



EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS IN DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMME:
A CASE STUDY OF NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

The present study evaluated the effectiveness of instructional process in distance education using National Open University of Nigeria as a case study .One research question and one hypotheses guided the study. A total of 1500 distance learners were proportionally selected from five National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) study centres in south west Nigeria. Structured questionnaire was the main instrument used for data collection. Mean and standarrd deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test statistics was employed to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that instructional process used in NOUN was effective. The study also revealed that there was no significant difference in the male and female rating of the effectiveness of instructional process in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) It was therefore recommended that NOUN should enhance its ICT capability in its instructional process and government should finance the installation of computer technology system in distance learning institutions

Keywords: Distance learning, Open universities, effectiveness, instructional process

Introduction

There have been many attempts to define both Open and Distance Education. A recent discussion of the two terms described them as amalgam of approaches that focus on opening access to education and training provision, freeing learners from the constraints of time and place, and offering flexible learning opportunities to individuals and groups of learners (Moore &Tait, 2002).They noted that distance learning is one of the most rapidly growing field of education, and its potential impact on all education delivery system has been greatly accentuated through the development of Internet-based information technologies, and in particular the World Wide Web. It is an educational approach in which there is a quasi-separation of the learner and the teacher in time and space (Keegan, 1996). In distance. education, the instructor and the instructional strategy/ methods are subsumed into the learning material. (popularly referred to as Study Materials), that been designed as a self-directed learning guide for the students .

However, despite the fact that distance education method of instruction delivery has moved from the correspondence to the internet-based system where multimedia (text, audio, video and computer-based) materials in electronic format are delivered to individuals through computers. It is accompanied with access to databases and electronic libraries, which enable teacher-student, student-student, one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many interactions, synchronously or asynchronously, through e-mail, computer and conferences, bulletin boards among others (Moore & Tait, 2002). It would be necessary to evaluate the process of instruction in national Open University of Nigeria distance learning programme and gender effect on the evaluation of the effectiveness of the instructional process.

Evaluation is an essential component of programme improvement and renewal and long-term success. As noted by Willis (1993) even the best designed or adapted distance delivered course will likely require revision. According to Verdvin, J.R. & Clark, T.A. (1991), good evaluation will also assist distance educators in thinking about what they are trying to



do and achieve as they implement programmes and activities. Continued development in distance education is essential and evaluation can reveal what is effective and what is not. This paper, therefore, evaluated the effectiveness of instructional process in national Open University of Nigeria distance learning programme .

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the mode of instruction in National Open University of Nigeria distance learning programme and to determine the effect of gender on the rating of instructional process in the university . . .

Research Question

The following research question has been raised in the study:

What is the level of effectiveness of instructional process of National Open University of Nigeria distance learning programme?

Research Hypothesis

The following research hypothesis has been formulated in the study:

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female distance learning education students as regards the effectiveness of instructional process in National Open University of Nigeria distance learning programme.

Methodology

The investigation employed the descriptive research of the survey design. The descriptive research of the survey design was used to determine the effectiveness of instructional process .The population for this study consists of all students of the National Open University of Nigeria In South West Nigeria There are ten study centres spread across south west geopolitical zone in Nigeria: four in Lagos, two in Osun state, one in ogun, one in Ondo State, one in Ekiti and one Centre in Oyo State.

The sample of the study comprised 1500 undergraduate students from five National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) study centres In south west Nigeria using proportional sampling

procedure. The instrument for data collection was a self-developed questionnaire titled: Evaluation of Instructional process in National Open University of Nigeria Distance Education (EIPNOUNDE). The questionnaire was divided into two sections, A and B. Section A sought information on the personal data of the respondents. While Section B was designed to elicit responses from the respondents as regards their opinion on effectiveness of instructional process in National Open University of Nigeria distance learning. The instruments were face validated by three experts in the Faculty of education, Ekiti state University and subsequently modified.

Reliability of the Instruments was ascertained using Split-half method. In doing this, the instrument was administered on respondents (students) from Ekiti state that are not part of the sample for the study. The instrument was administered once and scores was divided into two odd and even numbers. The two sets of scores were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the first half and Spearman Brown Prophecy formula for the full length. which yielded reliability coefficient of 0.88. which was appropriate for the study

Results

Result of the study were presented based on the research questions and the hypothesis. Table 1 presents the data elicited by research question 1.

What is the level of effectiveness of instructional process of National Open University of Nigeria distance learning programme?

The Decision Rule which is applicable to the results of the Research Question involves a range of mean scores and their interpretations (i.e. effectiveness, extent and level depending on the response pattern of the questions.

Mean Score	Interpretation
3.5 - 4.0	Very Effective/Very High
2.5 - 3.4	Effective/High Extent/High Level
1.5 - 2.4	Not Effective/Low Extent/Low Level



Table 1: Effectiveness of instructional process in National Open University distance learning programme

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	The course materials contained the course objective so I had a general idea of the structure and direction at the beginning of the course.	650 (43.3)	774 (51.6)	54 (3.6)	22 (1.5)	3.37	Effective
2	NOUN course materials are effective in understanding lecture topics.	602 (40.1)	790 (52.7)	80 (5.3)	28 (1.9)	3.31	Effective
3	The course materials are easy to read and understand.	642 (42.8)	553 (36.9)	249 (16.6)	56 (3.6)	3.19	Effective
4	The presentation of delivery of course materials through prints are effective in learning	433 (28.9)	712 (47.5)	317 (21.1)	38 (2.5)	3.03	Effective
5	The use of audio, videotapes, CDROM as instructional effectiveness are effective in teaching and learning process	244 (16.3)	940 (62.7)	276 (18.4)	40 (2.7)	2.93	Effective
6	Facilitators are well qualified and compete in the respective field	174 (11.6)	1197 (79.8)	91 (6.1)	38 (2.5)	3.00	Effective
7	Facilitators provide clear expectation for the course	216 (14.4)	705 (47.0)	563 (37.5)	16 (1.1)	2.75	Effective
8	The facilitator demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter	162 (10.8)	929 (61.9)	365 (24.3)	44 (2.9)	2.81	Effective
9	The facilitator demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter	176 (11.7)	959 (57.3)	455 (30.3)	10 (0.7)	2.80	Effective
10	Tutorial at the study centre are student centre	459 30.6)	780 (52.0)	187 (12.5)	74 (4.9)	3.08	Effective
11	The use of radio and television broadcasts as instructional modes are effective in teaching learning process	221 (14.7)	864 (57.6)	349 (23.3)	66 (4.4)	2.83	Effective
12	The contact periods between instructors and learners are adequate to understand the knowledge being impacted	143 (9.5)	860 (57.3)	399 (26.6)	98 (6.5)	2.70	Effective
13	Regularity of visits by instructors during contact periods makes learning effective	229 (15.3)	660 (44.0)	565 (37.7)	46 (3.1)	2.71	Effective
14	Tutorial sessions organized by instructors are effective in the teaching learning process	572 (38.1)	631 (42.1)	229 (15.3)	68 (4.5)	3.14	Effective
15	NOUN'S instructional process creates a flexible, interactive and student centred learning environment	198 (13.2)	968 (64.5)	250 (16.7)	84 (5.6)	2.85	Effective

Table 1 reveals that the overall average Mean of the respondents is 2.92. Based on decision rule, the respondents were of the opinion that the instructional process of NOUN in implementing distance learning is effective.

Test of Hypothesis

The hypothesis is on whether a significant difference exists in the mean responses of male and female students on effectiveness of instructional process of NOUN in implementing distance learning programmes. The respondents' opinion was



subjected to t test using the following null hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female student regarding the

Table 2: t-test analysis of difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on effectiveness of instructional process of National Open University of Nigeria distance learning programme.

Students	N	Mean	SD	DF	t-Cal.	t-Tab	Alpha Level
Male	750	34.94	5.27	1480	0.24	1.96	0.05
Female	750	34.90	5.99				

Table 2 shows t test analysis of difference in the mean rating of male and female distance learning students as regard the effectiveness of instructional process in the National Open University of Nigeria. It was revealed that t-calculated of 0.24 was less than t-tabulated of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus there was no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students as regard the effectiveness of instructional process of National Open University distance learning programme.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that instructional process of Open University Distance Learning programme is highly effective. This is in support of this findings Ofoha and Awe (2011) who found that NOUN course materials were highly rated and comparable in content to those in the conventional system. This result could be as a result of adequate consideration that was given to the delivering mode of the distance learning programme because of the characteristics and nature of both the learners and the programme.

The Distance learning programme is not like face to face programme since the former requires different media, delivery method, course designing and learner support program. The effectiveness could also be as a result of the management effort in ensuring that previously prepared instructional materials are augmented with varieties of learning strategies in addition to the National Open University of also maintained linkages with other international Open University such as Open University of United Kingdom, Indian Gran National Open University. This may have helped the University to improve on the instructional delivery processes.

effectiveness of the instructional process of NOUN in implementing distance learning programmes.

According to Morayo (2014) instructional delivery modes are change and constantly improving this could also have affected the effectiveness of National Open University of Nigeria distance learning programme The result of this study also showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents on effectiveness of instructional process of national open university distance learning programme

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study set out to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional process in National Open University of Nigeria distance education programme. The result showed that the instruction process of National Open University is effective. It was therefore recommended that:

1. Government should finance the installation of computer technology system in the distance learning institutions.
2. There should be adequate provision of ICT facilities in distance learning centres.
3. Government should ensure there is stable electricity supply.

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