawashdeh et al. (2021), this mode of learning enables a learner to achieve their goals with least efforts and in the shortest time possible compared to conventional learning.

Kenyan universities and especially the University of Nairobi have offered distance learning for over four decades. This has been done in order to meet the growing demand for university education while widening accessibility to university education (Kibuku et al., 2020). Nevertheless, Ruga et al. (2023) notes that several challenges that include poor Information Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure, lack of a clear guiding policy framework, inadequate and expensive internet bandwidth, and financial constraints have hampered effective online learning at the university. Such challenges have led to a relatively low rate of students that have completed their learning through distance learning. Nyaegah (2022) and (Owino 2023) observe that the COVID-19 pandemic brought about great transformation that influenced adoption of online learning by a greater number of undergraduate students of the University of Nairobi. The economic challenges and job insecurity emanating from the pandemic motivated the university administration and faculty members to improve the quality of online education (Owino, 2023). Nevertheless, greater efforts are needed to ensure there is increased enrolment in distance learning and that more students are able to complete their courses via this mode of learning (Ruga et al., 2023). There is also great need to continuously review course materials to make them relevant to changing times. This should be coupled with offering continual and refresher training to the teaching staff to enhance their digital literacy competence (Ndege et al., 2023).

Distance learning for university education has also existed in Senegal for a long time, being provided mainly through the Virtual University of Senegal (UVS). This is a public digital university established to provide Senegalese youth with equitable access to higher education (Faye, 2022). The university combines both online learning and conventional classroom learning (Upadhyay, 2020). The successful establishment of UVS coupled with its commitment to use technology to bring about economic and social development has created a conducive environment for EdTech companies to develop in Senegal (USAID, 2022). The University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD) also have distance learning programs which however face great challenges that include power outage, low broad band capacity, high cost of internet connectivity among others. Similar to the University of Nairobi however, the COVID-19 Pandemic brought about great transformation that influenced adoption of online learning by a greater number of undergraduate students of the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (Ba et al., 2020).

Various challenges have been noticed with the implementation of distance learning at the University of Nairobi. Such challenges include inadequate distance policies, inadequate ICT infrastructure, insufficient technical and pedagogical competencies and training for e-tutors and e-learners, the ever evolving technologies, budgetary constraints, and sustainability issues. Other challenges include negative perceptions towards distance learning, and quality issues (Kibuku et al., 2020). Nyaegah (2022) notes that unreliable electricity, internet unreliability, and unfavourable study environments also hampers effective distance learning. As a result of these challenges, relatively few learners manage to complete their learning through distance learning (Ruga et al., 2023). Most of the learners apply various strategies to cope with these strategies. These include consulting information technology staff with respect to technical issues on the use of the online platforms, consultation with colleagues, browsing for notes, and going to nearest internet cafes (Oboth, 2021). From the foregoing there is little evidence to show much of the effort that the University makes to ensure students are effectively supported in their distance learning, hence the need to focus on the administrative support provided to distance learning students.

Several challenges have also been identified to face distance learning at universities in Senegal. Rawashdeh et al. (2021) observed that most parents are electronically illiterate which hampers their ability to follow their children's online learning. Though the average graduation rate for the students enrolled in distance education at the University of Cheikh Anta Diop has increased over the years, performance issues and student have risen among the distance education students (CWUR, 2019; Glennie, 2017). Lack of face-to-face interactions with other students and the teachers is also noted to reduce the effectiveness of distance learning and reduce students' performance in some cases performance as a student. Bar et al. (2020) also noted several other challenges with distance learning that include high cost of internet connectivity, low broadband capacity in some areas, inadequate network equipment, housework, and power outage. Fatou et al. (2019) notes that there is a combination policy, human, organizational, and financial challenges that affect effectiveness of distance learning at university level in Senegal. Existing literature does not show sufficient support offered to the students to cope effectively with distance learning hence the need to focus on the administrative support offered to distance learning students.

Administrative support refers to the assistance that is given to students undertaking distance learning (Al-Sharif et al., 2024). It entails a series of activities that include marketing the online programs, recruiting students into the programs, preparation, and timely dispatch of the necessary learning materials, while ensuring ease of its accessibility to the learners. It also includes clarifying to the learners the policy issues with respect to distance learning and any available financial support. The administrative support enables distance learners to undertake their tasks in tandem with their peers and their instructors (Al-Sharif et al., 2024). Often, Learning Management System administrators play different roles such as enrolment specialists, managers, data analyst, and technological experts. Research shows that students' learning experiences and performance are likely to be improved when appropriate administrative support that caters to students' requirements is offered to the students undertaking online education (Saleem et al., 2022). Similarly, Aluko and Coetzee (2024) observed that universities need to give the required support to distance learners to help them to succeed. On the other hand, insufficient administrative support offered to distance learners negatively affects the learners' performance (Fabian et al., 2022). From the foregoing there is little evidence to show that both the University of Nairobi (UoN) in Kenya and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD) in Senegal have made enough effort to ensure students are effectively supported in their distance learning which prompted the need to focus on administrative support offered to distance learning students and its influence on their performance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Kenya and Senegal have been offering distance learning programs in various universities. The University of Nairobi is one such example in Kenya and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop in Senegal. Nevertheless, these distance learning programs have faced several challenges that have hampered their success. This is despite increased demand for distance learning in Kenya and Senegal in the post COVID-19 pandemic which increased enrolment into the programs (Nyaegah, 2022; Owino 2023; Ba et al., 2020). Distance learning makes higher education more accessible, flexible, and convenient. It enables students to access educational resources conveniently from anywhere any time they wish, at their own pace, and at a low cost (Kamraju et al., 2024; Masalimova et al., 2022). This enables learners to conveniently acquire relevant and high-demand skills for the twenty first century. It is therefore imperative to address the challenges that hamper effective implementation of the distance learning in both universities. Failure to effectively address these challenges will result to diminished enrolment into the programs which may roll back the gains that the two pioneer distance learning universities brought to students (USAID, 2022; Beche, 2018).

This may also slow down the social economic development of the two nations because of slow acquisition of the relevant skills for social economic transformation that can be acquired through distance learning.
Existing literature show very few studies that have investigated the importance of administrative support needed to improve students' success in distance learning. The current study explored how effective administrative influence academic performance of distance learning students. The study was carried out at the University of Nairobi (UoN) in Kenya and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD) in Senegal, providing an opportunity to compare and contrast the unique learner support systems and performance of the students at the two universities. Following the great challenges the study has revealed, the study makes recommendations that may be implemented to improve the success of the distance learning programs at the two universities.

1.3 Research Objective

To establish the influence of administrative support on performance of students enrolled in distance learning in Public Universities specifically at the University of Nairobi, Kenya and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to benefit the stakeholders of the two universities, the University of Nairobi, Kenya, and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal in their efforts to address the challenges that the two universities face in the successful implementation of distance learning. The study focused on the influence of administrative support on the performance of students enrolled in distance learning programs at the two universities.
The study provides empirical evidence relating to how administrative support influences performance of students enrolled in distance learning at the universities. The study results are also beneficial to the students enrolled in distant learning programs at the two universities. The two universities might also use the study findings to help them make appropriate policies to govern the provision of effective administrative support to students enrolled in distance learning courses. Scholars may also use the study findings as basis of further research in the area of distant learning in higher education.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Administrative Support and the Performance of Student Enrolled in Distance Learning

Administrative support is very critical to distance learners. The support helps learners to overcome the obstacle of the perception that many students have that their learning has to be focused on their instructor. Effective learner support thus helps students transition from conventional to distant education alleviating this problem (Sifuna & Obonyo, 2019). Effective administrative support ought to address issues to do with student admissions, student registration, information distribution, record keeping, the creation and provision of learning resources, and supervision of examinations. Such support will enable learners to have a positive attitude towards distance learning. Studies have shown that poor administrative support may create several hindrances to distance learning that may include issues of using obsolete and inaccessible learning materials (Mtebe & Raphael, 2018). This often emanates from failure to make frequent reviews of learning materials to keep them updated, which negatively impacts students' learning. Proper administrative support improves students' learning experiences. This is especially so when the support techniques used cater for the students' requirements and learning preferences including provision of the pedagogical materials needed for distance learning (Saleem et al., 2022). In addition, to improve student's behaviour in distance learning setting, several prerequisites for distance learning instruction need

to be met. These include creation of clear, quantitative, and visible learning objectives, which is a fundamental aspect of administrative support (Rahman et al, 2020). Challenges such as insufficient budget have led to a slowdown in the payment of teachers and the creation of appropriate educational resources. Studies have shown that distance learners are often dissatisfied with the shortage of books and other study materials provided by the library services (Fabian et al., 2021).

Apart from the academic support, distance learners also need organizational and emotional support. This entails helping learners to effectively organize and prioritize their studies. This include helping learners to wisely organize their time, keep up with the distance learning class tempo, and to set priorities while incorporating their other non-academic obligations that include, work, and family. Students also need support to help them cope with the emotionally demanding aspects of their educational process. This entails helping students to develop and maintain a desire to learn, increasing their faith in their abilities, and figuring out ways to manage the stresses associated with distance learning, especially test anxiety (Salvador et al, 2021). Research has shown that organizational support on students in a blended learning environment positively predicted perceived usefulness (PU). Research further shows that students need to be provided with ongoing intellectual, emotional, and social assistance to improve their chances of achieving their educational goals (Yang, 2023).

There are three distinct forms of student support that are critical in the context of distance learning (Shikulo, 2020). These include cognitive support, systemic support, and emotional support. Cognitive support is aimed to provide uniform and standardized teaching and learning resources to all students to ensure they succeed. Furthermore, Shikulo (2020) opines that it is necessary to provide good tutoring and evaluate students' in order to improve their academic performance. The emotional function creates a supportive environment that stimulates learners' dedication and boosts their self-esteem. On the other hand, systemic function entails establishing effective and student-friendly administrative and information management systems. This helps learners to be satisfied with the institution and remain loyal to it. Aluko and Coetzee (2024) also noted that besides giving students an opportunity to take a course, universities ought to also give them the required support to help them to succeed. Thus, the primary focus of student administrative support ought to be on the administrative procedures that will guarantee the effectiveness of the whole distance-learning program.

Research has shown that many online educational programs are unsuccessful due to lack of financial resources to run them (Duman, 2023). This hinders the development of the necessary technology infrastructure, drives up student access fees, and hampers provision of sufficient students' administrative support (Duman, 2023). Challenges of unreliable and insufficient power, lack of a strong ICT infrastructure, and poor internet connectivity makes it difficult to effectively provide the requisite administrative support to students undertaking distance learning in Kenya. This has seen many colleges who used the Open Distance and eLearning (ODEL) reverting to onsite instruction due to infrastructural issues especially for the students from rural places where (Odhiambo & Momanyi, 2024).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study was based on the Motivation Design Theory by Keller (1983), which suggests that for students to be motivated to study for success, it is necessary to provide them with educational materials using strategies that increase the materials relevance, students' attention, confidence, and satisfaction (Khan, 2019). Low motivation is directly correlated with high rates of attrition. Consequently, it's vital that instructional designers understand motivational design concepts. According to the motivational design theory, understanding the various dimensions of motivation is essential for creating an efficient, appealing,

and effective instructional design. Keller developed a motivational model with four major (ARCS) components: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. They all serve as the foundations for motivation, a concept that this study focused on. The scientific learning method typically employs printed instructional materials. However, digital teaching materials have been developed utilizing the Attention Relevance Confidence Satisfaction (ARCS) model, which emphasizes substance, pressure, and material (Sundari et al., 2023).

Learner support services are crucial for maintaining students' motivation. Studies have indicated that distance learning students face significant motivational obstacles. There is a high percentage of students that drop out of programs, which is a reflection of motivational concerns. The ARCS model is based on effective learner support services delivered before, during, and after a course and, and it can be utilized to sustain or modify students' motivation throughout the course. Increasing student interests for online courses is crucial because it has been shown to minimize student dropout rates. Wei et al. (2023) argue that learners are driven by numerous motives when engaging in massive open online courses (MOOCs). This include curiosity fulfilment, personal gratification, knowledge and skill acquisition, educational attainment, personal gratification, personal growth, career relevance, and social interaction.

3.Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. According to positivists, a research design ought to use a technique that properly represents reality, while maintaining trust within the scientific community from which the research findings were obtained (Sumathi et al., 2018). The adopted research design enabled the researcher to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, conduct data analysis, and appropriately answer the research questions (Miksza et al., 2023).

3.2 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Purposive sampling was used to select the two universities; University of Nairobi in Kenya, and Cheikh Anta Diop University in Senegal. The researcher however selected students from each faculty using proportionate sampling. This was because the selected faculties have enrolled different numbers of students. Simple random sampling was used to select students from each faculty.

Further, the researcher utilized Cochran's approach to arrive at the appropriate sample size for the study. This approach is appropriate for picking a valid sample from large populations. The study used a sample of 240 distance-learning students, comprising 102 students from the University of Nairobi, Kenya and 138 students from Cheikh Anta Diop University in Senegal.

3.3 Research Instruments

The researcher utilized standardized questionnaires to collect data from the selected representative sample of students undertaking distance learning from both universities. Questionnaires were deemed suitable data collection instruments because they can be used to collect large amounts of reliable data using minimum resources. Questionnaires also enable researchers to collect data from a wide sample (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013).

3.4 Data Collection

The researcher obtained the letter of introduction from the two universities and a research permit and forwarded the same to the responsible authorities to ask for permission to carry out the research. Before undertaking the main study, the researcher conducted a pilot study to establish the validity and reliability of the research instruments (Shirali et al., 2018). The pilot study involved a sample of 20 distance-learning

students from the two universities. For the main study, the researcher administered the survey questionnaires to the participants. The questionnaires for the participants from the University of Nairobi were in the English language, while those for the participants from Cheikh Anta Diop University were in the French language. This was to ensure that all participants understood all questions with ease. The French data were however translated into English ahead of data analysis to enable the researcher to make one final report in English. The researcher enlisted the help of student research assistants to help in data collection in both universities. The researcher communicated using multiple channels that included Teams, Zoom, and telephone discussions. The researcher also used Kobo Collect tools to aid in data collection. The researcher made appropriate follow-ups with assistants to facilitate efficient returns of completed surveys.

3.5 Data Analysis

The researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics in data analysis. For the case of descriptive statistics, the researcher used measures of central tendency and dispersion. Conversely, the researcher utilised inferential statistics to test the study hypotheses to establish the correlation between the study variables. Specifically the researcher used regression analysis, correlation analysis, and ANOVA in hypothesis testing. The results of the data analysis were presented using tables and graphs.

4 Findings

Below are the study findings following results analysis according to the study the objective.

4.1 Demographic Information of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the results of the return rate of the questionnaire categorized on the basis of gender, country, and faculty of the respondents.

Table 1 : Gender and Country Versus Faculty Cross Tabulation

Gender & Country		Faculty						Total
		Art and SS	Bus and mgmt. Sci	Educ	Eng	Health Sci	Sci and Tech	
Male	Kenya	8(14%)	9(16%)	5(09%)	11(20%)	10(18%)	9(16%)	56(23.73%)
	Senegal	15(58%)	14(18%)	11(14%)	14(18%)	12(16%)	11(14%)	77(32.63%)
	Total	23(17%)	23(17%)	20(15%)	25(19%)	22(17%)	20(15%)	133(56.36%)
Female	Kenya	8(18%)	9(20%)	7(16%)	5(11%)	11(24%)	5(11%)	45(19.07%)
	Senegal	11(19%)	12(21%)	13(22%)	6(35%)	8(14%)	8(14%)	58(24.58%)
	Total	19(18%)	21(20%)	20(19%)	11(11%)	19(18%)	13(13%)	103(43.64%)
Total	Kenya	16(16%)	18(18%)	16(16%)	16(16%)	21(21%)	14(14%)	101(47.80%)

	Senegal	26(12%)	26(12%)	24(18%)	20(15%)	20(15%)	19(14%)	135(57.20%)
	Total	42(18%)	44(19%)	40(17%)	36(15%)	41(17%)	33(14%)	236(100.00%)

Table 1 shows that the male students were the majority represented by 56.36% while the females were represented by 43.64% on the overall return rate. Based on the countries of origin, the male students from Senegal had the highest representation of 32.63%, followed by the females from the same country at 24.58%, then the males from Kenya at 23.73%, and lastly the females from Kenya at 19.07%. The respondents were further categorized based on their faculties. Those from the Business and Management Science were the majority with a representation of 19%, followed those from the faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at 18%, then Education and Health Sciences, each at 17%, then those from the faculty of Engineering at 15%. The minority were the respondents from the faculty of science and technology at 14%.

The respondents were further categorized based on their gender, country of origin, and highest level of education achieved through online learning. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 : Gender and Country Versus Highest Level of Education Achieved Via Online Courses Cross Tabulation

Gender and Country		**Highest level of education achieved via online courses**					**Total**
		Interrupted from distance learning	**Graduated with a diploma course**	**Undergraduate degree**	**Masters' degree**	**PhD. Degree**	
Male	**Kenya**	11(20%)	10(18%)	32(57%)	3(05%)	0(0%)	56
	Senegal	0(0%)	21(27%)	39(51%)	16(21%)	1(01%)	77
	Total	11(08%)	31(23%)	71(53%)	19(14%)	1(01%)	133
Female	**Kenya**	6(13%)	11(24%)	25(56%)	3(07%)		45
	Senegal	0(0%)	24(41%)	22(38%)	12(21%)		58
	Total	6(06%)	35(34%)	47(46%)	15(15%)		103
Total	**Kenya**	17(17%)	21(21%)	57(56%)	6(06%)	0(0%)	101
	Senegal	0(0%)	45(33%)	61(45%)	28(21%)	1(01%)	135
	Total	17(07%)	66(28%)	118(50%)	34(14%)	1(01%)	236

Table 2 shows that undergraduates were the majority of the respondents with the greatest level of education achieved via online courses. This represented 118(50%) of all participants. Out of these, Kenyans were 57(56%) against the Senegalese 61(45%). Under this category, there were 71(53%) males and 47(46%) females. Those who had graduated with a diploma course followed represented by 66(28%) of the total

respondents. From this category, Senegalese were 45(33%) while Kenyans were 21(21%). In terms of gender, female respondents in this category were 35(34%) while male respondents were 31(23%). In the third position were those who had masters' degree attained via online course represented by 34(14%). In this category, the Senegalese were 16(21%) and Kenyans were 3(5%). From this category, the females were 12 (15%) while males were 19(14%). The fourth category were those who were interrupted from distance learning represented by 17(7%) of the total respondents. All the respondents in this category were from Kenya where 11(8%) were male while 6 (6%) were female. The lowest representation was those who had attained PhD via online courses with a representation of 1(1%), being a male respondent from Senegal. The results from Table 2 reveal that the highest level of education that had graduated most students through distance learning was the undergraduate degree.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Learner Performance

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of learner performance obtained by country of origin.

Table 3 : Descriptive Statistics of Learner Performance by Country

Country	N	Min	Max	Range	Mean	SD
Kenya	101	9.00	45.00	36.00	35.08	7.64
Senegal	135	24.00	45.00	21.00	36.56	4.46
Total	236	9.00	45.00	36.00	35.93	6.06

Table 3 shows that the respondents from Senegal obtained a higher mean score of 36.56 (*SD* = 4.46) with a minimum score of 24 and a maximum of 45. Their Kenyan counterparts obtained a mean score of 35.08 (*SD* = 7.64) with a minimum score of 9 and a maximum 45.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Learner Performance by Gender and Country

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for the learner performance by gender and country to determine if mean differences existed.

Table 4 : Learner Performance by Gender and Country

Country	Gender	N	Min	Max	Range	Mean	SD
Kenya	**Male**	56	9.00	45.00	36.00	35.21	7.04
	Female	45	13.00	45.00	32.00	34.91	8.40
	Total	101	9.00	45.00	36.00	35.08	7.64
Senegal	**Male**	77	28.00	45.00	17.00	36.64	4.17
	Female	58	24.00	45.00	21.00	36.47	4.85
	Total	135	24.00	45.00	21.00	36.56	4.46

Table 4 reveal the existence of the mean differences. Basing on their country of origin, the male respondents from Kenya obtained a mean score of 35.21 (*SD* = 7.04). They also had a minimum score of 9 and a maximum of 45. Their female counterparts obtained a mean score of 34.91 (*SD* = 8.40) with a minimum score of 13 and a maximum of 45. The male respondents from Senegal obtained a slightly higher mean score of 36.64 (*SD* = 4.17) with a minimum score of 28 and a maximum of 45. Their female

counterparts obtained a mean score of 36.47 (*SD* = 4.85) with a minimum score of 24 and a maximum of 45. The results indicate differences in learner performance based on gender and country of origin.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Administrative Support

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of administrative support by country of origin.

Table 5 : Descriptive Statistics of Administrative Support by Country

Country	*N*	Min	Max	Mean	*SD*	*Sk*	*Kur*
Kenya	101	20.00	100.00	72.88	17.03	-.60	.28
Senegal	135	27.00	85.00	59.09	13.02	-.61	-.24
Total	236	20.00	100.00	64.99	16.34	-.16	-.07

Table 5 shows that Kenyan respondents obtained a higher mean score of 72.88 (*SD* = 17.03) with a minimum score of 20 and a maximum of 100. The coefficient of skewness was -.60 indicating a distribution that is moderately skewed. The kurtosis coefficient was .28 indicating a platykurtic distribution. On the other hand, the respondents from Senegal obtained a mean score of 59.09 (*SD* = 13.02) with a minimum score of 27 and a maximum of 85. Their coefficient of skewness was -.61 also showing a moderately skewed distribution. The kurtosis coefficient was -.24. The results imply that administrative support had an impact on students' performance whereby Kenyan students received better administrative support compared to their Senegalese counterparts.

4.3 Gender and Country Versus Administrative Support Cross Tabulation

Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics of administrative support based on the gender and country of origin.

Table 6 : Gender and Country Versus Administrative Support Cross Tabulation

Country	Gender	*N*	Min	Max	Mean	*SD*	*Sk*	*Kur*
Kenya	**Male**	56	35.00	100.00	74.00	14.73	-.26	-.19
	Female	45	20.00	100.00	71.49	19.60	-.68	.05
	Total	101	20.00	100.00	72.88	17.03	-.60	.28
Senegal	**Male**	77	27.00	85.00	60.83	12.53	-.78	.42
	Female	58	28.00	81.00	56.78	13.42	-.41	-.73
	Total	135	27.00	85.00	59.09	13.02	-.61	-.24

Table 6 reveals that the male respondents from Kenya obtained the highest mean score of 74.00 (*SD* = 14.73) with a minimum score of 35 and a maximum score of 100. They were followed by the female respondents from Kenya who obtained a mean score of 71.49 (*SD* = 19.60), a minimum score of 20 and a maximum of 100. The male respondents from Senegal obtained the third highest mean score of 60.83 (*SD* = 12.53) with a minimums core of 27 and a maximum of 85. The females from Senegal obtained the lowest mean score of 56.78 (*SD* = 13.42). The results indicate that there were differences in administrative support based on gender and country of origin.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

The study sought to evaluate the influence of administrative support on the performance of students enrolled in distance learning at the University of Nairobi, Kenya and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal in line with the study objective.

To achieve this, the researcher tested the following null hypothesis:

H_{01}: There is no significant influence of administrative support on performance of students enrolled in distance learning in Public Universities (University of Nairobi, Kenya and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal).

Table 7 shows the correlation results.

Table 7 : Correlations between Administrative Support and Learner Performance

Country			Learner Performance
Kenya	Administrative Support	Pearson Correlation	.81**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
		N	101
Senegal	Administrative Support	Pearson Correlation	.57**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
		N	135

The results in Table 7 reveal a positive and significant correlation between administrative support and learner performance (Kenya: r (101) = .81, p < .05; Senegal: r (135) = .57, p < .05). Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis was adopted. The alternative hypothesis stated that there is a significant influence of administrative support on performance of students enrolled in distance learning in Public Universities (University of Nairobi, Kenya and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal). The results imply that giving more administrative support to the learners result in higher performance.

The researcher also conducted regression analysis to determine the extent to which administrative support influences learner performance in both countries. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 : Model Summary for Regression analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1 – Kenya	.81[a]	.65	.65	4.53
2 – Senegal	.57[a]	.32	.32	3.69
a. Predictors: (Constant), Administrative Support				

From Table 8, the results reveal the existence of a positive relationship between administrative support (the predictor variable) and learner performance (the outcome variable) for the two countries (Kenya: R = .81, Senegal: R = .57). The R square value for Kenya indicated that the administrative support accounted for about 65% of the total variance in learner performance. On the other hand, R square value for Senegal revealed that the administrative support accounted for approximately 32% of the total variance in learner performance. The results indicate that administrative support can be used to predict learner performance for those students enrolled in distance learning.

To confirm whether the predictive values of administrative support on learner performance were significant, the researcher conducted the ANOVA test. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 : ANOVA Test

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 – Kenya	Regression	3799.77	1	3799.77	185.35	.00[b]
	Residual	2029.60	99	20.50		
	Total	5829.37	100			
2 – Senegal	Regression	860.51	1	860.51	63.35	.00[b]
	Residual	1806.70	133	13.58		
	Total	2667.22	134			
a. Dependent Variable: Learner Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Administrative support						

Results from Table 9 reveal that administrative support can be used to significantly predict learner performance (Model 1 for Kenya, F (1, 99) = 185.35, p < .05; Model 2 for Senegal, F (1, 133) = 63.35, p < .05). This establishes that administrative support can be used to predict learner performance.

The researcher conducted regression analysis to determine the predictive values of administrative support on learner performance. The analysis results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10 : Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1-Kenya	**(Constant)**	8.70	1.99		4.37	.00
	Administrative support	.36	.03	.81	13.61	.00
2-Senegal	**(Constant)**	24.97	1.49		16.75	.00
	Administrative support	.19	.02	.57	7.96	.00
a. Dependent Variable: Learner Performance						

According to the results presented in Table 10.0, administrative support for Model 1 (Kenya) had a regression coefficient of β =.36, p <.05, while the administrative support for Model 2 (Senegal) had a regression coefficient of β=.19, p <.05. This led to the following prediction equations:

The prediction equation for Model 1 (Kenya) is:

$\hat{Y}_1 = 8.70 + 0.81X_1 + \acute{\varepsilon}$

Where $\hat{Y}_1$ = Predicted administrative support from Kenya; X_1 = administrative support, and $\acute{\varepsilon}$ = standard error.

The results indicate that a unit change in administrative support of students from Kenya leads to 0.81 change in learner performance.

The prediction equation for Model 2 (Senegal) is:

$\hat{Y}_2 = 24.97 + 0.57X_2 + \acute{\varepsilon}$

Where $\hat{Y}_2$ = Predicted administrative support from Senegal; X_2 = administrative support, and $\acute{\varepsilon}$ = standard error.

The results indicate that a unit change in administrative support from Senegal leads to 0.57 change in learner performance.

5.0 Discussion of the Results

The objective for this study was to evaluate the influence of administrative support on performance of students enrolled in distance learning in Public Universities specifically at the University of Nairobi, Kenya and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal. It was established that there exist a positive and significant relationship between administrative support and learner performance. For the learners enrolled in distance learning under the University of Nairobi, the R square value obtained revealed that administrative support accounted for approximately 65% of the total variance in learner performance. For the case of Senegal, administrative support was also responsible for about 32% change in the learner performance. This indicates that administrative support given to distance learning students can be used to predict students' performance. It was also confirmed that the predictive values of learner performance from administrative support was significant for the two countries. Results from regression analysis revealed that a unit change in administrative support from Kenya leads to 0.81 change in learner performance, and a unit change in administrative support from Senegal leads to 0.57 change in learner performance.

The findings of this study are supported by Motivational Design Theory which asserts that for students to be motivated to study for success, it is necessary to provide them with educational materials using strategies that increase the materials relevance, students' attention, confidence, and satisfaction. Insufficient support and motivation is directly correlated with high rates of attrition for remote learning courses (Khan, 2019). The Motivational Design Theory argues that the students are motivated to learn if they get adequate support from the administration. Thus, to guarantee success of students enrolled in distance learning in their academics, there is a need to motivate them through adequate administration support.

The findings of the present study support the work of the previous researchers who established that administrative support has an influence on students' academic performance. For instance, Uribe and Vaughan (2017) noted that for distance learning institutions to maintain the ideals and principles of accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and convenience for students, the institutions must establish and manage properly decentralized centers. These centers serve as the point of contact for students because the institutions serve students from all over the country. This means that students who need assistance in getting it must travel to one of the several regional centers, where they will also find a considerable pedagogical and didactical component to the administrative components of support. The administration of these centers is the primary factor in determining whether or not distant learning programs are successful. Sifuna and Obonyo (2019) established that the quality of service and education supplied to students at a distance learning institution is determined by the degree of administration support provided for the regional center since the regional center represents the institution in terms of program operationalization. The researchers noted that by assuring a strong learner support system to help students transition from conventional to distant education will help them achieve their desired academic goals. The key administrative areas highlighted by the researchers' included admissions, registration, record keeping, information distribution, supervision of examinations, and the creation and provision of learning resources. They indicated that provision of such programs enables learners to acquire and cultivate a positive attitude towards online learning.

Mtebe and Raphael (2018) reported that distance learners performed poorly due to lack of administrative support in Tanzania. The researcher noted that administration in most cases did not provide up to date study materials which has created a negative attitude among the students towards distance learning. It was also indicated in the study that the inadequate study materials did more harm than good to those students admitted on distance learning programs. The delay in payment of instructors among institutions of higher learning was another area that was cited as demoralizing to the instructors who ended up delivering poor quality services to the students who in turn performed poorly.

Inadequacy of the resource persons to facilitate distance learning discouraged the students from enrolling in distance learning programs. The study conducted by Shikulo (2020) revealed that the students must be provided with cognitive support, emotional support, and systemic support for them to succeed in distance learning programs. It is worthy to mention that only 1% of the respondents were in the process of undertaking a PhD indicating lower enrollment at that level of education. The cognitive support included provision of resources for teaching and learning which are necessary for any success to be realized. The emotional function included creating a supportive environment for the learners, one that stimulates dedication and boosts self-esteem. The systemic function included establishing effective and student-friendly administrative and information management systems. The researcher noted that the provision of good administrative and information management assistance determines the degree to which students are satisfied with the school and remain loyal to it and the extent to which they will achieve their academic goals. This is consistent with the findings of the current study.

6.0 Conclusion

The objective of this study was to establish the influence of administrative support on performance of students enrolled in distance learning at the University of Nairobi, Kenya and the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal. Based on the results, the study concludes that there exist a positive and significant relationship between administrative support and learner performance and that the administrative support accounted for about 65% of the total variance in learner performance in Kenya, and approximately 32% of the total change in learner performance in Senegal. This implies that administrative support plays a significant role in learner performance.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Practice Recommendations

1. Institutions of higher learning should implement robust administrative support systems, including clear policies and procedures that streamline student services. This can include improving communication channels, reducing bureaucratic delays, and ensuring that students receive timely and effective support. Additionally, regular training for administrative staff on student needs and service delivery can further enhance student performance.
2. The institutions should also consistently monitor contemporary online technology for adoption in order to facilitate offering of effective support to the distance learners.

7.2 Recommendations for Further Research

Further research should be conducted to expand the theoretical understanding of how different forms of learner support—administrative, personal, and technological interact with learning innovations to influence academic performance in distance education. This could lead to the development of new theoretical models that better explain student success in online and distance learning environments.

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