

## ASSESSING LEARNERS' SATISFICATION TOWARDS SUPPORT SERVICES DELIVERY IN NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING SERVICES

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to determining the level of students' satisfaction of learner support services in the study centres of NOUN - National Open University of Nigeria and whether the support services offered at the study centres have significant influence on the level of students' satisfaction. A descriptive survey of ex-post facto research design was adopted for this research. Stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting two thousand, one hundred and sixty (2160) samples from eighteen (18) study centres; made up of three (3) study centres in each of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. Two hypotheses subjected to Percentile statistics, Friedman Rank Test and Post hoc Wilcoxon Rank Tests via SPSS version 20 at the level of .00 and .01 asymptotic significant level respectively were formulated and analysed in the study. The results indicated symbolising significant differences among students' in their satisfaction with learner support services provided by their study centres. Significant difference was also observed on the basis of the geopolitical zones, as learner support services were adjudged to be unsatisfactory in five study centres. Suggestions were offered on how to alleviate the identified problems.*

*Keywords: Study Centre, Dedicated Model, Lodger Model, Satisfaction, Support and Counselling Services*

### INTRODUCTION

Open and distance learning is considered to be one of the best options in providing mass access; reduce cost of university education, meeting the yearnings of the individual for university admission and rebuilding confidence in those who struggled for places in conventional universities that all is not lost (Ipaye, 2007). In line with this assertion, the Federal Government of Nigeria therefore deemed it necessary to resuscitate the suspended National Open University and re-named it as National Open University of Nigeria in 2002. The existence of the university study centres in various states of Nigeria provides the means of which the University reaches out to the nation and the world at large. As of June, 2011, there were 49 NOUN functional study Centres in 33 States of the Federation including the Federal capital territory and these centres form the bedrock for providing the needed support services to the students spreading all over Nigeria and beyond. The concept of learner support is a term

used to subsume all interactions that exists between institutional personnel and students (prospective and registered) with an intention to assist the students' in meeting their objectives from the point of first inquiry made by the students through graduation and often for life time (COL 2002).). In a nutshell, Learner Support is tailored towards meeting the learners' academic and socio-psychological needs and also towards the realization of the institutions' mission.

In Open Distance Learning system of education, the satisfaction of the stakeholders especially the learners' perception of the value and quality of the support services are germane to the students' retention and their continuous patronage. Distance learners expect robust support system that will satisfy their yearning for support and bridging communication gaps between them and their institutions, support personnel and other students whereby reduce distance in whatever form, keeping them on track and help them to be successful in their

academic pursuit

## **The rationale behind establishment of Learner Support Services in ODL (Open Distance Learning)**

The choice of support services offered by an Open Distance Learning institution largely depends on the contextual factors such as the mission and vision of the particular university, national policy on education, available resources, learners' characteristics and needs and types of courses and programmes offered (COL 2002). The main reason for learner support in ODL system of education is to provide a warm, and supportive atmosphere for learners so as to enable them develop self-confidence; thus assisting them to achieve personal success in their individual academic and life goals by making available to them a variety of resources, services and referrals (Ipaye, 2007). In the same vein, in 1998 Kishore, observed that the success or failure of the ODL methodology and overall corporate image of an ODL institution are contingent on the strengths and weaknesses of the student support services sub-system. This observation reiterates the need for an establishment of a viable learner support services unit in all open and distance learning institutions. To therefore point out the importance of support services in open and distance education, Ranasinghe, Vidanapathirana, Rajamanthri, Gamini and Bullumulle (2009), stated that without continuous interpersonal interactions and feedback found in the traditional classroom, the learner in open and distance learning can find himself or herself unfocused on the lesson, unaware of his or her progress, and less motivated than the learner in conventional institution. They further observed that Distance learners typically needed a lot of counselling and guidance in order to complete a programme.

To explain further, the essence of learner support in an ODL environment, Sampson (2000) identified two major areas of Learner Support schedules to be academic and administrative support services. He defined academic support as the incorporation of a variety of functions such as explaining concepts, giving hand on practical experience, developing learning skills etc. While administrative support services include: provision of

information, orientation, registration, matriculation, counselling, guidance services, referral, academic facilitations, assessment and evaluation, monitoring of academic progress, seminars and workshop, course material delivery and access to multimedia facilities and equipment. For the rationale behind the establishment of learner support services in an ODL institution to be well considered, the three characteristics that made up the reasons for the need to establish learner support services crucial and critical to the learning process must be put in proper perspectives. The characteristics of the learners; that of the institution and that of the learning process.

## **Characteristics of NOUN Students**

The characteristics of ODL learners as apply to NOUN students in terms of age and gender spread are: students' age range is between 15 and 70 years and 45% of the NOUN students' population are adults with busy lives, family and work commitments (Okopi, 2011). Also 44.52 % of NOUN students are females while 55.48 % are male (NOUN Directorate of ICT, 2013). Again, a bulk of applicants to NOUN are youths who had attempted university entrance examinations, several times and still could not get into the conventional university (Ipaye, 2007) Identification of ODL learners according to their age, gender and social class characteristics is germane to the designing and provision of appropriate learner support services vis-à-vis meeting the expectations and satisfaction of every student. According to Tail, (2000) the level of support needed by an individual student in open and distance learning depends on factors such as age, gender, social class etc.

## **Characteristics of Open and Distance Learning Institutions**

One of the characteristics of the ODL institutions is the existence of geographical, interactional and transactional distances between the institution and the learners making it difficult for the learners to have regular contact with the institutions and other learners. In abide to mitigate the effect of distance and bring education to the door steps of every learner, the establishment of study centres becomes inevitable and imperative. Study

centres constitute an essential aspect of Learner Support Services especially for single mode institutions and particularly in the case of NOUN which is the only Open University in the country. A study centre is designed to support and enhance the educational and learning efforts of distance learning students; it is set up to bring the student closer to the university and to give him or her sense of belonging to the university.

Another difficulty being experienced by NOUN students especially the learners in remote rural areas is arduous task of communicating with the tutorial facilitators, or other learners or/ and the institution. In Nigeria where effective communication is often hampered by poor road network, lack or erratic electricity supply, poor phone services, lack of internet facilities, causes delays in the delivery of course materials, creating a huge gap in interactional and transactional communication (Okopi, 2010). Establishment of study centres becomes very germane to bridging communication gaps between tutorial facilitators and learners or between a learner and other learners or support staff and also successful operation of an ODL institution. In order to mitigate this problem, National Open University of Nigeria established study centres in the thirty-six states of Nigeria, and also in some communities and special government agencies in Nigeria, A study centre provides avenues for face to face interactions between students to students, and students to university staff, (both academic and non-teaching staff); it affords didactic interaction between students and their study materials (i.e. by means of pointing out aspects of the study materials, the person finds difficult for others to explain). Study Centres support students in independent learning by various means of educational technologies and human support. A study centre is thus part of an overall system of support in open and distance learning.

### **Learning Process in ODL**

Learning process in ODL system demands that a learner must develop an effective set of appropriate learning strategies or study skills in order to effectively study. Learning in an open and distance learning especially single mode institution is a novelistic concept in Nigeria and often many of the students are not aware of their

responsibilities as distance learners. In ODL, teaching and learning are hinged on effective communication, coupled with separation of learners from the teachers, learners in ODL also need to acquire and attain a certain level of ICT knowledge and skills to be able to cope with the basic ICT requirements of ODL system of education. Also some learners might have possessed study skills and learning styles that are at variance with and/or are inappropriate to learning process in ODL. Though the choice of study and learning skills depends largely on individual learner idiosyncrasy, the need to help the ODL learners to acquire appropriate study and learning skills compatible with learning in ODL through counselling cannot be underestimated. Apart from those factors mentioned above, other militating impediments to effective learning process in ODL system of education include difficulty of the language of study materials and its readability, culture of reading, and studying, motivation, improper and inadequate reading and learning skills or preparation, anxiety, time, and work or family commitments etc. Also, evidences are bound all over the world that the rate of drop out in ODL system is higher than in conversional face-to-face classroom system of education. Availability and provision of support services such as learners having contact with tutorial facilitators or other support staff through occasional face-to-face or technology will imperatively reduce this phenomenon to the barest minimum.

### **Types of Support Services in NOUN Study Centres**

A study centre according to NOUN Policy on Establishing Study Centres (2011), is a hallmark of an overall system of support in open and distance education . Meeting support needs of learners is central to sustainability of quality learning in a distance and reduction of attrition rate in ODL system. At inception, the plan of the university has been, to establish study centres as follows:

- a study centre in each state of the Federation, based at the State Capital, and Federal capital Territory
- a study centre in each of the 774 Local Government Areas of the Federation
- study centres in communities where individuals or

communities donate centres that meet the minimum standard for the establishment of study centres

- Special study centres for Nigerian Armed Forces and Para-military forces

## Types or Models of Study Centres:

There are various models of study centres. Briefly mentioned are six of such models.

**a) The rented model:** In this model, the Distance Education institution merely rents rooms in another institution for the various activities of the DE programme. The institution thus does not have absolute control on what goes on in the centre.

**b) The partnership model:** Here, another institution or organization, partnering with the DE institution, provides the location and services;

**c) The dedicated model:** where the building (whether purchased or rented) is dedicated to the use of the ODL institution alone;

**d) The civic model:** where the local community through the Local Government, an NGO, or the Community takes responsibility to undertake the provision of the centre in order to support the provision of higher (university) education in the community.

**e) The lodger model:** The centre may be a "lodger" within the premises of another higher institution's facility (Polytechnic or Colleges of Education) possibly paying rent to cover space used, furniture and fittings provided, science laboratory, classrooms, halls offices and power and services by laboratory and workshop staff.

**f) The Regional or Zonal model:** This model differs slightly from {c} above in that though it is dedicated, in addition to the normal activities of a study centre, it also supervises activities in a number of other study centres in the Region or Zone.

For the purpose of this study, the services currently offered to students at the NOUN study centres as segmented into three phases based on support activities requirement of each study phase. According to IGNOU (2001), at every stage of studying in ODL, learners expect support, starting from pre-entry stage through on-course stage to post-

course stage. This research examines NOUN students' satisfaction towards support services provided in study centres at pre-registration, registration and post registration stages of their studies. The phases are:

*i. At Pre-enrolment stage* (Pre-registration), the prospective learner needs mixture of information, advice and counselling in a NOUN study centre. Prospective learner would want to know about the programmes and courses available, entry requirements, application procedures, the university fees charged, the teaching-learning process, the recognition of the award, employment prospects etc.

*ii. On course stage* (registration and post-registration stages); during the course stage, thus once admitted, the student would require the following support services at NOUN study centres:

- Registration
- An induction into the instructional system of the organisation
- Distribution of self-learning materials, assignments
- Provision of television programmes, radio broadcasts, teleconferencing etc
- Provision of library facilities
- Organisation of practical at science labs, computer labs, industry etc
- Organisation of assignment, evaluation and feedback through tutor comments
- Development of study skills and structuring his/his learning
- Provision of counselling and tutoring services (including limited face-to-face comments)
- Conducts of examination
- Communication of results of assessment
- Provision of relevant, accurate and unbiased information

*i. At Post course stage* (Graduating stage) the learner at this stage has taken the required examination. The person (learner) may not receive the final grade card/award. The learner may also require information on possible career guidance in general at NOUN study

centre. The support sought for at this stage would be

- Communication of final /awards, convocation etc
- Advice regarding career advancement/job opportunities/future prospects etc
- Obtaining feedback on the programmes and services provided

## Media for Service Delivery

The mode of service delivery is imperative to effective and efficient provision of support services in ODL. The most commonly used media of delivery of support services in NOUN study centres include: occasional face-to-face interactions; but often optional, counselling, teaching and learning process 'mediated' in some ways by print; including correspondence, or through technology by audio, including, cassettes, telephone and by computer (computer-based training, e-mail, computer conferencing or World Wide Web); (NOUN, 2006).

For effective required contacts and interactions to take place at NOUN study centres the following categories of staff are available to deliver the needed support services; forty nine (49) Study Centre Directors to superintend these centres across the nation; seventy (70) professional counselling psychologists; Knowledge Technologists to superintend the computer centres of the study centres and provide students and staff with the technical support. Others include administrative staff and Tutorial Facilitators who facilitates academic courses across the schools

## Facilities and Equipment at the NOUN Study Centres

In order to provide effective and efficient support services at the study centres, NOUN provides:

- a) A well-equipped e-learning at its Headquarter in Lagos. The University in collaboration with NASRAD link up with 16 of its study centres for the provision of internet connectivity, conduct interactive video conferencing and also conduct tutorial facilitation on line across all these centres from one base.
- b) Computer laboratories equipped with between 30 to 50 desktop computers in many of the study centres.
- c) Each of the study centres have compliment of laboratories for science and workshop experience.

d) NOUN working in collaboration with hospitals has put up an arrangement for the clinical experiences and supervision for nursing students.

e) More study materials are being developed, printed and distributed to the students.

f) Most Course materials on the CD-ROM/DVD.

g) Library access is provided to all the students with codes with which they could access the virtual library and thus take advantage of more than 500,000 e-books to which the University had subscribed or bought (Ipaye, 2007)

h) Integrated Learning Management System (ILMS) and MAPLE TA- software programmes have been developed by the University to bring all support services rendered by the University into a unified e platform. Both staff and students can key into the facility for any service of their choice.

## Students' Satisfaction of Support Services in ODL

According to Merriam-Webster's dictionary and Thesaurus (2012), satisfaction means (a). fulfilment of a need or want; (b). the quality or state of being satisfied (contentment) and (c). a source or means of gratification. Customer satisfaction is a measure of how products and services supplied by a company or organisation meet or surpass customer expectation. In searching for customers' satisfaction, firms generally ask customers whether their product or service has met or exceeded their expectation. Thus, expectation is a key factor behind satisfaction. When a customer has high expectation of service and in reality, the service rendered falls short of this expectation, the customer will be disappointed and will likely rate their experience as less than satisfactory. In other words, in ODL context, customer's satisfaction means learner's satisfaction of services.

Kotler and Keller (2009) opine that customer satisfaction depends on the relative performance of the product for buyers' expectations. At each stage of studying in ODL every student would have experienced different levels of satisfaction of support services provided. In the ODL system of education, if the support services rendered are not in congruence with the learners' expectations, then

the learner gets dissatisfied and de-motivated and consequently among other reason, may drop out of the programme. Learners' satisfaction can be shaped by their experiences during pre-registration, registration, even at on-course and towards graduation at their study centres or comments coming from relatives, friends and information from other stakeholders like employers, parents, community and government. Effective and efficient support services depend largely on the quality of services rendered, staff, and learners' satisfaction of the service delivery mechanism of the institution. A learner who is satisfied with the support services rendered by his or her institution will be loyal and give good comments about the institution. According to Ipaye (2007) learner support services not only bridge socio-psychological distance but also foster personal development and the accomplishment of learning goals.

## **Purpose of the study**

The research is to determine the level of students' satisfaction towards learner support services in NOUN's study centres and whether there is a significant difference between students' satisfaction towards provided support services at pre-enrolment, registration and post-registration stages of study. In a nutshell, the findings of this research will assist the management of NOUN, study centre directors, and student counsellors, other support staff and students at the NOUN study centres to be aware of their learners' needs and expectations of support services. The counselling implications of this study are; to help identify effective and efficient ways of supporting students in their quest towards accomplishment of learning goal thus, enhancing personal development .

## **Objective of the study**

The main objective of this research is to find out the level of students satisfaction towards support services at NOUN study centres.. Another objective is to determine whether there is a significant difference between students' satisfaction towards the provided support services at pre enrolment, registration and post-registration stages of study in the centre.

## **Research question**

What are the levels of students' satisfaction towards provided support services based on model of study centres?

## **Research hypothesis**

There is no significant difference between students' satisfaction towards provided support services at pre enrolment, registration and post registration stages of their study.

## **Research methodology**

### ***Research Design:***

A descriptive survey of ex-post facto research design was used for this research.

### **Research Population**

The research population comprised all the registered NOUN students in the study centres spread across Nigeria.

### ***Sample and sampling techniques***

Stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting two thousand, one hundred and sixty (2,160) samples from eighteen (18) study centres. One hundred and twenty samples (120) were randomly drawn from three (3) centres in each of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

***Characteristics of the samples:*** Marital status of the respondents for this study comprised 1382(64%) married subjects and 778(36%) unmarried subjects while 1,728 (80%) of the subjects of this study were employed and 432(20%) were unemployed. 1,296(60%) subjects of this study were male while 864(40%) were female.

The numbers of students selected randomly from the Schools were as follow:

- (a) Arts and Social Sciences –Eight hundred and fifteen ( 815) 27.17%
- (b) Laws –Three hundred (300)10%
- (c) Management Science- six hundred and sixty (660) (22.32%
- (d) Education- Six hundred and twenty (620) 20.65%
- (e) School of Science and Technology- Six hundred and five (605) 20.19%

## Research Instrument

The instrument used for the research is a self-developed questionnaire with input from experts in the Directorate of Learner Support Services. The questionnaire has two sections.

Section A contains Bio data of the samples

Section B comprises three subsections as explained in Table 1 are as follows.

- i. Pre-enrolment stage that contains twelve (12) items
- ii. Registration stage that contains seven (7) items
- iii. Post-enrolment stage that contains thirty (30) items

The questionnaire contains Likert graduation four option responses and a respondent is expected to tick only one column for an item. The Likert graduation includes: very satisfactory (4 points) satisfactory (3 points) unsatisfactory (2) and while very unsatisfactory (1) point.

**Validity and reliability of the instrument:** Copies of the drafted questionnaire were given to experts in the Directorate of Learner Support Services who vetted it for both content and face validities. Twenty students of Lagos Study Centre who were not part of this study were given the questionnaire to answer and it was collected on the spot; after two weeks, the same questionnaire were

given to the same set of students and collected back on the spot. Coefficient method of test-retest and Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability were used to analysis the pilot test data and the result was .81.

## Administration of the Research Instrument

The copies of the questionnaire were taken to the selected study centres between the months of October and December 2011 by the Directorate of Learner Support Services Monitoring Team and came back to NOUN Headquarters with the filled questionnaire. At the selected study centres, the copies of the questionnaire were administered by the research assistants, who were the study centres counsellors and copies of the filled questionnaire were collected back on the spot from the respondents.

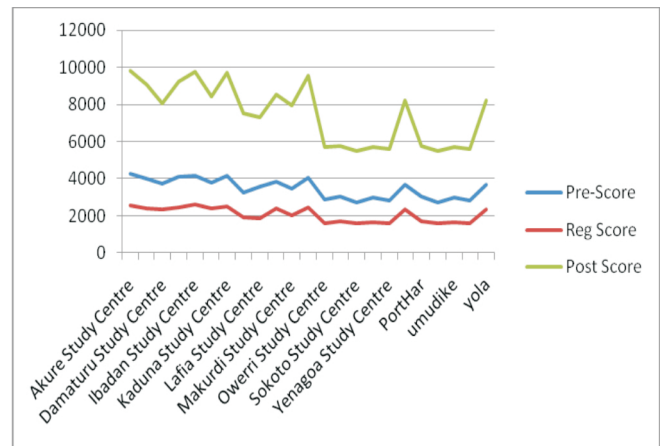
## Analysis of Data

The researchers employed percentile, Friedman test and post-hoc Wilcoxon test via SPSS version 20 to determine the differences among NOUN students' satisfaction of support services at pre-enrolment, registration and post registration stages in eighteen study centres and six geo-political zones of Nigeria. The Figure 1 shows the student level of satisfaction in the selected Noun study centers.

Students' satisfaction of support services was set at benchmark of fifty percent (50%) for all study centres. Students' percentile scores of any study centre that falls below 50% was regarded as unsatisfactory. It is expected that all NOUN study centres provide the same set of support services at pre-enrolment, registration and post-

S/N	Study Centre	Gross Score	perce- ntile	Gross Score	perce- ntile	Gross Score	perce- ntile
1	Akure Study Centre	4262.4	74	2553.6	76	9792	68
2	Benin Study Centre	3974.4	69	2420	72.1	9072	63
3	Damaturu Study Centre	3744	65	2335.2	69.5	8064	56
4	Enugu Study Centre	40896	71	24528	74	9216	64
5	Ibadan Study Centre	4147.2	72	2620.8	78	9720	67.5
6	Jos Study Centre	3801.6	66	2385.6	71	8424	58.5
7	Kaduna Study Centre	4147.2	72	2486.4	74	9691.2	67.3
8	Katsina Study Centre	3225.6	56	1881.6	56	7488	52
9	Lafia Study Centre	3571.2	62	1848	55	7272	50.5
10	Maiduguri Study Centre	3859.2	67	2385.6	71	8496	59
11	Makurdi Study Centre	3456	60	2016	60	7920	55
12	Osogbo Study Centre	4032	70	24528	73	9504	66
13	Owerri Study Centre	2880	50	1596	47.5	5688	39.5
14	Port Harcourt Study Centre	3052.8	53	1680	50	5760	40
15	Sokoto Study Centre	2707.2	47	1574	46.85	5490	38.13
16	Umuidiye Study Centre	2995.2	52	16296	48.5	5688	39.5
17	Yenagoa Study Centre	2822.4	49	1579.2	47	561674	49
18	Yola Study Centre	3686.4	64	2352.2	70.1	8208	57

**Table 1. Students' gross and percentile scores analysis in Pre-enrolment, registration and post-registration stages in selected NOUN study centres**



**Figure 1. Line chart of Students' levels of satisfaction in the Selected NOUN Study Centres**

registration stages of studies in ODL system. What is measured above is the level of students' satisfaction of support services provided at pre-enrolment, registration and post-registration stages of study in the selected NOUN study centres.

## Results:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between students' satisfaction towards provided support services at pre enrolment, registration and post registration stages of their study in NOUN.

## Findings

I. At the pre-registration stage, the percentile scores of two study centres (Sokoto and Yenagoa) fell below 50%, indicating that support services at the two study centres seem to be unsatisfactory to the students.

II. At the registration stage, the percentile scores of four study centres (Owerri, Sokoto, Umudike and Yenagoa) fell below 50%, therefore implies that the support services at the these study centres seem to be unsatisfactory to the students.

III. At the post registration stage, the percentile scores of five study centres (Owerri, PortHarcourt, Sokoto, Umudike and Yenagoa) fell below 50%, therefore implies that the support services at the five study centres seem to be unsatisfactory to the students.

Table 2 shows, those students of NOUN Akure Study Centre rated their satisfaction of support services highest among the study centres while Sokoto Study Centre rated their satisfaction of support services lowest.

Figure 2 shows that the Friedman Test Statistics asymptotic significant was .000 alpha levels indicating a significant difference among students' satisfaction of support

Study Centre	Mean Rank	Study Centre	Mean Rank	Study Centre	Mean Rank
Akure	17.67	Jos	11.00	Makurdi	7.67
Benin	13.00	Kaduna	16.17	Oshogbo	14.50
Damaturu	9.33	Katsina	6.67	Owerri	13.17
Enugu	14.50	Lafia	6.67	P/Harcourt	5.00
Ibadan	17.17	Maiduguri	12.00	Sokoto	1.00
Umudike	3.83	Yenagoa	2.00	Yola	9.67

Table 2. Friedman Rank test Analysis of differences in students' satisfaction towards provided support services at pre-enrolment, registration and post-registration stages

services among the selected NOUN study centres.

## Discussion

Inferences from the findings as shown above, the five study centres (Owerri, PortHarcourt, Sokoto, Umudike and Yenagoa) rating of support services were adjudged by their students to be unsatisfactory are the Lodger model study centres: The centre is a "lodger" within the premises of another higher institution's facility (Polytechnic or Colleges of Education) possibly paying rent to cover space used, furniture and fittings provided, science laboratory, classrooms, halls offices and power and services by laboratory and workshop staff. The dissatisfaction of support services in these five "lodger" study centres could be attributed to quality of support services provided at pre-enrolment, registration and post-registration stages of study in these centres. The quality of support services could have been adversely affected by limited space, furniture and fitting, science laboratory, classrooms, halls offices and power and services.

Though the same brand of support services is offered at pre-enrolment, registration and post- registration in all NOUN study centres, the provision of equipment and facilities in study centres could make or mar the quality of services provided. Study centres serve as the hob of support services and the type or model of a study centre affect the provision of equipment and facilities for learning, therefore, the significant difference between study centres in their students' satisfaction of support services could be attributed to differences in model of study centres

## Implication for counselling

The quality of the counselling will take on a different emphasis with different individuals at different stages of their studies. For example, at the pre-registration stage it

Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>	
N	3
Chi-Square	50.696
df	17
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. Friedman Test

Figure 2. Friedman Test Statistics.



may often be the information giving and clarifying functions which are most demanded. This stage is very important and the key role of the student counsellor who is the first contact for the would-be-learner is to provide the enquirer with vital information about ODL system of education. Once the learner has begun course work, the counselling service would focus more on facilitation, study skills regular contact with teacher/tutors; quick response from teachers/tutors; and regular support for learning as central to education. Therefore, Student Counsellors should be conscious of counselling needs of students at pre-registration, registration and post registration stages of their studies in ODL and adopt efficient and effective intervention strategies.

As expressed by NOUN students, the support services in "Lodger Model" study centres were unsatisfactory to the students. Inference from this research, indicates that Lodger Model study centres lack space, furniture and fittings, science laboratory, classrooms, halls, offices and power and services by laboratory and workshop- which could adversely affect the quality of support services provided at such centres. For example, lack of conducive counselling office or where a counsellor has to share office with other staff or counselling office lacking the basic counselling equipment affect the quality of counselling services provided. Quality of other support services like tutoring and coaching, recording keeping, conducting examination, access to computer and internet facility, etc. could be adversely affected by adequate space, furniture and fittings, science laboratory, classrooms, halls offices and power supply and services

## Recommendation

- a) NOUN should adequately equip all its study centres with basic equipment and facilities for effective academic and psycho-social support service delivery
- b) NOUN as matter of urgency and necessity should secure permanent accommodation for all study centres resident in other higher institutions (Polytechnic and Colleges of Education).
- c) NOUN should provide adequate human and material

resources in all its study centres for effective and efficient support services delivery.

d) The Student Counsellors should be conscious of counselling needs of students at pre-registration, registration and post registration stages of their studies in ODL and adopt efficient and effective intervention strategies.

e) Counsellors in Lodger model centres should do more in order to deliver effective and efficient counselling in the face of equipment and facility inadequacies.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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