Perception of Students about Tutorials in Open and Distance Learning at Allama Iqbal Open University

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Abstract

This research study was conducted to find out the perceptions of students about tutorials in the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). The objectives of the study were to find out the perceptions of the students about tutorials in ODL at AIOU and to give suggestions for improvement in the tutorial system. In view of the time constraints, the study was consisted of the students involved at the Peshawar and Rawalpindi Regions of the AIOU in B.Ed. Course 512 of semester spring 2012. The data was collected through a questionnaire developed five point Likart Scale. The data was analyzed and the results were converted into percentage and mean scores. The students perceived that tutor engages students in learning activities by using question answer approach in tutorials which is more active for teaching. Tutorials can help in student interaction with each other and they can learn and think in a critical way. Majority of the students agreed that tutorial can aid in the development of the necessary knowledge and abilities of the students. Tutorial is based on interactive approach, and its timing and duration is perfect. It was found that in tutorials tutor remains punctual while the students are not punctual. It was found that all the necessary facilities were not available in the tutorials. Tutor's training was found necessary. It was recommended that there is a need of comprehensive training for tutors to conduct the tutorials. The availability of tutors at the study centers may be made ensure as per schedule issued to the tutor and students so that to make interaction between students to learn from each other. Study centers may be established in the locations which would be accessible for the tutors and students and especially for female tutors and students of far flung areas. All the necessary facilities, including

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multimedia may be provided at the study centers. Monitory incentives for the tutors may be increased and the strength of students per tutor may be decreased so as the tutor may participate wholeheartedly and give meaningful feedback on assignments of every student.

Keywords: Perception, Tutorial, Open Distance Learning (ODL), Study Centers, Interactive Approach,

Introduction

As a force contributing to social and economic development, Open and Distance Learning (ODL) is today one of the most rapidly growing fields of education and training. It is fast becoming an accepted and indispensable part of the main stream of educational systems in both, developed and developing countries, with particular importance for the latter (UNESCO, 2000a). Immense attention is given to open and distance learning to meet the educational needs of the adult population, with a view to provide new and alternative learning opportunities for those who were initially deprived of them, or who, for one reason or another, did not make use of them. Open and distance learning supports the needs of those who cannot be efficiently reached by traditional delivery systems. Distance education has gained wide acceptance as one of the successful modes of extending education in a context of reach, acceptance, and productivity. As a scholar, reach in a sense that it has been instrumental in addressing the educational needs of speckled communities in different continents (Mitchell, 2009); acceptance in the sense that it has emerged "as a viable alternative delivery system and an alternative to the conventional system" (Rao, 2006); and productivity in the sense that "Research & Development in this area has contributed in many ways to more general educational research and development." (Spector, 2009). The provision of an opportunity to learn without being restricted by geographical or time constraints is a major factor behind the growth of distance education programs. Distance education highly essential to share the goals of conventional education, aims at providing access to historically under-served, and highly motivated population provide students‟ freedom and program flexibility, offer useful learning opportunity to recipients at a time and local environment convenient to them, the delivery medium plays a crucial role in minimizing the gap between teaching and learning (Keegan, 1996). Distance education, according to Valery and Lord (2000), may offer four different

benefits to education providers: enabling access to students; alleviating capacity constraints; capitalizing on emerging market opportunities and serving as a catalyst in institutional transformation. Since the education systems of most countries or areas have expanded quickly, these institutions have suffered from a poor understanding of quality and a lack of educational standards and indicators, (Cheng & Tam, 1997). Consequently, there is a strong emphasis on the pursuit of education quality in ongoing educational reforms in both local and international contexts. Development of distance learning courses needs good market research and business planning where a quality-based approach is a necessity, not a luxury (Lawton & Barnes, 1998). However, understanding of pedagogical issues in the distance education realm is a requirement to create a quality distance courses. As Cooke & Veach, (1997), the production and initial distribution of learning materials and the management of the student/lecturer interface using tools that permit the tracking of assignments and response times are important aspects of distance education. Effectiveness, technology, student characteristics, and instructor characteristics, institutional support, and supervision emerged as six key success factors for distance education delivery (Valery & Lord, 2000).

Tutorials are one of the main components of the Open Distance Learning (ODL). The learning environment in Open Distance is intended to be learner centered and high supportive. Qualified persons are selected as part time tutors from the formal institutions of the country. This approach has easy manageable workload and the learner support services are cost-effective. Programmed schedules are sent to students with the correspondence packages. In addition, assignments are sent throughout the period of study. These assignments have threefold function: i-They enable the students to have their performance and progress assessed regularly by expert tutors; ii-They enable a tutor to give instruction to his / her students through the comments; and corrections made on the assignment; iii-They act as a pacing device for the students during their period of study. Knowledge Series of Commonwealth of Learning has explained these aims of tutoring in the Open Distance Learning (ODL) (Daweti, 2005): a- Being an interpersonal element to the learning process. b- Faster collaborative learning and support small group. c-Enrich print-based learning through a variety of practical and interactive exercises.

D. Keegan (1996), explained the educational philosophy of Open Learning emphasizes giving learner's choices about: a-medium or media, whether print, online, television or video; b-place of study, whether at

home, in work place, or any other; c-time for study, any time; d-support mechanisms, whether tutors on demand, audio conferences or computer-assisted learning: and, entry and exit points.

According to Al. Sparkeset, (1983), "the time continuum is very important for Open Distance Learning system. At one end all learners and their tutors interact at the same time and same place, for example, face-to-face tutorials, seminars, workshops. At the other end, all learners and their tutors interact at different times and different places, for example, home study, computer conferencing and learners' visits to learning resources centers at their leisure". The use of new information and communication technologies has drawn new attention to open and distance learning and offers new possibilities (Shah, 2004). Distance education has been defined as an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is some open and distance learning programmers lead to a qualification, others do not; some are addressed to individuals and others to groups; some are tightly organized and others essentially a way of making learning resources available to teachers. All fall under this one umbrella of open and distance learning (Richardson, 2001). The aim of this study is to explore the dynamics and challenges of distance education facing in the tutorial of distance education programs. The study at hand has paramount importance in exploring the achievements and challenges that may debilitate the tutorial system, enables us to consider the views of tutors and students / learners towards the tutorials and its practical implications for extending and strengthening the system. In addition to the above, the findings related to a given study have a broader application about introducing adaption in the area under consideration. Specifically, it will provide some valuable suggestions and recommendations for the implementer and users such as students, counselors, teachers, educational administrators, curriculum designers and distance education coordinators.

Tutoring in Open and Distance Learning

As the learning environment in distance education is intended to be highly supportive and learner centered, regular tutor-led contact sessions are an important learner support strategy that may be an incentive for student enrolment in a program.

In general, institutions use the tutoring services of qualified professional or support staff employed on a part time contract basis, rather than full time academic staff. This approach ensures that lectures

have a manageable workload, and that learner support services are cost effective. Tutoring in open and distance learning (ODL) is designed to:- i-Bring an interpersonal element to the learning process. ii- Enrich print based learning through a variety of practical and interactive exercises. iii- Principles dealt with here will apply to main ODL contexts.

Types of Tutorials in ODL

Tutorials, in both media based and contact based formats, are one of the most effective strategies for opening up learning environments.

Media Based Tutorials

To an extent, well-designed and well-written learning materials serve as a good vicarious teacher. This means the materials can aid the development of the necessary knowledge and abilities, as if they were physically under the guidance of a real teacher when written in a way that simulates the actual tutorial process. The learning material becomes a kind of simulated conversation that takes place in a non contiguous (non contact) environment. One may experience this form of educational conversation through reading material that conveys a personal tone, in which the author gives advice on how to handle various concepts and activities; encourages him/her to interrogate the text, reflection his/her own thinking processes as he/she reads, and considers alternative perspectives. These courses or modules may be well designed to promote a sense of interactivity, but are produced for mass distribution to possibly thousands of students across vast distances. Skilled tutors will be able to help students use the material to create their own individual understanding and knowledge.

Contact Based Tutorials

I'm not sure now write the first assignment. Are we going to discuss the layout on Saturday? Contact-based tutorials correspond to Holmberg s of guided didactic conversation, based on the awareness that human beings, although learning individually, usually develop their thinking in an advantageous way by talking their concepts and ideas over with some partner. So in addition to dialogue between leaner and learning material and content, we should create personal interactions on at least two other levels, i.e. i-Between learner and teacher (or tutor), ii-Between learner

and learner contact based tutorials, also called contact sessions, may specify compulsory or optional attendance and may carry a portion of the total course credit. They take different forms: individual or group tutoring, tutor or peer facilitated tutorials, short (say three hours) but frequent sessions, or residential holiday schools of a longer duration (a week or more). The main reasons for creating opportunities for contact and dialogue go beyond just overcoming the isolation and loneliness of distance learning.

Effective Strategies for Tutorials

Skills and Qualities

A tutor undertakes multiple tasks that demand a variety of abilities generally; a tutor should have an academic qualification that is at least one level higher than the course tutored. Essential qualities include interpersonal skills, organization and attention to detail, enthusiasm, creativity, empathy, computer skills and commitment to students and their learning. Your institution may consider some skills and qualities more important than others, depending on the scope of your tutoring role.

Teaching and Learning

The structure and value of learner's support systems including tutoring, reflect the broader teaching and learning philosophy of the institution and the extent to which learning programs are really open, institutions where lectures are the sole custodians of the curriculum, are less open than those that use student's and tutors' feed back in the design process. Of course, many orientations can coexist. For example, you could combine experiential and constructivist approaches by allowing students to work individually and then share experiences with the group. Also, you may elicit opinion or examples form students to make a densely written text more accessible.

In planning and delivering a tutorial-learner support system institutions should carefully consider the implications of introducing a distance education component in a face to face tuition environment. How will the student profile change? Are there specific standards for distance education provision that must be met? Will the current administrative system and technologies be adequate? What opportunities for collaboration with other institutions or agencies can be exploited? Re-evaluate and communicate the teaching and learning philosophy. Is the tutorial-learner support system to be integral part of teaching and

assessment? How will teaching and learning practices be evaluated, and what role will students and tutors play here? Ensure that lecture and tutor roles do not conflict. Who will manage the tutorial system? Does the institution need to contract an external experienced tutor/facilitator to help define roles and responsibilities? Commit the necessary human and material resources. Will the institution afford the cost of training and remunerating tutors; developing new or revising existing learning materials; marketing new programs and tutorial services; hiring tutorial venues; and increased use of postal services? For which costs can external funding be sought? Is the system introduced as a pilot project, or as a planned sustainable tuition feature?

Tutoring at AIOU

The AIOU is the biggest provider of distance education in Pakistan, with nearly 1000 courses offered to undergraduate and postgraduate students. The University employs part-time tutors, who act as the human interface between the university and its students. Each tutor is responsible for supporting a group of around 40-60 students, although the group may vary in size depending on the geographical distribution of students. So, in spite of the scale and size of the University, the strength of the system is that all students are known individually by their tutor. The tutor's role is to mark assignments with detailed formative feedback, and to provide support to students as appropriate. Central academic staff designs the courses which are delivered in the form of printed or web based course materials. The nature of tutor support will vary to some extent with the faculty and course, but broadly speaking there is a standard remit.

Earlier research at the Open University (Price et al, 2007) described how students viewed tutoring and tuition differently. While tuition was seen as a more objective impersonal activity intended to meet the needs of a group and involving interpretation and assessment of a subject, tutoring was a more subjective and personal activity that was intended to meet the needs of individuals, where the students themselves had the greatest influence on the nature of tutor- student interactions. It was pastoral and interactive, involving supporting; counseling; and mentoring students aimed at helping them grasp the big picture'.

It can be argued that distance learners need help and guidance in coping with the associated demands of this type of studying (McGivney, 2004) and hence, the attitudes and behaviors of the tutors are crucial to students perceptions of the academic quality of courses in distance education (Richardson,Long,&Woodley,2003). Our aim in conducting

this study has been to explore tutor and student perceptions of what constitutes good tutoring in a distance learning environment. The following analytic strategy was used:

Finally, the discriminate analyses were used to determine the scale that contributed the most to the differences among the different clusters of tutors and students. This analytic strategy has been used in a number of previous exploratory studies in higher education and clinical psychology (Makoe, Richardson, & Price, 2008; Richardson 1996, 2007; Zelinski, Gilewski, & Thompson, 1980).

Perception

According to Nelson and Quick (1997), "social perception is the process of interpreting information about another person." In other words, you may be in possession of the same set of information that other people have on a particular situation, person or group but still arrive at different conclusions due to individual differences in the capacity to interpret the information that you all have. Rao and Narayan (1998) obviously share the main characteristics of the above definition. However, they emphasize that perception ranks among the "important cognitive factors of human behavior" or psychological mechanism that enable people to understand their environment. In their own words, "perception is the process whereby people select, organize, and interpret sensory stimulations into meaningful information about their work environment." They argue that perception is the single most important determinant of human behavior, stating further that "there can be no behavior without perception." From a third perspective "social perception refers to constructing an understanding of the social world from the data we get through our senses" (Michener, DeLamater and Myers, 2004). Thus, perception "refers to the process by which we form impressions of other people's traits and personalities." You may have noticed that by referring to "our senses" as the means of data collection the authors may have placed too much emphasis on its perception component, which the first two definitions clearly avoided. In order to shed more light on this concept it is important to pay attention to the following elements of the above definitions of perception listed by Rao and Narayan (1998):

1. Our attention, feelings and the way we act are influenced by our environment,
2. Perception helps you to gather data from your surroundings process the data and make sense out of it,

3. In perception it is sometimes difficult to separate the information from the action,
4. It is basically a process of gaining mental understanding, and
5. Perception guides the perceiver in harnessing, processing and channeling relevant information towards fulfilling the perceiver's requirements. (Godwin Ogheneochuko Unumeri , 2009).

Statement of the Problem

Tutorials are used as avenues for tutors and their students at a physical location to discuss issues related to course content. They also discuss issues other than course content. These issues require the attention of the tutors. The issues range from management, financial, and social, advising to helping learners become more autonomous. The Allama Iqbal Open University has the aim to provide quality education to the masses of the country. The university has its tutorial system to minimize the students' issues and problems and help them to become more autonomous in learning. This study is to find out the perceptions of students about tutorials in Open Distance Learning (ODL) at AIOU and to identify the issues and problems faced by the students at tutorials.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

i. Find out students' perceptions about tutorials in Open Distance Learning (ODL) at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU).
ii. Identify problems/barriers inhibiting implementation of tutorials in ODL at AIOU.

Significance of the Study

This study would help the tutors to understand the tutoring in ODL and they will use the study centers as a platform to reflect their practices. Tutor will address the tutoring linked challenges at the National and Regional campuses. Its findings and implementation would benefit the students' services department in the ODL to improve and enhance the students learning. The planner of ODL will be benefited and will change the rules of planning in ODL. The study may be significant in the following ways:

1. It would be beneficial for the planners of ODL at the AIOU.
2. It would be beneficial for the course coordinators at the AIOU.
3. It would be beneficial for the writers of courses at the AIOU.
4. It would be beneficial for the process of evaluation at the AIOU.

Research Questions

1. What are students' perceptions about tutorials in ODL at AIOU?
2. What is possible solution for problems and issues inhabiting in implementation of tutorials in ODL at AIOU?

Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to the tutors and students of B.Ed. Course 512, (Perspectives of Education) of Peshawar and Rawalpindi Regions. The Semester Autumn 2012 was considered for this research.

Methodology of the Study

This study is of survey type and a single questionnaire was used for the students. Likert's five rating scale questionnaire was used in this study. The questionnaire was developed to investigate students' perceptions of tutoring. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each item using 5-point rating scale. Random sample of available students was selected. Students were selected from B.Ed. program offered by the AIOU. Those responses were included in the analysis which contained in the original sample. The questionnaire was administered through post and personally face to face. The study is basically descriptive in nature and survey was conducted to collect the data.

Population

All students of B.e.d Course code 512; i.e. (12000) of Peshawar and Rawalpindi regions of the A.I.O.U was the population of the study. This Population was comprised of Semester Autumn 2012.

Sample

Twelve hundred (1200) students were selected from Rawalpindi and Peshawar Regions randomly which is 10% of the population. The total responses received were 1008 which is 84% of the population. This is a survey study, therefore, percentage and mean average scores of each statement of the questionnaire were calculated.

Tools of the Research

The data was collected with the help of a single questionnaire for students after the termination of the semester autumn 2012.

Data Collection

The following data was collected from the tutors and students through a single questionnaire.

Table
The tutors and students participated in the survey.

Category of population	Population	Sample	Sample Size	Received Responses	Response Rate	Sampling Technique
Students	12000	1200	10%	1008	84%	Convenient

Data Analysis

Data analysis was made by applying percentage and mean scores of each statement of the questionnaire. Mean scores were calculated by the following formula.

$$\text{M. A} = \frac{5(\%\text{SA})+4(\%\text{A})+3(\%\text{N})+2(\%\text{DA})+1(\%\text{SDA})}{100}$$ Where,

SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, N=Normal, DA= Disagree, SDA=Strongly Disagree. The mean score above 3.0 was taken as favorable. After percentage and mean scores were calculated, findings of the questionnaire were drawn. On the bases of findings, conclusions were made, while recommendations based on conclusions.

Results and Discussions

The data analysis is based upon the responses of the participants to the statements in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the frequencies of the participant's responses. The data was tabulated in the form of frequency distribution, percentage and mean scores. Analysis has been done only quantitatively. The 12000 students were taken as a random sample from the Peshawar and Rawalpindi Regions of the AIOU. The response rate was 84%. The following tables show analysis of the 31 statements of the questionnaire.

Table 1
Perceptions of the students about tutor engage students in learning activities.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
1.	Tutor engages students in learning activities	SA	381	30	
		A	399	40	
		N	105	11	4.04
		DA	058	06	
		SDA	040	04	
		Total	983	100	

Table 1 indicates that 79% of the students are agreed that tutor engages students in learning activities while 10% are disagreed. Mean score 4.04> 3.0 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 2
Perceptions of the students about the question answer approach in tutorials.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
2.	Questions answer Approach in tutoring is more active in learning	SA	469	52	
		A	340	38	
		N	69	08	4.9
		DA	14	01	
		SDA	10	01	
		Total	902	100	

Table 2 indicates that 90% of the students are agreed to the statement that using question answer approach in tutoring is more active in learning while 02% are disagreed. Mean score 4.39>3.0 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 3
Perceptions of the students about tutorials interact students effectively.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
3.	Tutorial interacts students effectively	SA	442	49	
		A	293	32	
		N	114	13	4.23
		DA	41	05	
		SDA	14	01	
		Total	904	100	

Table 3 indicates that 81% of the students are agreed that tutorials interacts students effectively while 06% are disagreed. Mean score 4.23 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 4
Perceptions of the students about the tutorials help students to learn.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
4.	Tutorial help students to learn	SA	588	65	
		A	241	27	
		N	49	05	4.53
		DA	14	02	
		SDA	08	01	
		Total	900	100	

Table 4.2.4 indicates that 92% of the students are agreed that tutorials help students to learn while 03% are disagreed. Mean score 4.53 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 5
Perceptions of the students about tutorials help students to think in a critical way.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
5.	Tutorials help students to think in a critical way	SA	484	51	
		A	249	26	
		N	122	13	4.16
		DA	74	08	
		SDA	14	02	
		Total	943	100	

Table 4.2.5 indicates that 77% of the students are agreed that tutorials help students to think in a critical way while 10% are disagreed. Mean score 4.16 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 6
Perceptions of the students about tutor discussion on assignments in the tutorials.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
6.	Tutor prefer to have discussion on the assignments in the tutorials	SA	303	34	4.0
		A	392	43	
		N	136	15	
		DA	51	06	
		SDA	20	02	
		Total	902	100	

Table 4.2.7 indicates that 77% of the students are agreed that tutoring means spend less time on giving information and more time engaging in discussion while 10% are disagreed. Mean score 4.04 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 7
Perceptions of the students about development of students' knowledge in the tutorials.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
7.	Tutorials can aid in the development of the necessary knowledge and abilities of the students	SA	456	51	4.34
		A	338	37	
		N	76	08	
		DA	25	03	
		SDA	07	01	
		Total	902	100	

Table 7 indicates that 88% of the students are agreed to the statement that tutorials can aid in development of the necessary knowledge and abilities of the students while 04% disagreed. Mean score 4.34 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 8
Perceptions of the students about the timings of the tutorials.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
8.	Tutorial timings are prefect	SA	443	49	4.19
		A	268	30	
		N	122	14	
		DA	45	05	
		SDA	21	02	
		Total	899	100	

Table 8 indicates that 79% of the students are agreed to the statement that tutorials timing is perfect while 07% disagreed. Mean score 4.19 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 9
Perceptions of the students about the duration of the tutorials.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
9.	Tutorial duration is prefect	SA	368	41	
		A	316	35	
		N	134	15	4.04
		DA	46	05	
		SDA	31	04	
		Total	895	100	

Table 4.2.11 indicates that 76% of the students are agreed that tutorials duration is perfect while 09% disagreed. Mean score 4.04 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 10
Perceptions of the students about the available facilities in the tutorials.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
10.	All the necessary facilities are available in tutorials	SA	306	34	
		A	220	24	
		N	161	18	3.58
		DA	123	14	
		SDA	89	10	
		Total	899	100	

Table 10 indicates that 58% of the students are agreed to the statement that all necessary facilities are available in the tutorials while 24% disagreed. Mean score 3.58 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 11
Perceptions of the students about tutor feels confidence in the tutorials.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
11.	Tutor feels confident in carrying out tutorials	SA	369	41	
		A	346	39	
		N	119	13	4.11
		DA	36	04	
		SDA	25	03	
		Total	901	100	

Table 11 indicates that 80% of the students are agreed to that they feel confident in carrying out tutorials while 07% disagreed. Mean score 4.11 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 12
Perceptions of the students about the feedback is given to every student on assignments.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
12.	Feedback is given on the assignment to every student	SA	361	40	3.98
		A	301	34	
		N	123	14	
		DA	75	08	
		SDA	38	04	
		Total	898	100	

Table 12 indicates that 74% of the students are agreed that feedback is given on the assignments while 012% disagreed. Mean score 3.98 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 13
Perceptions of the students about tutor is always sympathetic with the students.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
13.	Tutor is always sympathetic when students need help on their study	SA	497	55	4.37
		A	286	32	
		N	81	09	
		DA	26	03	
		SDA	10	01	
		Total	900	100	

Table 13 indicates that 87% of the students are agreed that tutor is always sympathetic when students need help on their study while 04% disagreed. Mean score 4.37 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 14
Perceptions of the students about tutor knows how to encourage self learning.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
14.	Tutor knows how to encourage self learning	SA	364	40	4.11
		A	357	39	
		N	132	15	
		DA	41	05	
		SDA	11	01	
		Total	905	100	

Table 14 indicates that 79% of the students are agreed that tutor knows how to encourage self learning while 06% disagreed. Mean score 4.11 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 15
Perceptions of the students about the tutor motivates students to learning.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
15.	Tutor knows how to motivate students to learn	SA	474	53	4.33
		A	292	33	
		N	84	09	
		DA	34	04	
		SDA	07	01	
		Total	891	100	

Table 15 indicates that 86% of the students are agreed that tutor knows how to motivate students to learn while 05% disagreed. Mean score 4.15 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 16
Perceptions of the students about tutor are aware of students' needs.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
16.	Tutor is aware about student's needs	SA	391	43	4.10
		A	313	33	
		N	152	17	
		DA	42	05	
		SDA	16	02	
		Total	914	100	

Table 16 indicates that 76% of the students are agreed to that tutor is aware about students' needs while 07% disagreed. Mean score 4.10 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 17
Perceptions of the students about tutor makes preparation before tutoring.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
17.	Tutor knows how to encourage self learning	SA	364	40	4.11
		A	357	39	
		N	132	15	
		DA	41	05	
		SDA	11	01	
		Total	905	100	

Table 17 indicates that 83% of the students are agreed that tutor makes preparation before tutoring while 05% disagreed. Mean score 4.25 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 18
Perceptions of the students about the tutors' expectation of success from all students.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
18.	Tutor has expectation of success from all students	SA	440	50	
		A	299	34	
		N	116	13	4.31
		DA	27	03	
		SDA	04	00	
		Total	886	100	

Table 18 indicates that 84% of the students are agreed that tutor has expectation of success for all students while 03% disagreed. Mean score 4.31 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 19
Perceptions of the students about tutor gives adequate guidance for students.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
19.	Tutor gives adequate guidance on assignment and about examination	SA	325	36	
		A	342	38	
		N	165	18	4.00
		DA	51	06	
		SDA	25	02	
		Total	908	100	

Table 19 indicates that 74% of the students are agreed that tutor gives adequate guidance on assignment and about examination while 08% disagreed. Mean score 4.00 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 20
Perceptions of the students about tutors' punctuality.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
20.	Tutor is punctual	SA	475	54	
		A	306	35	
		N	80	09	4.40
		DA	10	01	
		SDA	09	01	
		Total	880	100	

Table 20 indicates that 89% of the students are agreed to the statement that tutor is punctual while 02% disagreed. Mean score 4.40 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 21
Perceptions of the students about students are punctual.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
21.	Student is punctual	SA	59	07	
		A	88	10	
		N	122	13	2.18
		DA	303	34	
		SDA	328	36	
		Total	900	100	

Table 21 indicates that17% of the students are agreed that student is punctual while 70% disagreed. Mean score 2.18 shows that the students didn't support the statement.

Table 22
Perceptions of the students about the tutors' knowledge.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
22.	Tutor has thorough	SA	407	45	
	knowledge of	A	357	39	
	his subject	N	119	13	4.25
		DA	17	02	
		SDA	08	01	
		Total	908	100	

Table 22 indicates that 84% of the students are agreed that tutor has a thorough knowledge of their discipline while 03% disagreed. Mean score 4.25 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 23
Perceptions of the students about tutors communicate effectively in the tutorials.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
23.	Tutor is punctual	SA	342	38	
		A	390	43	
		N	137	15	4.14
		DA	29	03	
		SDA	08	01	
		Total	906	100	

Table 23 indicates that 81% of the students are agreed that tutor communicates effectively in the tutorials while 04% disagreed. Mean score 4.15 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 24
Perceptions of the students about tutor promotes students learning through media use.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
24.	Tutor promotes students learning through effective media use	SA	109	12	2.94
		A	233	26	
		N	214	24	
		DA	180	20	
		SDA	155	18	
		Total	891	100	

Table 24 indicates that 38% of the students are agreed that tutor promotes students learning through media use while 38% disagreed. Mean score 2.94 shows that the students didn't support the statement.

Table 25
Perceptions of the students about tutor clarify course objectives and goals to students.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
25.	Tutor clarifies course objectives and goals to students	SA	328	37	3.99
		A	326	36	
		N	169	19	
		DA	48	05	
		SDA	29	03	
		Total	900	100	

Table 25 indicates that 73% of the students are agreed that tutor clarifies course objectives and goals to students while 08% disagreed. Mean score 3.99 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 26
Perceptions of the students about tutor checks students' progress.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
26.	Tutor checks the student's progress	SA	400	44	4.07
		A	320	35	
		N	85	09	
		DA	67	08	
		SDA	38	04	
		Total	910	100	

Table 26 indicates that 79% of the students are agreed that tutor checks the students' progress while 12% disagreed. Mean score 4.07 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 27
Perceptions of the students about tutor are expert in the ODL system.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
27.	Tutor is expert of the open distance learning system	SA	413	46	4.09
		A	304	34	
		N	74	08	
		DA	63	07	
		SDA	47	05	
		Total	901	100	

Table 27 indicates that 80% of the students are agreed that tutor is not expert of the open distance learning system while 12% disagreed. Mean score 4.09 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 28
Perceptions of the students about tutor need training in the ODL system.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
28.	Tutor need training about open distance learning system	SA	318	35	3.60
		A	230	25	
		N	123	14	
		DA	150	17	
		SDA	79	09	
		Total	900	100	

Table 28 indicates that 60% of the students are agreed that tutor need training about open distance learning system 28% disagreed. Mean score 3.6 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 29
Perceptions of students about tutor provides an environment for the students learning.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
29.	Tutor provides an environment for the students to learn	SA	406	47	4.27
		A	337	39	
		N	89	10	
		DA	21	02	
		SDA	16	02	
		Total	869	100	

Table 29 indicates that 86% of the students are agreed that tutor provides a learning environment for the students while 04% disagreed. Mean score 4.27 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 30
Perceptions of the students about tutor encourages discussion among the students.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
30.	Tutor encourages discussion among students	SA	439	49	4.22
		A	291	32	
		N	115	13	
		DA	38	04	
		SDA	17	02	
		Total	900	100	

Table 30 indicates that 81% of the students are agreed to that tutor encourages discussion among students while 06% disagreed. Mean score 4.22 shows that the students supported the statement.

Table 31
Perceptions of the students about tutor uses appropriate participative methodology.

S. No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
31.	Tutor uses appropriate participative methodology	SA	355	40	4.10
		A	345	38	
		N	149	17	
		DA	16	02	
		SDA	28	03	
		Total	893	100	

Table 31 indicates that 78% of the students are agreed to the statement that tutor uses appropriate participative methodology while 04% disagreed. Mean score 4.10 shows that the students supported the statement.

Conclusions

Collected data was analyzed and on the bases of findings obtained through data analysis the following conclusions may be drawn.

1. Majority of the students (79%) are agreed that tutor engages students in learning activities by using question answer approach in tutorials which is more active for teaching. Tutorials help in student interaction with each other and to learn and think in a critical way. Majority students (90%) are agreed that tutorial can aid in the development of the necessary knowledge and abilities of the

students. Tutorial is based on interactive approach, and its timing and duration is perfect.

2. Majority of the students (58%) are agreed that all necessary facilities are available in tutorials. Majority of the students (80%) feel confident in carrying out the tutorials.
3. Majority of the students (74%) are agreed that tutorial is important for the transmission of knowledge and feedback is given on the assignments to every student, and also tutor is sympathetic when students need help on their study. The tutor is aware about students needs, makes preparation before tutoring, gives guidance on assignments and about examination, and counsels students when necessary in tutorials.
4. Majority of the students (89%) are agreed that tutor is punctual but70% students are disagreed that students are punctual in tutorials. Tutor has a thorough knowledge of his subject, communicates effectively in tutorials, and promotes students' learning in tutorials.
5. Majority of the students (73%) are agreed that tutor clarifies course objectives and goals to the students. The students (79%) are agreed that tutor checks the students' progress, and also is an expert of the open distance learning system. However, (60%) of students are agreed that tutor needs training about ODL system.
6. Majority of the students (86%) are agreed that tutor provides an environment for students to learn. Majority of the students (81%) are agreed that tutor encourages discussion among the students while (78%) students are agreed that tutor uses appropriate methodology in tutorials.

Recommendations

On the basis of finding and conclusions the recommendations of the study, the perceptions of students about tutorial in ODL at AIOU are proposed as under.

1. There is a need of comprehensive training for tutors to conduct the tutorials and give meaningful feedback on the assignments which can help in students learning.
2. The availability of tutors and students at the study centers may be made ensure as per schedule issued to the tutor and students so as to solve the students' problems related to course work well in time, and make interaction among the students to learn from each other and promote critical thinking among the students. Attendance of students

in tutorials may be awarded with marks in their academic program so that they may understand the worth of tutorial meetings.

3. Study centers may be established in the locations which would be accessible for the tutors and students and especially for female tutors and students of far flung areas. All the necessary facilities, including multimedia and internet may be provided at the study centers.
4. The strength of students per tutor may be decreased so as the tutor may participate wholeheartedly and give meaningful feedback on assignments of every student.

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