



## Students' Perceptions on Continuing Education Program in Higher Institution. The Case of Dire Dawa University, Ethiopia

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**Abstract:** This study address issues on students' perceptions on Continuing Education Program (CEP) for the case of Dire Dawa University, Ethiopia. To this end, a total of 223 students were selected by stratified random sampling technique. A survey instrument was used to investigate students' perceptions on key factors related to attitude, social life, instructors, assessment, curriculum and institution. The quantitative data of the study was analyzed using descriptive statistics and proportion t-tests. Significant statistical effects were observed on instructors and institution related factors; while the proportion t-test result has revealed no statistical significant differences on factors related to attitude and social life. Generally, the university academic environment and the institution as a whole mainly accounted for students' negative perceptions rather than personal problems of the students. These will have a serious implication on students' retention and completion rate, institutional service delivery and overall image. Therefore, key stakeholders including university management bodies, administrative and academic staff, and students need to discuss and take remedial actions on the problems of CEP.

**Keywords -** CEP, students' perceptions, Dire Dawa University, Ethiopia

### I. INTRODUCTION

Continuing Education Program (CEP) is required to be updated with the latest developments, skills, and new technologies needed for ones' field of study beyond graduating from a program. Certain professions also require continuing education to comply with laws, remain licensed or certified, or maintain membership in an association or licensing body. Over all, CEP is considered a way for professionals to keep abreast of their fields so that they don't lag behind. Many careers need continuing education. Therefore, countries adopt and issue different policies and strategies to accommodate potentials learner and keep the education sector accessible.

Ethiopia is trying to achieve with all possible efforts the *Second Growth Transformation Plan*, aimed at eradicating extreme poverty and improving the welfare of its peoples (MoFED, 2006, 2010). Providing Quality Education to all students is one of the major goal in educational documents and a stepping stone to achieve the *Growth and Transformation Plan* (MoFED, 2006, P.109; MoE, 2010). CEP is seen as the stepping stone for creating different educational opportunities and lifelong skills for a society (MoE, 2008; UNESCO, 2014).

Through the skills and knowledge gained, CEP enables people to participate in the social, economic and political activities of their communities to their potential. It is also seen as an opportunity to develop human intellectuals in a society who can assists to trim down the negative consequence of poverty. In an increasingly competitive global economy of free market, a well educated high quality workforce is vital to country's economy in order to attract foreign investments that generate jobs and create wealth. Hence, good quality education is an important foundation for economic growth and is seen as a mechanism in the attainment of other development objectives.

Ethiopian education has many challenges regarding quality as indicated in ESDP IV among others (MoE, 2010; UNESCO, 2009). In particular, CEP in DDU faces many challenges to accomplish its mission of 'providing accessible quality higher education and producing competent human power to the labor market' (DDU Senate Legislation, 2017). In 2015/16 academic year alone the program has increased its enrollment to 1812 (DDU Registrar, 2016). However, the numbers of students enrolling in different departments have shown a dramatic reduction after a semester of first academic year and progressively in the remaining years, too. For instance, accounting, management, civil engineering have decreased from 140, 80, 120 in 2016 first year first semester to 80, 20, and 60 students in the second semester of the same academic year.

The present study is alarmed by trends that are posing serious challenges to retain optimum number of students in CEP. Multitude of factors related to institution, educational, personal and social factors could contribute for this state of affairs based on research findings (Nabaho , Oonyu , & Aguti, 2017; Garriott, Patton ,Nisle & Stephanie, 2018; Karyn, BrckaLorenz & Shoup, 2018 ). Thus, it is important to investigate what are the current students' perceptions' on the overall program related to attitude, social life, instruction, curriculum, assessment and institution. Assessing the perceptions of students on continuing education program pinpoints possible directions to all stakeholders to make some remedial actions to improve the program, hence the study. To that effect, the following research question is developed to guide this study:

What are the perceptions of students on Continuing Education Program?

## II.METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Research Design and Method

The study conducted using quantitative survey design. The population of interest in this study was 1812 students attending CEP in 10 departments. The size of students in departments differ by large from each other; so that, first stratified sampling was used and then participants were selected using proportional allocation to make the sample representative of the population. Then, selecting students simple random sampling technique was used through the lottery method.

### 2.2. Sample Size Determination and Allocation

The sample size accounting for about 13% of the total population size (N=1812) was 223, distributed to different departments using

“Proportional Allocation” as  $\frac{n_i}{N_i} = \frac{n}{N}$ ). That is, it gives a self-weighting sample by which numerous estimates can be made with

greater speed and higher degree of precision (Darogha and Chaudry, 1986, p. 55). Accordingly, the following table of sample size allocation is prepared. These sample sizes had further been allocated to the different batches within the departments as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample size for each department for the survey

Department	N <sub>i</sub>	n <sub>i</sub>	Available batches
Civil Engineering	250	31	Year I, II, III, IV, V
Electrical Engineering	40	5	Year II, IV, V
COTM	36	4	Year III, IV, V
Computer Science	87	11	Year I, II, III, IV
Economics	82	10	Year I, II, III
Law	42	5	Year IV, V
Management	347	43	Year I, II, III
Marketing	55	7	Year I, II
PADM	16	2	Year III
Accounting	857	105	Year I, II, III
Total	1812	223	

### 2.3. Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

To investigate students' perceptions (attitude, social life, instruction, curriculum, assessment and institution) on CEP, data were collected through structured survey questionnaire. It was prepared in a 5-level likert scale format as: *Strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree*. The participants' responses are merged into “disagree” and “agree” for the purpose of analysis and being tested. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, percentage and standard deviation to summarize the data. Again, based on statistical assumptions, a parametric method (proportion t-test) was used to test the statistical significance of the study variables.

The test was made on one proportion:

H<sub>0</sub>: P=0.5 (null hypothesis)

H<sub>1</sub>: ≠0.5 (two-tailed alternative hypothesis)

α=0.05 (5% level of significance).

The conclusion is based on the P-value and the equivalent 95% Confidence Interval (CI) as indicated in the last two columns.

In general, the conclusion is as follows: If the P-value is less than α =0.05, or the 95% CI does not include 50%, then the null hypothesis must be rejected in favor of the alternative and we conclude that more than 50% (majority) of the students do have the indicated positive attitude. Conversely, the P-value is greater than α =0.05, or the 95% CI does include 50%, there is no enough reason to reject the null hypothesis and that there is almost a 50-50 chance to agree and disagree on the specific attitude.

## 2.4. Reliability and Validity

The study used validity tests such as construct validity, face validity and expert reviews for checking the validity of the instruments. Construct validity and face validity were checked against the theoretical background and the literature review. This method was facilitated through letting experts to review the content and face validity of the survey questionnaire. And the survey tool was given to two language experts in case if there were any difficulty in the language use. Further, the survey was pilot tested using 45 students selected from the program. Up on this, Cronbach alpha reliability analysis yielded a reliability of 0.82 for institutional factors, 0.73 for assessment, 0.69 for curriculum, 0.65 for instruction, 0.71 for attitude and 0.72 for social life factor in the pilot test.

## III. Result and Discussion

### BACKGROUND DATA

The total number of sampled respondents was 223, but due to non-response to some questions, the summary may be less than this figure. Based on this, the following are summary figures as per the questionnaire; some are provided with 95 % Confidence Interval (CI) and the corresponding P-values for testing one proportion.

The number of students was selected with proportional allocation from each department. The respondents were summed up as follows: Accounting 71 (32.4%), Management 42 (19.2%), Civil engineering 40 (18.3%), Computer Science 25 (11.4%), Marketing 16 (7.3%), Economics 8(3.7%), other departments (Law, COTM, PDAM and Electrical Engineering) were 17 (7.8%). About 70% of respondents were male and the rest 30% were female students. The 95 % CI of male respondents was 62-76 %, with P-value of 0.000 ( $< 0.05$  level of significance), showing that majority of our respondents were male students.

Even though there were more options for marital status, the responses were only classified in to two: 68.2% of the respondents were single and the rest were married. The 95 % CI of single respondents was 62-74 %, with P-value of 0.000 ( $< 0.05$  level of significance), showing that majority of our respondents were unmarried students. When asked if students have dependents at home to support, about 50%, ranging from 48-61%, with P-value of 0.194, which is not significant at 5% level of significance, said that they do not have dependents.

Majority of the students, 72%, of the students were aged between 20 and 29, 20% were aged between 30 and 39, 5% were aged between 17 and 19 and 3% were aged 40 or older. Before grouping the data, the descriptive statistics were: minimum age is 17, maximum age is 48, average age is 26 years with standard deviation of 6.0 years, excluding an outlier of 60 years old. Approximately 22% of students had a family size of 1 or 2, 33% had 3 or 4, 23% had 5 or 6 and 18% had 7 or more. The descriptive statistics on family size were: minimum was 1, maximum was 12, and average was 4.5 with a standard deviation of 2.55.

About one-tenth of the students had a monthly income between 200 and 1500 birr, about 31% had between 1501 and 3000 birr, about 27% had between 3001 and 4500 birr, 18% had between 4501 and 6000 birr, about 7% had between 6001 and 7500 birr and about 7% had between 7501 and 10470 birr. Before grouping the income data, the descriptive statistics were computed as: minimum was 200 birr, maximum was 10470.00 birr and average was 3904.90 birr with standard deviation of 21.46.

When asked if the students were primary caregivers other than own children, 72 % of the students said that they were not. This percentage ranged from 65 to 78 (with 95% confidence) and P-value of 0.000, showing that the majority of students were not primary caregivers. When asked about their place of residence, about 95% of the students resided in Dire Dawa, and about 5% of them were outside Dire Dawa. The percentage ranged from 91 to 97 and only 3 to 9 lived outside Dire Dawa (with 95% confidence).

The employment condition of the surveyed students was that majority of them (about 64%) were employed of any form (Government, Private, Self or NGO) and 36% of them were unemployed. Among the employed ones, 62% were government, 22% were private organization, 9% self, and 8% were NGO employees. Regarding the level of education of students prior to joining CEP at DDU, approximately 36% were preparatory completed, 33% had first degree, 28% had diploma, 2% had second degree, and 1% had certificate. The reasons of students to join CEP were: about 61% for the purpose of KSA (knowledge, skill and attitude), 15% to get job, 18% to improve their life (for future career, to improve status and for a better income), and 6% for some other reasons (family or society influence, to be busy, for personal satisfaction, and so on).

In regards to the source of information of students about their department, 59% got it from friends and family who were already in CEP, 29% from information sessions, 9% from career guide, and the minimum information, about 3%, was obtained from TV advertisement. Finally, when asked whether or not their choice of department was right in retrospect, about 84% of them responded that it was a correct choice.

### Attitude related

Table 2 shows the factors related to the attitude of students regarding their studies in CEP at DDU. All the factors are found out to be statistically significant at 5% level of significance, since the p-values are less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , and the corresponding 95% CI do not include 50%. Thus, we can conclude with 95% level of confidence, that majority of the respondents: get personal satisfaction on their study (76-88%), think that they will finish their study (83-92%), their study is useful to their future career (79-90%), are not anxious in their field (56-72%), enjoy their study (68-81%), will get knowledge and skill from their study (77-88%), are interested in their study (66-79%), and they are motivated in their study (59-74%).



Table 2: Attitude related variables

	Attitudes	Agree	Disagree	Total	% Agree	95% CI	P-value
1	I get personal satisfaction on my study	160	34	194	82	76-88	0.000
2	I think I will finish my study	174	24	198	88	83-92	0.000
3	My study is useful to my career	158	28	186	85	79-90	0.000
4	I am not anxious in my field	102	57	159	64	56-72	0.000
5	I enjoy my study	143	47	190	75	68-81	0.000
6	I will get knowledge and skill	163	34	197	83	77-88	0.000
7	I am interested in my study	142	52	194	73	66-79	0.000
8	I have motive in my study	128	64	192	67	59-74	0.000
	TOTAL	1170	340	1510	77	75-80	0.000

In general, majority (77%) of the students (ranging from 75 to 80%) do have a positive attitude towards their study in CEP at DDU. According to the Namibian Case Study on the relationship between academic outcome and the psychological outcome, the model reveals that despite a student's high academic performance, they may leave the institution if they perceive low level of goal commitment or have high levels of stress, anxiety etc (Murangi, 1997). So, psychological outcome is graded higher than academic outcomes. Contrary to these findings, our study reveals that most of our students do not -have attitudinal problems since the majority of them do have a positive feeling on their learning.

### Social life Related

Table 3 shows that overall, the factors are significantly positive since the P-value=0.001 is less than  $\alpha=0.05$ . But separately, only the following three factors are found out to be significant: society's culture encourages for attending CEP at DDU (59-74%), family and friends do motivate students to attend CEP at DDU (67-81%), and students are not affected from participating in social life (53-68%).

Table 3: Social Life Related Variables

	Factors related to social life	Agree	Disagree	Total	% Agree	95% CI	P-value
1	family responsibility do not bring DO	94	79	173	54	47-62	0.287
2	social security is assured	80	63	143	56	47-64	0.181
3	society's culture allow to attend CEP	111	55	166	67	59-74	0.000
4	society encourage to attend CEP	93	69	162	57	49-65	0.070
5	family and friends motivate to attend CEP	128	44	172	74	67-81	0.000
6	staff is caring at DDU	72	84	156	46	38-54	0.379
7	we are not affected by CEP reputation	87	71	158	55	47-63	0.223
8	students do participate in social life	105	67	172	61	53-68	0.005
	Total	770	516	1286	60	57-63	0.001

That is, more than half (60%) of the students, ranging from 57 to 63%, do have a positive response to factors related to their social life. The rest factors are not statistically significant at 5% level of significance since their P-values are greater than  $\alpha=0.05$  and the 95% CIs also include 50%. That is, with 95% level of confidence, the rest of the factors are not significantly different from 50%. In other words, about half of the students are affected by the following factors: family responsibility (47-62%), social security (47-64%), society encouraging study at CEP (49-65), staff at DDU caring (38-54%), and students are affected by CEP reputation (47-63%).

Family responsibility, outside motivation, finance and employment are more related to the students' negative perceptions than academic variables such as study habits, course availability, advising, and absenteeism (Murangi, 1997). A similar research finding by Yukselturk and Inan (2004) personal problems is a second factor that contributes for students' negative perceptions. According to the students respondents to the survey conducted by Vergidis and Panagiotakopoulos (2002) the main problem attributes for negative perceptions stem from a combination of adult's learner obligations, specifically balancing their academic workload with their employment commitment and family obligations.

Hence, these two studies among others suggest students have negative perceptions on their studies in CEP due to personal reasons rather than academic, institution. Contrary to these findings, our study reveals that most of our students do not have personal problems due to social life since the majority of them do have a positive perceptions for social life related variables (including: family responsibility, external motivation, participation, etc) variables as compared to the other categories, except for the curriculum related variables. Based on the background data 64% of the respondents are employed. However, when asked if the students were primary caregivers other than own children, 72 % of the students said that they were not. It may be due to less family responsibility that the problem of balancing CEP study with their employment commitment and family obligations is less severe.

### Instructors Related

The result of the study in Table 4 suggested that majority (60 %) of respondents responded as their instructors who deliver courses are punctual with p-value 0.015% level of significance. From this, one can deduce that punctuality among instructors directly affecting CEP students in raising their motivation to learn or not. The same table also shows that the test of proportion result for instructors build on prior knowledge indicates 0.009 at 5% level of significance. Moreover, this data implies that those students who stay to carry on their schooling feel their instructors build on their previous knowledge. Up on the response, about 68 percent of respondents responded their instructors are willingness to listen but the remaining 32 percent respond as their instructors don't listen. Hence, the test of proportion result for unwillingness to listen is 0.000 at 5% level of significance.

In addition, the study also found respondents' perceptions about the objective of a course are communicated as the test of proportion result shows at 5% level of significance which was p-value of 0.000. For the teaching method instructors deploy, the test of proportion result for the method is teacher/instructor centered was 0.000 at 5% level of significance. Furthermore, the test of proportion for instructors communicate with their student the test of proportion result was 0.000 at 5% level of significance. This imply as instructors communicate with their students accordingly.

However, with respect to instructor's knowledge, almost half of them (53 percent) perceived that their instructors are knowledgeable in their field while the remaining closer to half about (47 percent) responded they do not. Thus, the test of proportion result for instructors are knowledgeable was 0.471 at 5% level of significance. The study also found as the test of proportion result for instructors provide minimum feedback was 0.768 at 5% level of significance.

Volery and Lord (2000) argued that, the characteristics of the instructor are important factors that appear to influence students' retention and completion of their study. The successful implementation of distance and continuing education does not only rely on advanced technology but it also relies on the characteristics of the instructor which is alike with the finding of this study which suggest instructor punctuality affect CEP. Studies also suggest the influence of prior knowledge on learning is also a concern for educators. Students are likely to be influenced by preexisting assumptions and beliefs when introduced to new information (Chi & Ceci, 1987). Indeed, constructivist theory argues that all new learning builds on prior understanding (McCormick & Pressley, 1997). This associates with the finding of this study which implies building on previous knowledge CEP students.

Table 4: Instructor related variables

	Factors related to Instructors	Agree	Disagree	Total	% agree	95% CI	P-value
1	Instructors are punctual	97	64	161	60.25	52-68	0.011
2	Instructors build on previous knowledge	103	68	171	80	52-68	0.009
3	Instructors' knowledge	83	73	156	53	45-61	0.471
4	Instructors are willing to listen	119	55	174	68	61-75	0.000
5	Instructors communicate objectives	118	67	185	64	56-71	0.000
6	Instructional teaching method is used	112	63	175	64	56-71	0.000
7	Instructors provide feedback	88	93	181	49	44-59	0.768
8	Instructors communicate with the student	104	67	171	61	53-68	0.000

This study also found willingness to listen among instructors and communicating objective significantly associated with CEP student's perception. This also allied with several researchers result considered interaction as an essential element to student learning and to the overall success and effectiveness of education (Bruning, 2005; Burnett et al., 2007). Shale and Garrison (1990) stated that "in its most fundamental form, education is an interaction among instructor, student and subject content. Besides, Kenneth (2007), also suggest without communication, the teaching and learning process will not take place. Therefore, teachers with good communication skills will create a more successful teaching and learning ambience for the students. Lecturing, a time-tested and long-venerated teaching method remains the most frequent method of instruction in higher education throughout the world (Svinicki and McKeachie, 2011; Lambert, 2012). However, active learning is a crucial element of the new thrust toward what is now commonly called "learner-centered" or "learning-centered" teaching (Weimer, 2002).

According to Chickering & Gamson, (1999) feedback allows students to assess existing knowledge, reflect on what they have learned and what they still need to learn, and receive suggestions for improvement of future work. Effective feedback leads to gains in student learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998). This study found there was no significant association which entails the need for intervention. Although they may experience difficulties accurately interpreting instructor feedback on their written assignments, learners in face-to-face environments attend to instructor feedback.

### Curriculum Related

Table 5 showed that majority of the students responded that sequence of courses and their integration are excellent (65% and 75%, respectively), they are specific to the fields and that they are useful to their career (71% and 78%, respectively), and course materials are based on learning styles. The table also shows that almost half of the students responded that students are given enough course resources (53%), courses are not finished timely (54%), and courses do not have practical trainings (53%).

Table 5: Curriculum related Variable

Factors related to curriculum	Agree	Disagree	Total	% Agreed	95% CI	P-value
1. Sequence of courses is excellent	115	63	178	65	57-72	0.000
2. Integration of courses is excellent	156	53	209	75	68-80	0.000
3. Courses are specific to the field of study	122	50	172	71	64-78	0.000
4. Courses are useful to our career	131	36	167	78	71-84	0.000
5. Course materials are based on learning Style	99	59	158	63	55-70	0.002
6. given enough course resources	91	81	172	53	45-61	0.493
7. courses are not finished on time	96	81	177	54	47-62	0.293
8. courses do not have practical trainings	89	78	167	53	45-61	0.439

According to Yilfashewa and Yonas (2016) the curriculum of adult education need to be relevant and this study suggests overall the curriculum in CEP has good integration as well as sequence which reveal in part its relevance.

Perhaps the result shows that almost 50% of respondents expressed that enough course resources were not provided for CEP students and not finished on time. Similarly, among others, the dominant theme obtained by Eriksson et al (2017) on their qualitative research was the learners' lack of time to engage with the course materials. This is related with resources allocation to distribute courses, program arrangements and designing the course materials to finish the courses in time. A study by Asgedom (2009) has found that the practice of Ethiopian Education mostly focuses on knowledge acquisition, or what UNESCO calls "learning to know," to the detriment of other useful purposes, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. This is similar with the finding of the survey research done by Seyoum and Basha (2017) in that adult education in Ethiopia do not have a curriculum that help adults to learn by doing practical activities.

### Assessment Related

Assessment is one mechanism for tracking the progress of students' learning. Table 6 has depicted the responses regarding assessment adjusted to have positive feelings. The only significant positive response at 5% level of significance, with a majority of 61% having a p-value less than 0.05 and the corresponding 95% CI excluding 50%, is that exams are different year after year. All of the other responses are not found out to be significant at the above level of significance, since their p-values are greater than 0.05 and the corresponding 95% CIs exclude 50%. In other words, the responses are almost fifty-fifty in agreeing and disagreeing to the questions asked, which indicate that almost half of the students do not have positive feelings regarding almost all of the indicated variables. When seen as a whole, assessment with a positive response is about 52% (690 out of 1331), which is not significant at 5% level of significance.

Table 6: Factors related to CEP Assessment

Factor related to assessment	Agreed	Disagreed	Total	% Agreed	95% CI	P-value
1.Students get enough feedback for each assessment	93	84	177	53	45-60	0.549
2.Students get timely feedback for each assessment	82	92	174	47	40-55	0.495
3.Student' prior knowledge is assessed	88	80	168	52	45-60	0.589
4.Student get balanced assessment types	87	84	171	51	43-59	0.879
5. Students are often tested on their critical skills	83	74	157	53	45-61	0.523
6.Students sit for exam with minimum stress	82	89	171	48	40-56	0.646
7.Assessment are not similar/not boring	80	76	156	51	43-59	0.810
8.Students get assessed using different exam year after year	90	62	157	61	52-68	0.010

For quality CEP education assessment has to be aligned with the instruction. Based on the research finding, adult learning is significantly affected by assessment of learning outcomes (Yilfashewa & Yonas, 2016). Students get assessed using different exams year after year is a significant result. Although non-significant result is obtained in other items on the assessment variable, the participants response is divided fifty-fifty on agree and disagree on the important aspects of assessment practice in CEP in DDU. Despite this, assessment as an important variable other supported by other studies merits the attention to align assessment, instruction and curriculum to promote quality learning in CEP, and thereby improving students' perceptions on CEP.

### Institution Related

The survey items that assess factors related to institutions ask students on the following points: how they are welcomed at institution; on readily available channels to express their complaints; on get adequacy of library resources and computer laboratories, on registration system; on timely given feedback mechanism and on education center. Table 7 shows students disagree on factors



related to readily available channels and on getting timely feedback by registrar with significant P-value (0.000 and 0.001 respectively for the two factors).

The question that ask 'how students are welcomed in DDU' survey item received 48% ratings from students (strongly agree and agree) with CI 40-55 % with p-value 0.602 as shown in Table 7. Though the result shows no significance difference, almost half of students responded to the "students are not made to feel welcome at this institution." The survey item in regards to the availability of channels to express complaints received 36% rating only from students (strongly agree and agree) with CI 28-43 % with p-value 0.000. Thus the result has indicated that students do not get most likely readily available channels to express complaints. The survey item related to whether students gets adequate library resources and computer labs or not has received 42 % (strongly agreed or agreed) ratings with CI 34-50% with p-value 0.0507.

The survey item on good registration procedure and treatment students rated 44% (strongly agreed or agreed) with CI 37-51% and p-value 0.106. However, few percentages of students rated they could not get timely feedback on their progress by the registrar 37% (strongly agree and agree) with CI 29-44% and p-value 0.001 which is significant. Nearly half of the students strongly agree and agree that the tuition fee is reasonable 52 % with CI 44-59% and p-value 0.705 as shown in Table 7.

The percentage of students who rated that they find the teaching and learning program suitable is 59 % (strongly agreed or agree) with CI 51-66% and p-value 0.022. Similarly, for the question that ask how students find the learning center is convenient, students rated 58% (strongly agree and agree) with CI 50-65% and p-value 0.0402 which is not significant as shown in Table 9. The only significant response at 5% level of significance, with a majority of 64% and 63% since its p-values are less than 0.05 and that the corresponding 95% CI excludes 50% is that, channels' are not available for complaints and students did not get timely feedback from the registrar. All of the other responses are not found out to be significance at the above level of significance, since their p-values are greater than 0.05 and the corresponding 95% CIs exclude 50%. In other words, the responses are almost fifty-fifty in agreeing and disagreeing to the survey questions on institutional related factors.

Table 7: Factors related to Institution

Factors Related to Institution	Agree	Disagree	Total	% Agree	95% CI	P-value
1.Students are made to feel welcome at this institution	86	94	180	48	40-55	0.602
2.Students have readily available channels to express complaints	58	105	163	36	28-43	0.000
3.Students do not get good registration procedure and treatment	81	104	185	44	37-51	0.106
4.Students get adequate library resources and computer labs	67	92	159	42	34-50	0.057
5. Students get timely feedback on their progress by the registrar	63	109	172	37	29-44	0.001
6.Students pay reasonable tuition fee	90	84	174	52	44-59	0.705
7.Students find the teaching and learning program is suitable	102	71	173	59	51-66	0.022
8. Center is convenient	102	74	176	58	50-65	0.042

Although the finding suggested that students are made to feel welcome at the institution, they do not have a channel to express their complaints and get proper information from the registrar and concerned offices. Similar result from Braxton et al. (2014) on the significance of institutional commitment to student welfare holds true for CEP students. For working students, Perna's (2010) research among others suggests that it is critical that faculty and administrators serving adult and working students understand this population and adapt to the needs of these students. Even though, on institution related variables such as are non-significant, the findings are marginal on agree and disagree that they need worth attention to take remedial actions.

## IV. Conclusion and Recommendation

### Conclusion

All the factors related to attitude are found out to be statistically significant; thus, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents: get personal satisfaction, think that they will finish their study, their study is useful to their future career, are not anxious in their field, enjoy their study, will get knowledge and skill from their study, are interested in their study, and they are motivated in their study. In general, majority of the students do have a positive attitude towards their study in CEP at DDU.

Overall, the factors related to students' social life are significantly positive; but separately, only the following three factors are found out to be significant: society's culture does not prevent from attending CEP at DDU, family and friends do motivate students to attend CEP at DDU, and students are not hindered from participating in social life. The rest factors are not statistically significant. About half of the students are affected by the following factors: family responsibility, social security, society encouraging study at staff at DDU caring, and students are affected by CEP reputation.

Majority of the students responded that instructors who deliver courses are not punctual. Majority of them also responded their instructors are willing to listen; also most of their instructors communicate with them. However, with respect to instructor's knowledge, almost half of them suggested that their instructors are knowledgeable in their field. The study also revealed that their instructors provide minimum feedback.

Regarding curriculum, majority of the students responded that sequence of courses and their integration are excellent, they are specific to the fields and that they are useful to their future career and course materials are based on learning styles. Almost half of the students responded that students are given enough course resources, courses are not finished timely, and courses do not have practical trainings. On assessment related factors, the majority of the respondents said that exams are different year after year. Almost half of the students do not have positive feelings regarding almost all of the rest variables.

Almost half of students responded to the 'students are not made to feel welcome' at the institution. The result indicated that students do not get most likely readily available channels to express complaints. The survey also indicated that majority of students do not get adequate library resources and computer. The survey showed that majority of students does not get good registration procedure and treatment. Also, few percentages of students rated they could get timely feedback on their progress by the registrar. Nearly half of the students agree that the tuition fee is reasonable. The majority of students rated that they find the teaching and learning program suitable. Majority of the students rated that the learning center is convenient. The other significant response is that channels' are not available for complaints and students do not get timely feedback from the registrar.

### Recommendation

The institution should take the prime responsibility to retain its students to complete their study and graduate in CEP. All the approaches used in regular program should not be the same for CEP. DDU has to advertise its CEP via TV, Radio, and Newspapers and other channels so as to sustain the program. Staff at DDU has to be more caring to its CEP customers. DDU need to work more to improve the social life components of CEP students as much as possible in order to retain current students and attract new ones. DDU has to keep up the attitude components as much as possible so as to be consistent.

Since only half of the students are satisfied by assessments, DDU needs to improve related variables. That is, use different assessment techniques, balancing assessments, giving enough feedback on assessments, and so on. Regarding curriculum matters, students should be given enough course materials; they should be supported with practical trainings and be complete courses within their schedules.

Based on the findings the study recommends interventions should be conducted by the institution and instructors as well are suggested hereafter. Instructors play pivotal role in determining the success and failure of CEP typically in a nation like Ethiopia where access to regular college and higher education is limited given with distance, finance, and other factors. Hence, for proper utilization of instructor's decisive potential in molding the program they should exercise their responsibility in a way that enhances quality of education. Therefore, instructors should start building on student's previous knowledge, identify the correct teaching method compatible with student, communicate learning objectives to students, they should also develop willingness to listen to students and improve their interaction/communication with their students to find out gap and take corrective action. In addition, they should also foster interactive/participatory teaching method, provide enough feedback timely for the request raised and assessments, improve their subject matter and teaching method knowledge conducive to students. Instructors need to get proper trainings and support they need to boost quality in CEP. Inverted classroom or flipped classroom where students get enough resources to read and prepare before class and come to discussion to class may be appropriate for CEP students rather than using lecture method often.

Moreover, improving the program is not only the primary concern of the instructors, but also the institution has the mandate to enable instructors through providing adequate training. DDU need to see some of the discrepancies observed in our experiences in some instructors who teach both in DDU and other private colleges. Moreover, students should also play their duty through active engagement in the learning process to manifest as they are not passive learners and held the system accountable. Finally, regarding the institutional factor, DDU should make students to feel welcomed; improve channels for students' complaints; improve the deteriorated registration system and feedback from registrar; and improve library provisions.

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