

DISTANCE LEARNING AND THE QUALITY OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN RWANDA:  
A CASE STUDY OF BYUMBA DISTANCE LEARNING

BY

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## **Declaration**

I, Anastase Mvuyekure, declare that this work is my own, and that it has not been submitted for any degree in any institution of higher learning, and that all the resources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

## Abstract

This study examined the contribution of distance learning to the quality of teacher education in Rwanda and was conducted to establish whether the teachers' experiences and qualifications, acquired through the distance learning program, adequately led to quality education. The study was guided by three objectives: namely, to investigate the effect of distance learning on the teaching-learning process; to examine the academic relevance of resources used in the distance learning program in Rwanda; and to evaluate whether the graduates from the distance learning program had the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for qualitative, effective, and efficient education. Concerning the sample and methods used in this study, the simple random sample technique, Questionnaires, interviews, and a documentary study were used. A simple random sample was used to enable each and every individual or case in the entire population to have an equal opportunity to be selected for analysis. Distance Learning Program; intake two, which started in 2011, was chosen as a targeted population. The rationale for selecting this intake is that the students were still following the program and were familiar with it based on the time they had already covered. All of these make them good sources of information about the program. Besides the tutors who were assisting the teacher trainees in the program, the lecturers from the Kigali Institute of Education who were appointed to take part in the training, and the head teachers whose teachers are following the program were also involved. In accordance with the number of respondents, Cochran's formula for sample size was used, and the formula gave a sample size of 58 respondents. As far as the data collection instruments are concerned, questionnaires were chosen because they are easy to administer and save time. Two types of questions were used: closed-ended questions and open-ended questions. In closed-ended questions, participants were allowed to choose from a pre-existing set of dichotomous answers, such as yes or no. A small number of leading questions that required answers like "strongly agree" or "strongly disagree" were also used to get an opinion from the respondents in limited words. Concerning open-ended questions, the respondents were motivated to explain their answers by reacting to the question in order to obtain the quality of their thinking and the reality of their answers.

The interview was also used as a data collection instrument. It involved a face-to-face meeting in order to find out the performance of learners who were taught by teacher trainees. in a distance learning program.

Finally, a documentary study was used to get the statistics mentioned in the study's background. Those statistics referred to the number of trainees who are following the programme and the number of tutors who are guiding them.

The study found that the distance learning program in Rwanda gave rise to effective and efficient outcomes in terms of quality education. This was reflected in the positive change in learners' performance in class and in the national examinations before and after the implementation of the program. However, the distance learning program could be improved, and the study suggests that the Ministry of Education should plan and provide the in-service distance learning program to a larger number of teachers, including primary school teachers. It also suggested that the number of distance training centers be increased in order to provide more beneficiaries with access to the program. Lastly, attempts should be made to use information and communication technology (ICT) to deliver the distance learning program.

