

An Investigation into the Nature and Treatment of Learning Difficulties of Distance Learners at Intermediate Level

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Abstract

The Study was aimed at identifying the learning difficulties faced by the distance learners of private higher education in Ethiopia at intermediate level and to explore the existing support provided by the higher education to its distance learners to overcome the learning difficulties emerged during self-study the textual materials and in completing assignments. The study was descriptive in nature's it was mixed design study approach w e r e used for data collection a n d analysis. The population of the study consisted of two categories: the distance learners and the tutors. The sample for the quantitative part was comprised of 150 distance learners and 80 tutors using stratified and random sampling techniques. The qualitative phase includes the sample of 16 distances learners represent in four compulsory courses enrolled in two privet higher education in 2012 at intermediate level. Likewise 10 tutors and two study centers in eastern Ethiopia were also drawn for the qualitative design. Data for the qualitative phase was collected by developing two questionnaires: one for the distance learners and second for the tutors.

Statements; items were developed at 5-pointlikert scale, three point scales yes/no for m and open ended form besides, percentage and mean score, one sample t-test was employed to test the Five hypothesis of the study. For qualitative part interview were conducted of 16 distance learners and 10 tutors. An observation sheet was also prepared to observe student tutor intervention in resolving the learning difficulties the result revealed that the majority of distance learners faced difficulties in comprehending the modules due to multiplicity of concepts ordained in the sentences, lack of pro per illustration in the modules and lack of study skills the module materials was not supplemented with audio and video programs. Lack of time was also a hurdle for the distance learners as they had to study a lot of modules in short periods of one semester the difficulty in completing assignment were; the difficulties in making self notes during self studding the modular material, problems in organization of studied/read materials, hurdles in presenting critical analysis of the question and difficulties in summarizing the answers. Lastly the tutors role was also non cooperative as most of the tutors did not correct the wrong answers written by the students majority of tutors did not return checked assignment to their students in time. The study centers did not function properly and learning difficulties of distance learners were not properly treated at study centers through tutorial support and electronic media.

Key words: Distance learners; Learning difficulties; Treatment of learners

I. Introduction

Distance education is comparatively a recent development in the field of education. The main aim of this system of education is to provide education to the people who have no opportunity to

upgrade their qualification after schooling. So distance learners are the most important element of the system of distance education. It is the element for which the whole system operates. Distance learners vary in a number of ways like age, social status and even in their approaches to learning due to the difference of their geographical location, previous experiences and abilities (Brookfield, 1986, p.26). Moreover, they involve themselves in the learning process to attain different goals and fulfill different kinds of needs (Rumble and Keegan 1983, p.209). Distance learners enrolled in any program of distance education are widely diverse in their characteristics as (Cass, 1986, pp.48-49) identifies some positive characteristics of distance learners such as impatient learners feel urgency about learning, have very definite needs, high motivation, want to learn, have several goals and purposes in wanting to learn, may need the satisfaction of successful achievement, goals within easy and quick reach, like to be treated as mature adults, may be at varying stage of emotional and psychological maturity, have experiences and factual information to share. He also described the negative characteristics which are: have had unpleasant experiences in formal schooling days, experience strong feelings of frustration, possess fixed habits and be distracted from learning by their personal problems. All the distance learners work in isolation that causes them to face difficulties relating to techniques of studying in distance mode of education. They find it hard to understand the responding to the study material (Holmberg, 1981, p.20). They consider themselves inexperienced in expressing their thoughts in written work and in developing adequate reading and comprehension skills (Rashid, 1998, p.26). While discussing the difficulties of distance learners Jarvis (1995, p.25) concludes that "sometime distance learners face difficulties in understanding particular concepts of texts, utilizing their time properly and availing the broadcasting due to the absence of two-way communication". Besides the difficulties relating to studies, they have to face personal problems also as pointed out by Roger (1981, p. 45), "a distance learner may face anxiety of the prolonged working hours of his duty which prevents him from attending the meetings at local centers and employing full attention to his studies". However, Rowntree (1983, p. 142) indicates that most of the distance learners face difficulties due to poor mailing, inadequate feedback, and because of their commitments to their families and study requirements while Robinson (1981, p.143) indicates that a distance learner may face one or more problems such as "lack of time, difficulties of concentration, family commitment, organization of time and planning, low level of motivation, study skills, resources, anxiety and isolation". These problems ultimately increase the distance learners' difficulties in learning.

The causes of learning difficulties described by Westwood (2003, p.7) are: below average intelligence, poor concentration span, difficulty with auditory and visual perception, problems in understanding complex language, limited vocabulary, lack of motivation, poor recall of previous knowledge, inability to generalize learning to new context, lack of study skills, lack of self-management skills, low self-esteem emotional reactions to failure, defective sensory system, malfunctioning of brain/central nervous system (CNS) and dysfunction of muscles (lack of motor coordination).

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2002) suggested three broad categories only to clarify the definition of learning difficulty described by Westwood (2003, p.2) as follow:

- i. Students with learning difficulty not attributed to any disability or impairment.
- ii. Students with identifiable disabilities and impairments.
- iii. Students with difficulties due to socio-economic, cultural, or linguistic disadvantages.

The distance learners at intermediate level are adults and self directed, so the present study addresses the two categories (i) and (iii) described above by Westwood leaving aside category (ii). The category (ii) is excluded from this study as the students with moderate and severe learning difficulties are unable to complete school education (Farrel, 1997) and are treated in clinics and/or in formal system i.e. Special educational institutions according to their special needs in learning or in formal system (inclusive education) with modified curriculum. Such students with identifiable disabilities and impairments are not addressed in the present study.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study mainly focuses to investigate the learning difficulties regarding distance mode of education of St. Mary's University College i.e. correspondence based distance education and to explore the existing role of tutorials at study centers of Dire-Dawa in minimizing these learning difficulties.

In Ethiopia St. Mary's University College is one of the institutions that impart education throughout the country with the help of correspondence or self-study material. The university develops specified print material (modules) for the students on the basis of self-learning. While various regional campuses are responsible to providing tutorial support by appointing tutors who not only mark students' assignments but also provide feedback and academic support in minimizing the learning difficulties emerged during self-study the textual material of St. Mary's University College.

The present study has been undertaken to identify the learning difficulties faced by distance learners of St. Mary's University College, Ethiopia and to explore the support provided by the university college to its distance learners in minimizing the learning difficulties emerged during self-studying the compulsory courses of general group at Intermediate level.

Therefore, the problems in teaching learning process were focused in this study.

The researcher collected empirical data from the distance learners, and tutors at intermediate level.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:-

1. To identify the learning difficulties faced by the distance learners of St. Mary's University College in self-studying the modular material at intermediate level.
2. To explore the role of tutorial services of St. Mary's University College in minimizing the learning difficulties of the distance learners.
3. To suggest remedial measures for learning difficulties of distance learners.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study will be helpful in meeting the educational needs in general. It might help educational planners to have a better plan in future to implement the adequate theories of distance education at St. Mary's University College to reduce the cost of distance education on the one hand and to improve the quality of distance education on the other hand.

The outcomes of this research may be useful for planners, implementers and managers of distance education to have a better and effective ways and means to launch their activities such as: revise the existing courses, to supplement the modules of St. Mary's University College, recruit relevant and competent tutors, manage study centers to support distance learners in learning and career counseling etc. This study may help evaluators of distance education to have insight into the strength and weakness of current practices in treating the learning difficulties at study centers.

Since this study focuses upon the nature and treatment of learning difficulties of distance learners, therefore currently emerging instructional methods, guidance and counseling services and student support services will easily supported from the results of the study.

The tutors of distance education will be the main beneficiaries particularly in the area of guidance and counseling of distance learners in commenting assignments, correcting mistakes, removing ambiguities and misconceptions emerged during self-study instructional material of St. Mary's University College at intermediate level. Moreover, the teaching learning process of distance education would be improved with the help of this study.

1.4 Null Hypotheses

Following hypotheses were made for this study:

1. There is no significant mean difference between the opinions of distance learners and tutors about the nature of self-study material of compulsory courses at intermediate level.
2. There is no significant mean difference between the opinions of distance learners and tutors about self-study difficulties in compulsory courses at intermediate level.

3. There is no significant mean difference between the opinions of distance learners and tutors about difficulties in completing assignments.
4. There is no significant mean difference between the opinions of distance learners and tutors about the comments on the written assignments of the students.
5. There is no significant mean difference between the opinions of distance learners and tutors about the role of tutorials in minimizing the learning difficulties of the distance learners.

II. Materials and Methods

2.1 Procedures of the Study

This study is descriptive in nature and conducted through interviews, observations and survey (questionnaires) approach. In order to achieve data for the study, “Two Dimensional Mixed-Methods Sampling Model” was used. In this model both quantitative and qualitative research design was conducted sequentially. For quantitative phase of this study, a survey was conducted. For qualitative phase of the study interviews and observations were conducted.

2.1.1 Population

The population of the study consists:

- i. The population of the study comprised 150 distance learners residing in East Ethiopia and enrolled in 2011 at intermediate level of St. Mary’s University College.
- ii. 80 tutors of compulsory courses appointed during the year 2011.

2.1.2 Sample

In order to achieve data for the study, “Two Dimensional Mixed-Methods Sampling Model” was used which is given below:

Quantitative Phase and Sampling Design

The quantitative phase utilized a stratified sample of students and tutors and media producers. 1500 distance learners (4% of total population) of compulsory courses of General Group at Intermediate level enrolled in 2011 was the sample of the study. The sample was drawn from all the ten Regional campus/centers of St. Mary’s University College using stratified and simple random techniques. 80 tutors (50% of total population) appointed in compulsory courses at intermediate during the semester spring 2011 to 2012 was the sample of the study. The sample was drawn from all the ten regional campuses/centers of St. Mary’s University College province using stratified and simple random techniques.

1. Qualitative Phase and Sampling Design

In the mixed sampling design of this study, the quantitative phase is dominant while qualitative phase is less dominant to draw nested sample, only those students are selected in this phase that face very much difficulty at intermediate level and are frequent repeaters in compulsory courses. For qualitative phase of the study, convenient sampling technique was used as described below.

Four distance learners (repeaters) were selected purposively as sample for interview to assess learning difficulties. 3 tutors who taught compulsory courses were selected conveniently as sample to conduct interviews to explore the treatment (tutorial support) provided by them in minimizing learning difficulties. Dire-Dawa centers were selected as purposive sample to observe the treatment activities provided by the tutors to distance learners in minimizing the learning difficulties in the compulsory courses at intermediate level.

2.2 Instruments

Questionnaires on five point rating scale (Likert Scale) were designed for the tutors and distance learners and media producers. The experts in distance education have validated these questionnaires Pilot study was conducted in to ensure the validity and reliability. For the administration of the questionnaires, these were mailed and in some cases personally administered to the selected samples. Scheduled interviews were developed on the basis of data collected by questionnaires of the distance learners and tutors. The key variables/items of the data collected by the questionnaires of distance learners and tutors were included during structuring the scheduled interviews. An observational sheet was developed to evaluate the effectiveness of study centers of St. Mary's University College in treating the distance learners with learning difficulties.

2.3 Data Analysis

Data collected through questionnaires was analyzed by using SPSS software. For the purpose of data analyses, frequency, percentage, mean values and t-values were calculated. On the basis of conclusions, recommendations were made for treatment of learning difficulties of distance learners of St. Mary's University College. The results of the observational sheet and interviews were analyzed in percentage by categorizing the responses received.

3. Findings of the Study

3.1 Findings of the Quantitative Phase of the Study

The findings of the quantitative phase of the study are given under the following subheadings:

3.1.1 Objective No. 1: The Nature of Learning Difficulties Related to the Textbooks

1. Both the distance learners (55%) and the tutors (67%) were in favour that the textbooks of compulsory courses were self explanatory.
2. Both the distance learners (49.7%) and the tutors (65.7%) were in favour that the concepts were presented in logical sequence in the textbooks of compulsory courses.
3. Both the distance learners (44.8%) and the tutors (63.4%) were in favour that the concepts were presented from easy to difficult.
4. The distance learners (47%) disagreed and the tutors (54%) were in favour that the material was presented from known to unknown.
5. Both the distance learners (71.7%) and the tutors (80.6%) disagreed that the illustrations were provided in the text to explain the difficult concepts’.
6. Both the distance learners (91.4%) and the tutors (76.4%) were in favour that important points were given at the end of each unit.
7. Both distance learners (74.3%) and tutors (73.1%) were in favour that self assessment exercises were given in the text.
8. The statement that “The distance learners face difficulties in reading the modules due to lack of their prior knowledge” was not supported by the distance learners (53.6%) but supported by (72%) the tutors.
9. The distance learners (72.1%) did not support the statement that the distance learners faced difficulty in studying the textbooks due to lack of study skills while the tutors (47%) supported it.
10. The distance learners (39.3%) disagreed that they faced difficulty in reading the textbooks due to difficult words while tutors (45.9%) agreed.
11. Both of the distance learners (41.8%) and tutors (47.2) agreed that the students faced difficulty in studying the textbooks due to multiplicity of concepts ordained in the text.
12. The distance learner (68.4%) and tutors (80.3%) disagreed that the courses at FA level were out dated.
13. The distance learners (41.9%) did not support while tutors (49.6%) supported to the statement that “The distance learners face difficulty due to excessive detail in the text” but the statement is rejected by applying t-test on both the questionnaires of students and tutors.
14. The distance learners (93.9%) and the tutors (90.3%) disagreed that the students faced difficulties in studying the textbooks due to dim/misprinting of the text.
15. The distance learners (83.4%) and the tutors (82.2%) disagreed that the courses at FA level were non-beneficial.
16. The distance learners (51.6%) and the tutors (64.9%) agreed that the students faced

difficulty in learning due to lack of their interest in study”.

17. The distance learners (54.6%) were of view that they had lack of time for study due to which they faced difficulty in studying the textbooks of St. Mary’s University College at FA level while this statement was rejected by the (45.4%) tutors.
18. Both the distance learners (54.7%) and the tutors (63.1%) disagreed that the lack of supportive home environment was a hurdle in studying the textbooks at home.

3.1.2 Objective No. 1: The Nature of Learning Difficulties Related to Assignment Completion

1. The distance learners (56.3%) were of view that they faced difficulty in writing assignments in their own words while the tutors (66.2%) were of view that their students did not write answers in their own words.
2. The distance learners (60.1%) faced difficulty in presenting the answers in organized form during writing their assignments while the tutors (56.7%) were of view that their students did not present answers in their own words.
3. The distance learners (62.8) faced difficulty in providing critical skills of the questions while the tutors (54.1%) reflected that their students did not present critical analysis.
4. The distance learners (67.6%) agreed that they faced difficulty in summarizing the answer while the tutors (64.1%) considered that their students did not present summaries of their answers.
5. The distance learners (65.2%) were in favour that they faced difficulty in searching the answers from the textbooks while the tutors (74.4%) were in favour that their students reproduced answers from the textbooks.
6. The distance learners (69.8%) were in favour that they faced difficulty in giving the relevant answers during completing their assignments while the tutors (61.6%) were of view that their students gave relevant answers.
7. The distance learners (52.1%) agreed that they faced difficulty in completing assignments due to lack of vocabulary while the tutors (50.4%) were in favour that their students had lack of vocabulary and hence faced difficulty in completing assignments

3.1.3 Objective No. 2: The Role of the Tutors in Resolving Learning Difficulties During Marking the Assignments

1. Both the distance learners (71.2%) and the tutors (81.9%) were in favour that tutors appreciated the correct answers by (¥) during marking students’ assignments
2. The distance learners (85.7%) disagreed that the tutors crossed the wrong answers

attempted by the students while tutors (81.9%) agreed.

3. The distance learners (91.5%) disagreed that the tutors gave comments on wrong answers during marking assignments while (84.5%) tutors agreed.
4. Both the distance learners (51.3%) and the tutors (80.9%) were in favour that tutors marked assignments honestly.
5. Both the distance learners (77.4%) and the tutors (76.7%) disagreed that tutors returned marked assignments within fifteen days.
6. The distance learners (71.6%) agreed that the tutors gave marks on copied assignments while tutors (87%) disagreed.

3.1.4 Objective No. 2: The Role of the Tutors in Resolving Learning Difficulties at the Study Centers

1. The distance learners (47.9%) were of view that the tutors never gave overview of the course/units to students at study centres while the tutors (53.4%) were of view that they always gave overview of the course
2. The distance learners (60.9%) were of view that the tutors rarely explained difficult concepts in the tutorials' while tutors (91.2%) agreed that they always explained difficult concepts in tutorials
3. The distance learners (75.3) supported that the tutors rarely satisfied students about their queries' while tutors (91.6%) reported that they always satisfied distance learners' queries
4. The distance learners (84.1%) were of view that the tutors never guided the students at study centres' while tutors (89.5%) showed that they always guided the distance learners
5. Both the distance learners (57.9%) were of view that the tutors never guided students on telephone while tutors (77.1%) were of view that they rarely guided students telephonically'
6. The distance learners (57.9%) were of view that the tutors never motivate students for study at study centres' while tutors (90%) reported that they always motivated students for study
7. The distance learners (69.8%) were of view that the tutors rarely provided studying skills at study centres' while the tutors (90.1%) were of view that the tutors always provided study skills
8. The distance learners (91.3%) were of view that the tutors never taught skills for solving assignments while tutors (64.3%) were of view that they sometimes provided skills for solving assignments
9. The distance learners (73.6%) were of view that the tutors never solved common mistakes in the students' assignments while the tutors (80.3%) were of view that the tutors always solve common mistakes in assignments.

3.2 Findings of the Qualitative Phase of the Study

The findings of the scheduled interviews (nested sampling) and observational sheet are given separately as under:

3.2.1 Objective 1 & 2: Findings of the Interviews of the Distance Learners and the Tutors

It was found that more than two third distance learners (81%) got admission for the sake of intermediate certificate while 39% distance learners reflected that they preferred St. Mary's University College only to seek knowledge and skills. Compulsory course was found to be the most difficult course at intermediate level as reported by both distance learners (89%) and tutors (86%). The tutors also reported that they (56%) performed duty of tutorship as part time easiest job. Majority of the distance learners reported that they faced difficulties in studying the modules due to difficult words (students 62%), multiplicity of concepts ordained in the sentences (students 68%) and lack of time for study (students 49%). The modules of St. Mary's University College at level were found to be effective but there were shortcomings as reported by the tutors and the distance learners such as: lack of proper illustrations (students 87% and tutors 80%) and not supplemented with audio (students 78% and tutors 90%) and video programs (students 90% and tutors 98%). The causes of difficulties in completing assignments as reported by distance learners and tutors were: lack of study skills (students 72% and tutors 85%) lack of organizational skills (students 36% and tutors 89%), lack of critical skills (students 64% and tutors 99%) and lack of summarizing skills (students 56% and tutors 89%). Lastly the tutors' role is also non-cooperative, as most of the tutors did not correct the wrong answers written by the students. The tutors did not give proper comments on written assignments and did not provide note making skills as reported by more than 85% distance learners.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

1. The module of compulsory courses at intermediate level are self explanatory, organized in logical sequence. The module material is presented from known to unknown and from simple to complex with a lot of self evaluating exercises. The null hypothesis H01 is rejected. It can be concluded that the tutors showed better attitude towards the quality of compulsory courses of St. Mary's University College as compared with distance learners.
2. The module at intermediate level were difficult to comprehend due to lack of illustrations/diagrams, not supplemented with electronic media. Audio cassettes were not sent with modules for the convenience of listening during studying the modules. The null hypothesis H02 is rejected. It can be concluded that the difficulty level of compulsory courses is higher according to the tutors as compared to the views of distance learners.
3. The hurdles in completing assignments were: difficulty in presenting the answer in organized form/ lack of organizational skills, lack of critical skills and lack of summarizing skills. The null hypothesis H03 is rejected. It can be concluded that the assignment completion of compulsory courses was a difficult task according to the distance learners.
4. Tutors' role in marking students' assignments is the first step to treat the learning difficulties of distance learners. During marking, the tutors appreciated the correct answers by marking (¥) tick, but tutors did not cross the wrong answers, neither they gave comments nor corrected the wrong answers. They gave marks on copied assignments and did not return assignments within fifteen days. The null hypothesis H05 is rejected. It can be concluded that tutors showed better attitude towards their marking and commenting on assignments while distance learners opposed the tutors' views in this regard.

5. The main role of tutorial meetings is to treat distance learners with learning difficulties, the tutors did not give overview of the units/courses, were unable to explain the difficult concepts, did not motivate students for study, were unable to teach self-study skills, and did not solve common mistakes in the written assignments. All these discrepancies were due to irrelevant appointment of tutors, as most of the tutors did not even have any formal teaching experience at intermediate level. The null hypothesis H₀₆ is rejected. It can be concluded that tutors greatly favour towards their tutorial support in minimizing learning difficulties of distance learners while distance learners opposed tutors' opinion.
6. This study concludes that the content of each of the compulsory courses at intermediate level was organized in self explanatory manner. However, the distance learners faced difficulties in comprehending the modular material of compulsory courses due to the problems of independent/self-study. They faced hurdles in completing the assignments due to lack of study skills. The tutors did not give proper comments during marking the written assignments of the students; and lastly, the tutors did not treat distance learners with learning difficulties in tutorial meetings.
7. However, only one type of instructional material in the form of textbooks for each compulsory course at intermediate level is against the Peters' theory of industrialization. Peters (1971) advocated a variety of instructional materials at the same level/programme. Theory of industrialization has not been implemented at St. Mary's University College due to which a distance learner has no any option to choose appropriate instructional material according to his/her ability and learning styles. St. Mary's University College Dire-Dawa is working on the bases of the Denial theory of 'Interaction and Independence'. The distance learners at intermediate level engage in independent activities such as self-study the correspondence material mailed by the St. Mary's University College, and writing assignments; while interactive activities includes: tutors marking and commenting on assignments, correspondence between tutor and distance learner, telephonic communication or face to face interaction between tutor and student at study centre. The cost of two-way communication (cost of tutorials) seems to be higher as compared to the effectiveness of tutorials in resolving learning difficulties of the

distance learners. St. Mary's University College has not cared to maintain a balance between the cost-saving industrialization concepts of Peters and cost-raising approaches of Holmberg's and Sewart's student support system. The tutorial meetings have been doubled at intermediate level that has further increased the cost of two-way communication but the impact of tutorials on students' learning is not much effective as are obvious from the findings of this study. It can be concluded that the ineffective tutorials increase the cost of the distance education at St. Mary's University College.

4.2 Recommendations

1. A workshop may be held for newly enrolled distance learners to make them acquainted with the distance learning system, study skills, scanning/skimming skills, note making skills, summarizing skills, media using skills, tutorials attending skills etc.
2. The modules may be illustrated with graphs, maps, diagrams and updated knowledge/information/data. Modules and electronic media may be integrated during development of new courses/programs or during revision of existing courses. More audio-video programs may be produced for each course and their cassettes may be posted to the distance learners.
3. The distance learners' kit containing modules, audio video cassettes and study plan may be sent to students in time along with the tutors' intimation so that the distance learners may be able to contact tutors well in time and may resolve their difficulties in learning during self-studying.
4. The format of audio/video programs may be chosen keeping in view the nature of the course. The video programs may be produced on a simulated class in studio and there may be a discussion or question-answer session at the end of each program.
5. Free telephonic service may be provided to students during transmissions of broadcasts of St. Mary's University College so that students' queries may be answered.
6. Tutors appointment may be made on pure merit bases. Those tutors who have teaching experience at intermediate level in the concerned courses/subjects may be appointed. The tutorship should be cancelled in case of tutors' negligence or irresponsibility in attending

tutorials. Refresher courses may be arranged for tutors to acquaint them with the theories and philosophy of correspondence-based distance mode of education.

7. There may be a monitoring unit in each district which may work under directorate of regional services (DRS) of St. Mary's University College so that the tutorials meetings can be made effective for resolving the difficulties of distance learners and Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA) can also be checked to increase marking standard.
8. Study centres may be established from easy approach of distance learners. The study centres may be equipped with AV aids. Mobile study centres equipped with AV aids may be much appropriate to solve the learning problems of distance learners.
9. To increase tutor-distance learners' interaction, the tutors may be directed to send their E-mail address and telephone numbers to the distance learners during sending intimation letters.
10. Following studies are recommended for future:
 - 11.1 Impact of tutors' comments on the improvement of the subsequent assignments in formative evaluation system of St. Mary's University College at intermediate level.
 - 11.2 Impact of theories of two way communication on distance learners' achievement.
 - 11.3 A comparative study of distance learners' attitude towards St. Mary's University College modules and the notes/helping books of local publishers at intermediate level.
 - 11.4 A comparative study of the treatment facilities provided by St. Mary's University College corresponding to the comprehension difficulties of distance learners.
 - 11.5 Role of tutorials of St. Mary's University College in resolving learning difficulties of distance learners.
 - 11.6 Impact of counseling services on students' achievement at intermediate level.

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