Role of Assignment in Distance Education

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ABSTRACT

The types of evaluation handled by technology in the bulk of distance learning programmes are limited (text-based, short answer, multiple choice questions, etc.) and are frequently inappropriate for the various disciplines involved. As a result, the traditional written assignment has remained the most common means of evaluating distance students' proficiency. A task or piece of (academic) labour is referred to as an assignment. It allows pupils to learn, practice, and demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. The assignment can focus on a product as an outcome (e.g., research report, design, prototype, etc.) and/or a process (e.g., research process, group process) and/or individual skills or competences performance (e.g. professional skills, communications skills). The main aim of this study is to discuss the Role of assignment in distance education. The current study was a descriptive one. The survey approach was chosen by the researchers to finding answers to the questions under inquiry. The study's sample included 360 children from the Nasik area. To gather opinions on the role of assignments in learning using the Distance Learning System, a five-point Likert type rating scale was used. The instruments' four portions (22 pieces) focus on learning through assignment work. The data was examined using a mean score and standard deviation, and suggestions were made based on the study's findings. Tutors' performance is dissatisfactory in most areas, according to the report. It is established that ODL System students are informed well in advance of their employment as part-time tutors for the courses in question by their tutors.

Keywords: Assignment work, tutor, students, distance education, university, institution, learner etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

Students who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to attend traditional schools can receive an education through a method known as distance learning, which was developed specifically with the intention of meeting their educational needs. It is also possible to define it as an educational system that is designed to produce as well as provide access to learning in a scenario in which the learner and the source of education are physically separated due to factors such as time and distance. In a nutshell, we can say that distance learning is the ideal way to provide education of an equal quality to meet the educational requirement of a learner outside of the traditional classroom setting. This teaching approach is currently being adopted by a significant number of educational institutions and establishments all over the world. If we look at the history of distance learning in India, we can see that even though it is not a very old phenomenon, it has, without a shadow of a doubt, been

welcomed

with open arms. As a result, a large number of students in India are signing up for a variety of courses that are offered through distance learning. There are currently around 11 universities and about 54 other institutions that are providing distance learning programmes, and the number of institutions providing these programmes is still growing.

Assignments help learners to focus on the essential learning and not to get swamped by details. Being transparent about the exact requirements of assignments from the start of the course is an important way in which you can support your learners in managing their time.

1.1 Assignment

Academic and didactic connection or communication between the distance learner and the distance teacher is based on assignments. Students can use assignments to check that they have learned what they were supposed to learn from their course materials. Assignments are used to carry out the actual teaching and learning. Writing letters to learners, commenting on their assignment responses, talking on the phone, interaction via teleconferencing and radio, face-to-face counselling, computer-assisted teaching, or 'guided didactic conversation,' i.e., self-instructional material are all examples of distance communication (SIM).

In most universities, assignments are part of the internal evaluation process and marks are set apart for them in both under graduate and post graduate programmes. Often, students and some teachers have a hostile attitude towards assignments as though these are thrust upon them from above without having any utility! If properly done, assignments would be of immense value as an additional learning instrument. However, assignments would be a big headache for the students, if they wait until the last minute to write their papers! Short essay assignments and long essays called term papers are the usual types of assignments given to the students. Apart from these, there are many other useful types, which can also be given to the students, depending upon the need and leaning situations.

1.1.1 Types of Assignments

Students are given a variety of tasks as part of their undergraduate and graduate education, each with its unique structure and features. Here are several examples:

- Essay
- Literature review
- Annotated bibliography
- Critical review
- Case study
- Reflective journal
- Experiment write up
- Project report
- Herbarium
- Insect collection

1.1.2 Functions of Assignments

Assignments are an integral part of the online teaching-learning process. The following are the functions of these assignments:

- ✓ Reinforcement of learning
- ✓ Initiate dialogue/pedagogical interactions
- ✓ Break the feeling of isolation
- ✓ Provide feedback to both distance learner and distance tutor:
- ✓ Continuous assessment
- ✓ Student learning

Furthermore, assignments in some fields may include the creation of models, posters, popular articles, booklets, processed items, or other visual aids.

Each assignment has its own structure and characteristics, as well as distinct writing styles. Any of these assignments might be offered depending on the learning circumstances and training requirements. Review of literature, annotated bibliography, critical review, case study, and other forms of papers would be more appropriate for PG students than basic essays. Essays, herbariums, insect collections, reflective journals, project reports, and other forms of UG teaching are more widespread.

1.2 Distance Education

Students who are not always able to be physically present at a school are able to receive an education through a method known as distance education or distance learning. In the past, this typically consisted of taking part in correspondence courses, in which the student communicated with the educational institution through the use of the postal service. Almost always, in today's world, it entails receiving an education online. There are two possible configurations for a programme that is referred to as distance learning: one uses only online learning, while the other uses both online learning and more conventional classroom instruction. Recent developments in the field of distance education include the introduction of massive open online courses (MOOCs), which allow for unrestricted participation on a large scale and can be accessed via the World Wide Web or other network technologies. There are a number of other terms that are used roughly synonymously with distance education. Some of these terms include distributed learning, e-learning, m-learning, online learning, and virtual classroom.

1.2.1 Types of Distance Learning

1. Asynchronous distance learning
2. Electronic learning
3. Fixed time online courses
4. Hybrid distance learning
5. Synchronous distance learning

1.2.2 Role of Distance Education in India

Education helps society develop. Social Interactive Education and Distance Education are two education categories. Social interactive learning is the traditional face-to-face method. Open and distance learning contrasts with 'conventional' or face-to-face education, which takes place in a classroom or auditorium. Distance Education is when the instructor and students are separated by time or distance. Distance education aims to make education available to anyone, anytime, anywhere, without social, physical, or geographical restrictions. Open and distance education give individuals and groups flexible learning options.

Social distancing is the main feature of the COVID-19 model and distance education, so distance education embraces a family of teaching aids in which teaching and learning are separated. Any economic disturbance or crisis requires special skills and knowledge to fix. Distance education is a saviour in this pandemic because it can teach students and scientists how to face a virus and adopt a healthy lifestyle online.

Distance education can improve learning skills and technological expertise, which will rationalise and increase specialisation and discover a vaccine eventually.

Distance Education, or online degrees, is a billion-dollar industry. While many people waste hours surfing the web, others invest in their education. Many people and colleges embrace this revolution. When considering the research's aim, it can be seen that teacher and student roles are really defined and their effectiveness is evaluated in distance education. What are the roles of teachers and students in distance learning make us evaluate learning and training. Distance education requires professionalism and individualism.

1.3 Role of Assignment in Distance Education

The majority of distance learners' learning occurred as a result of tasks that were completed on time. Assignments, on the other hand, are an important part of the formative evaluation process for distant learners. The purpose of this study was to examine and evaluate the role and expertise of persons and institutions in various parts of assignment evaluation in order to identify flaws in the process.

Assessment is crucial in assessing the direction of student effort and in establishing a communication channel between students and their educators, both on campus and online. In the distance education system, assignments are required as part of the formative evaluation process as well as a component of teaching and learning. The majority of distant learners' learning was done through assignments. Academicians strive to provide assignments that will assist students in completing the course and gaining meaningful learning experiences.

The value of assignments in distance education implies that planning, writing, and evaluating assignments are valuable skills for those involved in the distance education process, whether as planners, organizers, instructors, or students. It is critical to deliver excellent education to its users by having active and skilled employees involved in assignment development, dissemination to students, and correct evaluation of students' assignments. As a result, academicians see the responsibility of creating assignment questions and ensuring the quality of assignment marking as one of their most important obligations while working in an organization. Distance learners concentrate on mastering

the art of writing assignments on an ideal base while keeping the task's objectives in mind. Tutors believe they need to be educated in order to meet the demands of their employment.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Mustapha Bukar Gana (2021) In both formal and non-formal educational systems, assignments play an essential role in the learning process. Particularly in non-formal and distance learning systems, assignments are considered a required component. In addition to tutorial sessions, students complete course assignments. Through the required component of assignment work, learning is facilitated and managed in this manner. There is no permanent, regular, or continuous interaction between teachers and students in distance and non-formal education. In consequence, distance and non-formal learning modes lack daily regular classes, homework assignments, and assessment or evaluation of students' learning outcomes. As a result, assignments are the most important and effective component of non-formal learning, serving multiple purposes, such as engaging the learner to study and go through the contents and books while writing the assignments, enabling them to search and find the answers to the questions, enhancing their writing power, and on the other hand serving as a good source to evaluate their writing abilities, expression skills, and approach to explain, describe, and respond to a question.

Lisa Soon, Maryam Sarrafzadeh(2020) An online learning management system (LMS) called "Interact" is used with a variety of tools such as wiki, synchronous chat, group mail and announcements to facilitate virtual teamwork. In distance education, there are a large number of adult students. This paper examines the experiences and feedback of students in distance education who use e-learning technologies for online collaborative group assignments. Assignments for "Information and Knowledge Management in Organizations" were assigned to international and local students alike. Case study projects were conducted by each group to identify and solve problems in their chosen organisations. The case study assignment was completed by students in virtual teams. Each group was given a dedicated Interact workspace. A wiki was used as a platform for students to collaborate and store their work. After the group assessment was completed, students were asked to participate in an anonymous web survey.

Radhika Kapur (2019) It's widely accepted that people from all walks of life value education and want to improve their knowledge and abilities in this field. To improve their skills and abilities, people living in rural areas are also making use of modern technology. Distance education refers to educational methods in which students and instructors are separated by time and space. To put it another way, they are separated by distance and rely on technology to keep in touch. The most popular method of distance education is online learning. One of the major advantages of this type of education is that it allows students to continue their education and achieve their goals even if they live a long way away. Distance education in India, distance education objectives, aspects highlighting the significance of distance education, features of distance education, and monitoring and evaluation of distance education are all major considerations in this research paper.

Andreas Karaoulanis and Koukousouri Vasiliki (2017) - The writers of this study attempted to emphasize the importance of distance learning as a form of distant education in today's educational system. A literature review was conducted to illustrate why such a survey is so vital in this type of current learning. A brief review of several key prior surveys on the issue of distance learning was

conducted, with particular attention paid to the study questions and methodological approaches utilized by previous researchers to delve deeper into the subject. Finally, the findings of such empirical studies were examined, and the writers' critical thoughts were offered.

Lisa Soon and Maryam Sarrafzadeh (2010) - Charles Sturt University employs the "Interact" learning management system, which includes a wiki, synchronous chat, group mail, announcements, and media repositories to facilitate virtual teamwork. Distance education attracts a large number of adult students. This paper investigates distance education students' experiences and feedback in using e-learning technology for real-world online collaborative group assignments. International and local students were placed together for group tasks in the topic "Information and Knowledge Management in Organizations." Each group completed a case study project in which they presented solutions to problems identified in the firms they chose. In order to complete their case study project, students worked in virtual teams. In Interact, each group was given a private project site. Students used wiki to create their assignment and employed a variety of technologies for communication and document storage.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1) To study the concept of distance education, assignments and role of assignments in distance education
2) To learn more about course tutors' tutorial and guidance techniques in the distance education systems
3) To explain the importance of assignments in distance learning
4) To evaluate the University's input and tutors' performance in terms of writing assignment instruction and assessment
5) To give recommendations for enhancing strategies for writing assignments and evaluating them in a distance learning environment

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research design

The current study was a descriptive one. The survey approach was chosen by the researchers because it is well suited to finding answers to the questions under inquiry. The information required for the study was gathered through the use of a survey approach.

4.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of students who were enrolled in the M. Ed./M. A. Education Program between the semesters of spring 2018 and spring 2020.

4.3 Sample design

The technique of stratified random sampling was utilised in order to select a sample that is representative for the investigation.

4.4 Sample size

From among the inhabitants of all of the Tehsils that make up the Nasik district, a sample population

consisting of three hundred male and female students was chosen at random for the study. In order to ensure that the sample is truly representative of the population, we limited our selection of pupils from a single Tehsil to no more than twenty. The tabular representation of the sample can be found further down the page.

Table 1: Division of Sample

S. No	Tehsil	Spring 2018		Spring 2019		Spring 2020		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Nasik	5	17	5	17	5	17	60
2	Dindori	5	17	5	17	5	17	60
3	Malegaon	5	17	5	17	5	17	60
4	Nandgaon	5	17	5	17	5	17	60
5	Trimbakeshwar	5	17	5	17	5	17	60
	Total	30	90	30	90	30	90	360

4.5 Sources of Data Collection

- **Primary data -** The researcher addressed the respondents either directly or through friends in order to have them fill out the questions of the instrument and gather the data, which was obtained using a rating scale of five points. A coding system was developed, and different tabulations were performed on the data.

- **Secondary data -** The secondary data have been collected through the internet, magazines, newspapers, research papers, thesis, books, dissertations etc.

4.6 Tools used for data collection

It was decided to create a likert rating scale with five points that would consist of 22 things that would be presented in four sections, and the experts validated it. The instrument underwent pilot testing, and in response, some of the components were altered to provide more clarity.

4.7 Data analysis

The collected data have been analyzed using table and graphs.

## 4.8 Statistical tools used for data analysis

The analysis of the data included the computation of mean scores and standard deviations, as well as the application of straightforward percentage formulas.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT

Table 2: Relation to Intimation and Advance Instructions (Items 1-4)

Item.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	SD	Mean

1	My tutors informed me of their appointment in a timely manner..	227 (63%)	108 (30%)	7 (2%)	7 (2%)	11 (3%)	0.91	4.48
2	The university provides me with written instructions on "how to write the assignments."	26 (7%)	28 (8%)	7 (2%)	216 (60%)	83 (23%)	1.08	2.17
3	Tutors offer written guidelines/instructions on "how to write the assignments."	26 (7%)	22 (6%)	10 (3%)	108 (30%)	194 (54%)	1.19	1.86
4	I've been given instructions to write my assignments in the form of a different letter than the conventional intimation letter.	26 (7%)	29 (8%)	15 (4%)	100 (28%)	190 (53%)	1.21	1.89
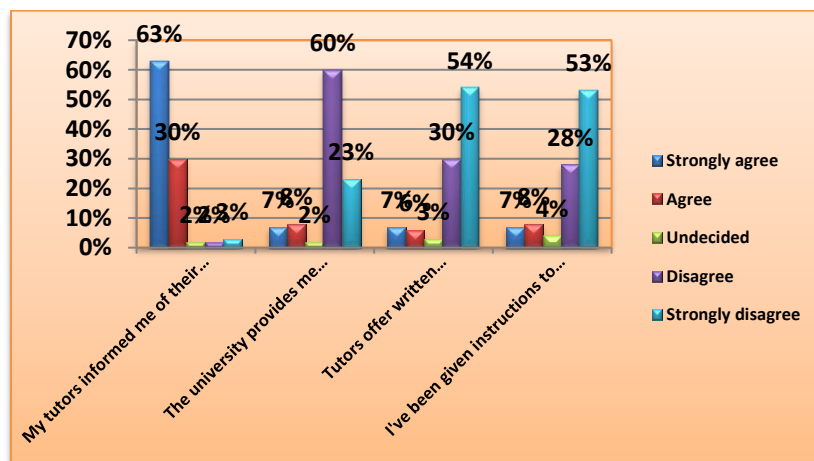
Figure 1: Relation to Intimation and Advance Instructions

According to the data on intimation and in advance instructions, the calculated mean score of 4.48 (SD of 0.91) indicates that the performance of course tutors is good in terms of well-timed intimation of their appointment as tutor, but there is below-average input from both the tutors and the University in terms of in advance instructions for writing assignments. The mean scores are 2.17, 1.86, and 1.89, and the standard deviations are 1.08, 1.19, and 1.21, respectively.

Table 3: Evaluation of Assignment and Feedback to Students (Items 5-13)

Item.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	SD	Mean

| 5	My tasks are simply ticked and marked by my tutors.	108 (30%)	111 (31%)	15 (4%)	68 (19%)	58 (16%)	1.48	3.41
6	My assignments are properly examined by my tutors.	50 (14%)	54 (15%)	86 (24%)	83 (23%)	87 (24%)	1.36	2.75
7	My assignments are evaluated carefully and thoroughly by my tutors.	47 (13%)	54 (15%)	25 (7%)	122 (34%)	112 (31%)	1.94	2.45
8	I am satisfied with their assessment.	40 (11%)	54 (15%)	15 (4%)	122 (34%)	129 (36%)	1.38	2.32
9	In the assignments, my tutors point out my weaknesses.	28 (8%)	44 (12%)	8 (2%)	136 (38%)	144 (40%)	1.30	2.12
10	Tutors provide comments on assignments in writing.	44 (12%)	40 (11%)	12 (4%)	130 (36%)	134 (37%)	1.37	2.27
11	The checked/evaluated tasks are returned/posted back by tutors in a timely manner.	68 (19%)	98 (27%)	14 (4%)	108 (30%)	72 (20%)	1.48	2.97
12	My first assignment was returned to me before the deadline for the second task.	79 (22%)	61 (17%)	19 (5%)	118 (33%)	83 (23%)	1.52	2.83
13	I found enough directions in the first assignment to write my second assignment in a more organized manner.	22 (6%)	29 (8%)	10 (3%)	216 (60%)	83 (23%)	1.07	2.15
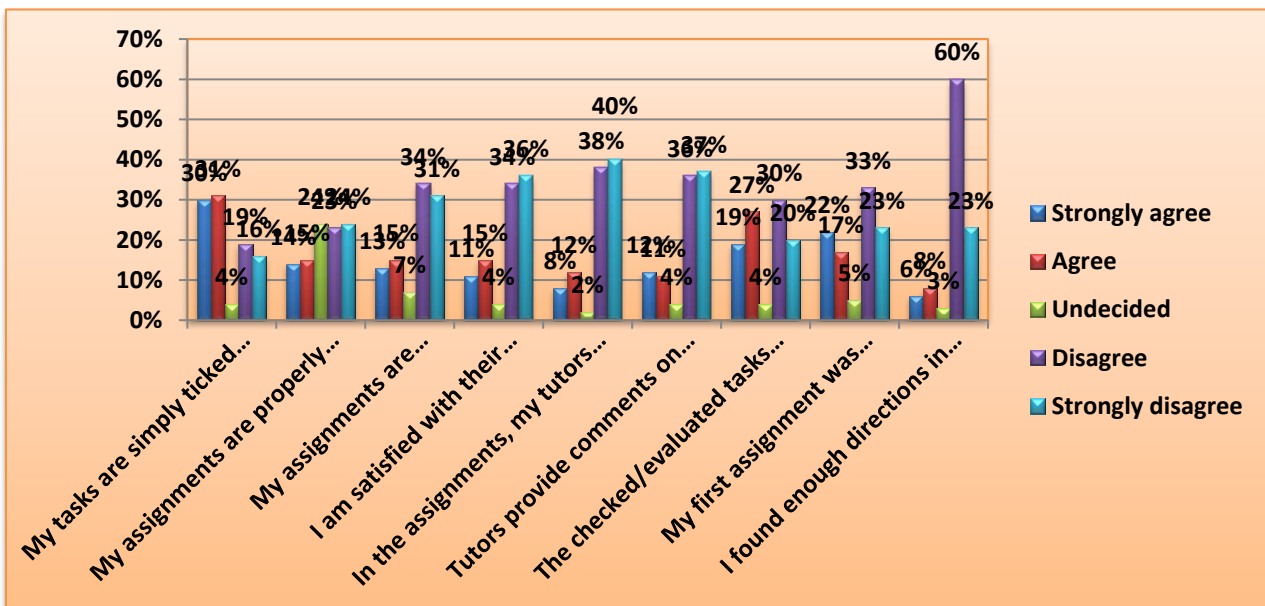
Figure 2: Evaluation of Assignment and Feedback to Students

The majority of respondents, which made up sixty percent of the pool, concurred with the notion that tutors only check off (√) and mark the tasks. The fact that the average score is 3.41 suggests that it is

not typical for tutors to provide written feedback on the assignment work that students have completed, as indicated by the prevalent practises. Instead, tutors typically just tick mark the assignments without providing any commentary on what the students have done incorrectly or correctly. SD was 1.48.

When asked whether Tutors thoroughly examine their assignments, 47 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement, while 23 percent exhibited confusion in this regard. The question was posed to the respondents in the form of a poll. The fact that the course tutors received a mean score of 2.75 shows that their performance in this regard is about average. SD was 1.36.

When respondents were asked whether Tutors take the assignments seriously and carefully assess them, 65 percent of those who responded disagreed with the assertion. The fact that the course tutors' participation in this area had a mean score of 2.45 shows that it is lower than average. SD was 1.94.

When asked whether they are satisfied with the appraisal of assignments by their instructors, the respondents gave an answer that was contradictory to the statement 70 percent of the time. According to the mean score of 2.32, the contribution made by course tutors is well below average in this regard. SD was 1.38. The majority of respondents (78%) did not agree with the assertion that tutors highlight areas of improvement in students' assignments. On this scale, the mean score (2.12 out of 5) was lower than the average. SD was 1.30. Regarding the proposition of whether or not Tutors provide written feedback in the assignments, seventy-three percent of the respondents were against the proposition. The fact that the course tutors' function in this regard was given a mean score of 2.27 shows that it is below average. SD was 1.37.

The statement that tutors return or post back checked work in a timely manner was met with disapproval from fifty percent of those who participated in the survey. The standard deviation was 1.48 points, while the mean score was 2.97.

The statement that students must turn in their first assignment before the deadline for the second assignment was rejected by around 56 percent of those who participated in the survey. According to the minimal performance mean scale, the mean score of 2.83 shows that the performance of tutors in terms of delivering back the marked assignments to the students well inside the allotted time frame is average. SD was 1.52.

In response to the question of "if Instructions are given in the first assignment to produce the second assignment in improved form," 83 percent of respondents said that they strongly disagreed with the statement being asked. The students are not receiving the appropriate guidance from their tutors in order to correctly complete the assignments, as seen by their below-average mean score of 2.15. SD was 1.07.

Table 4: Students' Learning and Improvement as a result of their Assignment Work (Items 14-17)

Item.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	SD	Mean
14	I completed all of my assignments by myself.	148 (41%)	112 (31%)	11 (3%)	39 (11%)	50 (14%)	1.46	3.73

| 15 | My assignment work has taught me a lot about writing techniques. | 58 (16%) | 90 (25%) | 18 (5%) | 111 (31%) | 83 (23%) | 1.46 | 2.80 |
| 16 | My writing style has improved as a result of my assignment work. | 28 (8%) | 58 (16%) | 22 (6%) | 144 (40%) | 108 (30%) | 1.29 | 2.33 |
| 17 | In light of the tutor's instructions/directions, I enhanced my second work. | 26 (7%) | 65 (18%) | 28 (8%) | 147 (41%) | 94 (26%) | 1.27 | 2.43 |
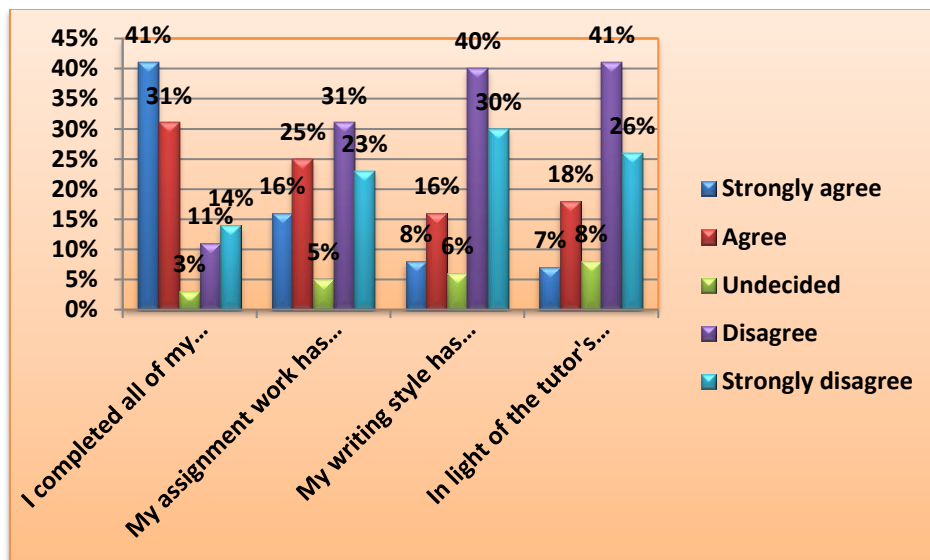
Figure 3: Students' Learning and Improvement as a result of their Assignment Work

According to the scale, the level of involvement of the students in the completion of their assigned task is rated as good with a mean score of 3.73. SD was 1.46. On the other hand, the learners' average scores, which were 2.80, 2.33, and 2.43 correspondingly, are all below the minimal level on the scale, which suggests that they have not improved as a result of the assignment work they have done. The relative values of SD were 1.46, 1.29, and 1.27.

Table 5: Respondents' opinion on what is and what should be examined? (Regarding the Assignment Work/Format) (Items 18-22)

Item.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	SD	Mean

18	I believe there is a deficit in the material provided by the university and instructors in terms of guidance on how to write assignments.	165 (46%)	154 (43%)	8 (2%)	18 (5%)	15 (4%)	1.03	4.22
19	For writing assignments, precise and clear directions should be provided.	169 (47%)	166 (46%)	4 (1%)	10 (3%)	11 (3%)	1.03	4.33
20	The university should provide a consistent and acceptable format/pattern/standard for writing assignments.	148 (41%)	151 (42%)	0 (0%)	40 (11%)	21 (6%)	1.25	4.03
21	The university should establish acceptable and consistent criteria for checking and grading assignments.	148 (41%)	158 (44%)	0 (0%)	39 (11%)	15 (4%)	1.06	4.11
22	Proposed writing format.	172 (48%)	165 (46%)	8 (2%)	7 (2%)	8 (2%)	0.93	4.35
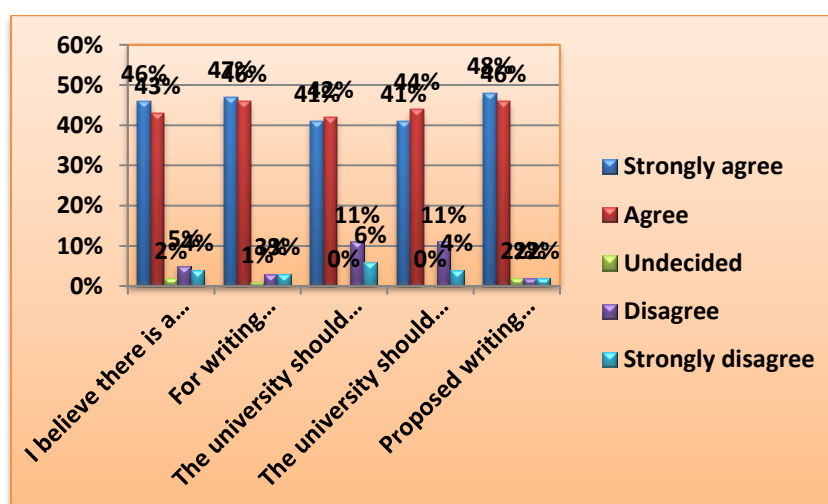
Figure 4: Respondents' opinion on what is and what should be examined? (Regarding the Assignment Work/Format)

89 percent of those who participated in the survey agreed that there is a gap in the information provided by the university and the tutors with regard to the directions on how to properly compose the assignments. The standard deviation was 1.03, while the mean score was 4.22.

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A higher level of acceptance is shown by the mean scores (4.33, 4.03, and 4.11) on the statement "there should be a good format and preceding guidance for writing tasks." The standard deviations each came in at 1.03, 1.25, and 1.06. The vast majority of respondents (94 percent) were in agreement that homework should be done in a standardized pattern or style by adhering to a particular structure, such as e.g.

- ✓ Introduction.
- ✓ Definition of the terms used in question statement.
- ✓ Comprehensive discussion about the question.
- ✓ Conclusions.
- ✓ Bibliography

The average score of 4.35 indicates a better level of compliance with the format that was suggested for the writing assignment. SD was 0.93.

6. CONCLUSION

Learners now have the opportunity to organize learning opportunities in distant education courses in a number of ways thanks to modern media. Electronic media has provided new ways to obtain and integrate information, as well as the ability to communicate with classmates and professors. Students in the virtual paradigm of distance learning are now members of an electronic community of learners and spend less time working alone. However, assignment writing remains a difficult work for distant learners, who are often alone, particularly in the correspondence form of education. Learners in distance education institutions are given assignment rules. Good students obey these principles and establish the groundwork for good tradition, but some students engage in unethical behaviour and disregard the importance of the mission.

The following are some of the conclusions that can be drawn from the study: The learners of ODL System are informed in a timely manner by their tutors regarding their appointment as part time tutors of the courses that are concerned with them.

There is a deficiency there regarding in advance written guidance concerning the technique, way, and style of writing tasks, which is not a good indicator especially in the context of a distant learning system. The performance of the tutors in terms of evaluating the assignments and providing written comments of what is right and incorrect is below average. The tutors only mark the assignments with a checkmark (√), they do not read the assignments carefully, and they do not call attention to any errors or deficiencies in the work that is submitted by the students. It gives the impression that instructors treat this essential component as a purely administrative matter. In the currently used procedures, which are carried out by the instructors of the ODL system, there is a lack of remedial efforts and reinforcement based on rectification.

Learners using the ODL system are aware of the significance of assignment work; they view it as a worthwhile Endeavour and a valuable source of education; and they believe that they can acquire a great deal of knowledge through assignment work; however, this is contingent upon the tutors' attention to detail as well as their methods, strategies, and approaches to working as part-time tutors in the ODL System. They may not be able to qualify the level as it should be if they do not take care

to provide proper guidance about 'how to write the assignment,' if they do not check the assignment work on the basis of predetermined and informed criteria for the assignment, and if they do not communicate their weaknesses and strengths through their assignments. Students are not receiving the appropriate direction and instructions with regard to the writing of assignments from either "the University or the tutors," and as a result, they have enthusiastically welcomed a standardized pattern or format for "how to write the assignment."

7. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations of the study that were made on the basis of the findings for the purpose of increasing the performance of course tutors working with ODL system at Master (of Education) level studies as well as enhancing the learning level of the students through assignment work.

a. Appropriate advice, help, monitoring, and counselling are basic requirements for educating learners, particularly in the case of the DL system. The course supervisor or tutor's clear and comprehensive instructions for completing assignment work, studying course materials, answering questions, creative presenting, writing, and presenting a sound, creative, critical, complete, and to-the-point discussion, among other things, are of great importance.

b. Tutors may be held responsible for thoroughly examining the assignments, and this evaluation should include complete feedback, a set of written instructions describing what is correct and incorrect in the learner's work, written reinforcement, rectification of errors, and all other types of guidance required in a distance learning scheme.

c. A unique training programme for all levels of tutors may be created to raise knowledge of their roles and obligations in the DL system. Similarly, there may be a set of clear instructions for checking assignments and then counter-checking (by senior tutors) of marked and graded assignments to see how well the tutors are following the university's recommendations for grading assignment work.

d. It appears necessary for the University to create a separate new course titled "Study skills," which would include several units on study, interpretation, writing, evaluation skills, and so on, and would be mandatory but non-credit for all levels of distance learning.

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