

OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS IN TANZANIA: EMPIRICAL VOICES FROM LEARNERS AT THE INSTITUTE OF ADULT EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Around the globe, open and distance learning in the education sector has been acknowledged positively. The special characteristic of distance education is that it is endowed with high flexibility and can meet the demands of education for all, which the conventional education system is unable to meet. This paper investigates the perceptions of open and distance learning among female students in Tanzania with a focus on the empirical voices from learners at the Institute of Adult Education. The study participants included students and tutors from the Institute of Adult Education. Data was collected through focus group discussions and interviews. The results show that female students had both positive and negative perception towards open and distance learning. These include flexibility of learning, ability to allow female students to pursue education along with household engagements, cost effectiveness, support from the tutors, inadequacy of learning materials and isolation tendency in the ODL mode.

Keywords: Open and distance learning, women students, adult education, ICT, Tanzania.