Evaluation of Learners' Satisfaction with Open Flexible and Distance Learning Services at the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute

Évaluation de la satisfaction des apprenants par rapport aux services d'enseignement ouvert, flexible et à distance de l'institut d'enseignement à distance de l'université de Lagos

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Abstract

The prospects of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) as the best way to acquire formal education, especially having to work and learn simultaneously have led to curiosity in investigating the challenges that come with this great opportunity. This study evaluated learners' satisfaction with the services provided by the Distance Learning Institute (DLI), University of Lagos, at various levels of learners' engagement. A survey research design using non-probability quota sampling was adopted. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire which was developed and validated for testing learner satisfaction in ODL at the University of Lagos. A sample size of 3,724 learners was used for the study. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used in analysing the data. Findings from this study revealed that DLI has been generally successful in satisfying learners at the pre-enrolment, process and product stages with

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mean response ratings of 7.27, 5.63, and 6.87 respectively. However, the learners were dissatisfied with the adequacy of course materials with a mean of 4.49 and radio lectures with a mean of 4.26. Furthermore, DLI graduates are slightly satisfied with the programme completion process such as result processing and convocation with mean response ratings of 7.74 and 7.44 but dissatisfied with the restrooms of mean 5.02. It is suggested that the administrators of DLI should adopt a continuous improvement approach, focusing on specific areas of the educational journey where satisfaction levels are low such as course materials, radio lectures, restrooms and related services to enhance graduate satisfaction.

Keywords: *Open and Distance Learning, Services, Learner Satisfaction*

Résumé

La perspective de l'enseignement ouvert et à distance (EOD) comme meilleur moyen d'acquérir une éducation formelle, en particulier le fait de devoir travailler et apprendre simultanément, a suscité la curiosité d'enquêter sur les défis qui accompagnent cette grande opportunité. Cette étude a évalué la satisfaction des apprenants à l'égard des services fournis par le DLI de l'Université de Lagos, à différents niveaux d'engagement des apprenants. Un modèle de recherche par sondage utilisant un échantillonnage par quota non probabiliste a été adopté. Les données ont été collectées à l'aide d'un questionnaire structuré qui a été développé et validé pour tester la satisfaction des apprenants dans l'EOD à l'Université de Lagos. Un échantillon de 3 724 apprenants a été utilisé pour l'étude. Des statistiques descriptives telles que les fréquences, les pourcentages, la moyenne et l'écart-type ont été utilisées pour analyser les données. Les résultats de cette étude ont révélé que la DLI a moins de marge de progression pour satisfaire les apprenants aux stades de la préinscription, du processus et du produit, avec des réponses moyennes de 7,27, 5,63 et 6,87 respectivement. Les apprenants sont également insatisfaits de l'adéquation des supports de cours (moyenne de 4,49) et des conférences radiophoniques (moyenne de 4,26). En outre, les diplômés de DLI sont légèrement satisfaits du processus d'achèvement du programme tel que le traitement des résultats et la convocation avec des réponses moyennes de 7,74 et 7,44, mais insatisfaits des toilettes avec une moyenne de 5,02. Il est suggéré que les administrateurs de DLI adoptent une approche d'amélioration continue, en se concentrant sur des domaines spécifiques du parcours éducatif où les niveaux de satisfaction sont faibles, tels que le matériel de cours, les conférences radiophoniques, les toilettes et les services connexes, afin d'améliorer la satisfaction des diplômés.

Evaluation of Learners' Satisfaction with Open Flexible and Distance
Learning Services at the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute

25

Introduction

Across the globe, there has been a growing desire for people to enhance
their educational attainment at the tertiary level, amidst several
challenges such as age, work and even finance. Educational
enhancement is the longing by prospective learners for continuous
improvement, upgrade and development in their academic or
professional pursuits. The conventional university system seems to
provide a limited option to many prospective candidates in this regard.
However, Open and Distance Learning (ODL) systems have come in
handy to fill this gap for desiring working-class candidates to work and
study simultaneously, at a flexible pace without necessarily having
physical contact with the facilitator (Oladipo, 2017, Oladele &
Modebelu, 2021, Oladipo, 2017, Oladele & Modebelu, 2021, Oladipo,
Adewara, Olayiwola, Afolabi, Oladele, Ajeyalemi, Akala & Udeani
2023). Consequently, ODL helps learners to resolve the major
challenges of time and place which the conventional university system
usually presents to learners in their bid to acquire tertiary education.
Accompanying this is also the fact that the system provides flexible
learning options to learners (COL, 2000; Daniel, 2012; Ghosh, Nath,
Agarwal, & Nath, 2012; Bozkurt, 2019). Interestingly, many countries
around the world have adopted ODL systems, thus availing their
teeming population with the benefits it provides. Hence, ODL
institutions in many of these countries usually record a large number of
enrolments annually. Examples include Indira Gandhi National Open
University which has over 4 million enrollees; Anadolu University of
Turkey with enrolments of 1,974,343 learners; and Islamic Azad
University of Iran with enrolments of 1,613,000 learners (India Today,
2022).

According to Dyvik (2023), India with a population of about 1.4 billion
has 5,350 universities and the United States with a population of over
300 million has 3,200 universities, while Nigeria with a population of

over 200 million has just 276 universities. This data shows that the Nigerian conventional university is grossly inadequate to meet the educational needs of its population (Iseolorunkanmi et al., 2021). Perhaps it was in a bid to ameliorate this challenge faced by prospective learners in Nigeria that the National Universities Commission (NUC, 2020) has now approved twenty-eight (28) dual-mode universities (using both the ODL and face-to-face instructional delivery methods. Apart from these 28, there is the single mode ODL institution, the National Teachers' Institute, Kaduna, (established in 1976), the National Open University (NOUN) (established in 2003) and 4 recently approved Open universities. As of 2021, the enrollment at NOUN was about 254,000 learners (NOUN, 2021). However, before the advent of these two ODL institutions, the University of Lagos had established its Distance Learning Institute (DLI) (not the original name at inception) in 1973. The DLI now operates on dual modes of instructional delivery, with a current enrollment target of 25,000 (DLI, University of Lagos, 2022).

When the University of Lagos (UNILAG) was established by the Federal government of Nigeria in April 1962 (Aderinoye & Ojokheta 2004; Iyiegbuniwe & Alaneme 2013), the main objective of its establishment was to prepare professionals for the manpower needs of the country (Aderinoye & Ojokheta 2004; Iyiegbuniwe & Alaneme 2013). UNILAG seemed to have envisioned the adoption of distance learning as part of its instructional delivery mode from its inception. This probably led to its establishment of the Correspondence and Open Studies Unit (COSU) in 1974; this metamorphosed into Correspondence and Open Studies (COSIT) in 1983. The Senate of the University conceded some measures of autonomy to COSIT. Subsequently, COSIT was changed to the Distance Learning Institute, (DLI) in 1997, the name which it bears till date. UNILAG was the first university in Nigeria to establish a distance learning programme which is well structured and quite distinct from part-time studies (Alaneme & Olayiwola 2013; Aderinoye & Ojokheta 2004).

Open and Distance Education has the advantage of meeting the educational needs of a wider strata of learners who otherwise would not have been catered for by the conventional system. Consequently, it

Evaluation of Learners' Satisfaction with Open Flexible and Distance
Learning Services at the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute

27

serves as a credible alternative for access to higher education for all categories of individuals with minimal or no barriers in terms of time and location across the globe. This, thus, helps various countries to attain Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 4. UNILAG DLI has developed a large carrying capacity over the years by leveraging existing infrastructure within the UNILAG Campus. Therefore, UNILAG DLI is positioned to contribute its quota to the SDGs.

Despite the many advantages of online learning such as increasing learner's flexibility, eliminating geographical barriers, improved convenience of learning and enhanced effectiveness for individualised and collaborative learning, it is bedevilled with some challenges. Such challenges include inadequate peer contact and restricted social interactions, excessive time demand on the part of the lecture content provider in developing video/content materials, as well as meeting the need for flexible tutorial support (Alraimi, Zo, & Ciganek, 2015). In addition, there is also the problem of filling the psychological gap in learners in online learning. This may include feelings of isolation, frustration confusion or reduced interest in the subject matter by the learners (Adams, Liyanagunawardena, Rassool & Williams, 2013). Thomas (2019) itemised institutional/organisational inability to provide effective and workable open and distance programmes, difficulties of the educational institutions to harmonise and link databank to the open and distance programmes, lack of infrastructure and insufficient technical and managerial support, poor quality of internet broadband, insufficient funds and lack of efficient training for stakeholders, lack of resources and trained manpower, lack of infrastructure, inadequate open and distance policies, lack of optimistic attitude among teachers and learners plus unwillingness and worries about open and distance by parents, and teachers pose threats to efficient and effective delivery of ODL. In the same vein, Adeleke (2022) reiterated that although open and distance is globally accepted as a new way for education to be well dispensed, there are core challenges for most developing nations, especially in Nigeria. For instance, in Nigeria, higher institutions' open and distance challenges are due to poor internet infrastructure, poor government funding, limited and poor information and communication tools, digital illiteracy, inability of power supply and others.

Although, research interests have focused on challenges bothering the instructional delivery of Open Distance Learning, little or nothing has been done in the area of the learners who are the recipients of the approach of learning. The downside of ODL as it touches the learners' dissatisfaction and unwanted experiences should not be ignored. The adaptation of the ODL system in the higher educational institutions (HEIs) in Nigeria is still being faced with a lot of barriers and challenges. Rehman (2021) stated that the unsatisfying challenges in ODL learning for emerging countries are more critical because of the insufficient infrastructures, unaffordability of high cost of school fees, illiteracy among many aspiring to enroll in ODL education, unwillingness to enroll in the ODL processes due to lack of adequate finance and limited information discovery and dissemination. These factors have posed great hurdles for learners in the ODL institutions in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Learners' satisfaction in learning at the Open and Distance Education, means a short-term attitude arising from a learners' evaluation of their educational experiences (Itasanmi & Oni, 2020). It refers to the disposition of the learner towards the learning experience. This is realised following an objective evaluation of learning outcomes and experience. Learners' satisfaction is also a function of the level of experiences and perceived behavioural change(s) experienced as a result of passing through the ODL programme. Based on the foregoing, learners' satisfaction can be described as a temporary disposition of the learner consequent upon his/her evaluation of learning experiences, services available facilities and so on in a particular learning programme. According to Weerasinghe and Fernando (2016), "learners' satisfaction is a multidimensional process which is influenced by different factors which include, but not limited to Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA), personal and institutional factors such as gender, age, marital status, learning styles, employment, quality of instructions, clarity of expectations, teaching styles and promptness of the instructors' feedback on the programmes of the open distance learning (ODL)". Other factors that can affect learners' satisfaction include the quality of resource persons, infrastructure provided by the ODL institution, learning environment, learner-tutor relationships, course contents, library facilities, effectiveness of learning materials, flexibility of curriculum design, status and/or prestige of the institution, learner's

Evaluation of Learners' Satisfaction with Open Flexible and Distance
Learning Services at the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute

29

loyalty, service quality, welfare services, institutional effectiveness and social conditions and many others (Itasanmi & Oni, 2020, Cole, Shelley, & Swartz 2013, and Kumar 2014). In recent times, scholars and stakeholders in ODL have shown interest in factors that influence learners' satisfaction with open and distance learning. Consequently, several research has been conducted in that regard in different parts of the globe with varying results. One such is Kuo, Walker, Elland & Schroder (2013) who investigated the extent to which interaction and other factors contribute to learners' satisfaction in the online learning environment. The result showed that learner-tutor interaction, learner-content interaction and internet self-efficacy serve as good predictors of learners' satisfaction, while interactions among learners and self–regulated learning did not contribute to learners' satisfaction. Research by Harsasi & Sutawijaya (2018) investigated the determinants of learners' satisfaction in online tutorials in a distance learning tertiary institution. One of its findings is that course structure and online tutorial flexibilities were variables that influence learners' satisfaction. Other empirical studies on learners' satisfaction with open distance learning found that learning content, course design, reliability, cost and time, website contents, communication, feedback, preparation and teaching techniques, accessibility, effective or functional technology, interactivity, assurance of learning outcomes and so on, are critical factors that generally determine learners' satisfaction in the open distance learning environment.

The researchers of this study had earlier developed an instrument for the measurement of learner satisfaction in ODL services in Nigeria, (Oladipo et al, 2023). The review of extant literature unearthed the determinants of learner satisfaction which were used to develop the QAPLCG model that consisted of three stages, the Pre-Enrolment stage, Process stage and Product stage (Oladipo, 2023). The researchers employed free item generation by outlining the learner's journey for each stage and developing questionnaire items for learner satisfaction along each identified milestone in the journey.

The research work has been identified with three main stages: Pre-enrolment, Process and Product (The 3Ps) stages guided by the QAPLGC MODEL as shown in the flow chart below:
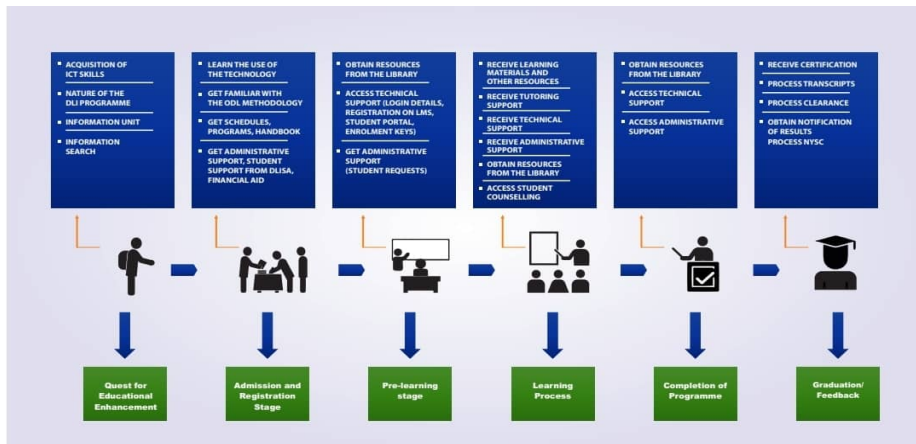
Source: Authors' conceptualization

Fig. 1: Flow Chart of Learners' Experiences and Services at the Distance Learning Institute*

*KEY: *
- *Q* = Quest for Educational Enhancement
- *A* = Admission and Registration
- *P* = Pre-Learning Stage
- *L* = Learning Process
- *C* = Completion of Programme
- *G* = Graduation/Feedback

In Nigeria, evaluations of learners' satisfaction with ODL services are rare in literature. Thus, there is a need to study the learners' satisfaction (e.g., usage of learning material, academic/facilitation services, learning centres' responsiveness and management assessment) of the services provided by the ODL institutions. The attrition rate for UNILAG DLI is significantly high. Only 10,443 learners were active (registered) during the 2018/19 session down from about 12,649 in the 2015/16 session. (DLI, Learners' enrolment unit, 2021). Moreover, new learner application rates seemed to have levelled off within the last few years with only a 40-learner increase in enrolment between the 2017/18 and 2018/19 sessions (UNILAG DLI, 2020). Many reasons have been identified in literature for high learner attrition rates which includes learner finance (Bozick, 2007). Learner employment

Evaluation of Learners' Satisfaction with Open Flexible and Distance
Learning Services at the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute

31

(Callender, 2008) and learner preparation for tertiary studies (Torenbeek, Jansen, & Hofman, 2010). All these are external factors which are beyond the control of the Institute. This suggests that the Institute may have to look inward to improve attrition rates as well as increase enrolment. Customer satisfaction has been linked to customer patronage (Olise, Okoli & Ekeke, 2015) and retention (Odunlami, 2015). This suggests an internal factor which is within the control of the Institute and may present an explorable avenue for solutions to the Institute's reducing learner registrations. Consequently, an audit of learners' satisfaction with UNILAG DLI services is required to see if changes can be made in service quality delivery to lower attrition rates. Moreover, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, such an audit has never been carried out and has become imperative in the light of improving the Institutes learners' statistics. Outcomes from this study will serve as feedback for the institute. To this end, this study is expected to evaluate learners' satisfaction with ODL services, at DLI, University of Lagos, at various levels: Enrolment, Process and Product stages. The findings of this study are significant in providing robust ODL services delivery at DLI, University of Lagos in the future, particularly, with the anticipated post-COVID-19 booming of dual modes of instructional delivery in Nigerian universities.

Research Questions

1) To what extent has DLI been able to satisfy learners in their quest for educational enhancement at the pre-enrolment stage?
2) To what extent have the Admission and Registration procedures been satisfactory to learners?
3) What is the level of learners' satisfaction being met by DLI at the Learning Process Stage?
4) What is the level of learners' satisfaction with the general assessment of DLI services at the Learning Process Stage?
5) What is the amount of satisfaction received by learners at the Programme Completion Stage?
6) What is the feedback on the level of satisfaction with ODL services received by learners after graduation?

Method

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey which involved the use of a questionnaire in the collection of data from large population sizes of DLI learners. The study targeted three distinct groups in line with the stages identified. They are:

Population 1: Pre-Enrollment Stage
This population is made up of all applicants for the DLI 2019/2020 Session.

Population 2: Process Stage
This population is made up of all registered learners in the 2019/2020 Session.

Population 3: Product Stage
This population is made up of all DLI graduates, irrespective of year of graduation.

Sample Procedure, Sample Size, and Method of Data Analysis

The sampling technique adopted for this study was non-probability quota sampling; this is in line with the suggestion of Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) that self-selection sampling may be appropriate where exploratory research is needed. The sample size for this study was 3,724 out of the population of over 14,000 registered learners of DLI, UNILAG. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire earlier developed, validated and pilot-tested on learner satisfaction in ODL services by Oladipo et al (2023). Three research instruments were put in Google format consisting Pre-enrolment Stage, Process Stage and Product Stage. The questionnaires were uploaded to learners' official platforms of the three departments (Education, Management Sciences and Social Sciences) in DLI. Learners who were screened for admission into 100 levels filled out the Pre-enrolment stage questionnaire, students from 200- 600 levels filled out the Process Stage questionnaire and the Product stage was administered to graduates of DLI from the 2019 academic session and below through the Alumni platform of Distance Learning Institute Students Association (DLISA). Responses were harvested after four weeks.

Evaluation of Learners' Satisfaction with Open Flexible and Distance
Learning Services at the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute

33

Description of Research Instruments

The research instrument adopted was a questionnaire extracted from Oladipo et al (2022) using validated learners' satisfaction with ODL services guided by QAPLCG model. The three instruments used were put in Google format consisting of the three stages: Pre-Enrolment Stage, Process Stage and Product Stage which were administered to DLI learners in the 2019/2020 academic session. The three instruments were validated by three senior colleagues who were experts in Open and Distance Learning, Measurement and Evaluation and Adult Education at the University. Their corrections and positive criticism further improved the instruments. A pilot study was carried out with 80 learners for each of the three instruments at the three levels of Pre-Enrolment, Process and Product stages to ascertain their reliability. Cronbach Alpha values obtained were 0.71, 0.72. and 0.70 respectively which showed that the instruments developed for data collection were good and reliable. Administration of the questionnaire was done by online surveys. Respondents were asked to fill out short surveys.

Pre-Enrolment Questionnaire: This consisted of 21 items grouped into visibility of DLI programme, form purchase and application, registration and screening exercise, information unit and Help desk. The scales of learners' satisfaction were 0 to 10, where; 0 = signifies highly dissatisfied and 10 = signifies highly satisfied.

Process Stage Questionnaire: This stage consisted of 70 items grouped into study centre facilitation, adequacy of course materials and resources, facilitators, radio lectures, medical centre registration and services, counselling, working conditions and schooling, affordability of tuition fees and prices of course materials, physical library, E-library, deferment, reabsorption process and reabsorption fees, residential programme and accommodation, exam registration and exam procedures, course timetable, exam result, quality assurance, administrative support, technological support, restroom, DLI physical environment and management staff. Since those areas are relatively related to one another, we considered 3 items each to be adequate for a valid analysis. The scales of learners' satisfaction were 0 to 10, where; 0 = signifies highly dissatisfied and 10 = signifies highly satisfied.

The Product Stage questionnaire: These consisted of 38 items grouped into result processing and convocation, clearance for certificate and certificate collection, transcripts, reference letter, tracer study, DLI graduates and National Youth Service Corp (NYSC), administrative support, technological support, restroom, DLI physical environment and management staff. Learners indicated their level of satisfaction on a scale of 0 to 10, where; 0 = signifies highly dissatisfied and 10 = signifies highly satisfied. This questionnaire was administered to DLI graduates on their alumni platform.

Method of Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used in analysing the data collected.

Analyses of Demographic Information

Tables 1a, 1b and 1c present the demographic distribution of the respondents across all three groups in the population of the study. The distribution has a good representation across all the programmes offered by the Institute with respondents from the Science Education Department showing more inclination to volunteer for the study.

Table 1a: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in Pre-Enrolment Stage

Variable	Option	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	620	61.5
	Female	388	38.5
Work Experience	Less than 10years	708	70.2
	Between 11 – 19 years	128	12.7
	Between 20 – 29 years	56	5.6
	30 years and above	8	.8
	Not in any Employment	108	10.7
Academic Department	Accounting	112	11.1
	Business Administration	232	23.0
	Economics	108	10.7
	Public Administration	212	21.0
	Science Education	344	34.1

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 1b: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in Process Stage

Variable	Option	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	778	50.3
	Female	770	49.7
Year Level	Year 1	6	.4
	Year 2	274	17.7
	Year 3	406	26.2
	Year 4	504	32.6
	Year 5	310	20.0
	Year 6	48	3.1
Department	Accounting	558	36.0
	Business Studies	330	21.3
	Economics	170	11.0
	Public Administration	108	7.0
	Science Education	382	24.7

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 1c: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in Graduate
Stage

Variable	Option	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	352	30.1
	Female	816	69.9
Work Experience	Less than 10years	320	27.4
	Between 11 – 19 years	512	43.8
	Between 20 – 29 years	96	8.2
	30 years and above	112	9.6
	Not in any Employment	128	11.0
Department	Business Administration	304	26.0
	Economics	256	21.9
	Public Administration	192	16.4
	Science Education	416	35.6

Source: Field Survey 2022

Analyses of Research Questions

Research Question 1: To what extent has DLI been able to satisfy
learners in their quest for educational enhancement at the Pre-
enrolment stage?

Table 2: Extent of satisfaction of learners in their quest for Educational
Enhancement at Pre- enrolment stage

Variable	Mean	STD	Scale	Remark	Factor Loading	Reliability
Form Purchase/Application	7.66	2.105	8	Moderately Satisfied	0.875	0.782
Registration and Screening Exercise	7.64	2.065	8	Moderately Satisfied	0.881	0.911
Help Desk	7.48	2.345	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.929	0.846
Information Unit	6.71	2.462	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.855	0.889
Visibility of DLI programmes	6.87	2.584	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.718	0.829
Pooled Mean	7.27	1.913	7	Slightly Satisfied	1.000	0.940

Source: Field Survey 2022. SD = Standard Deviation, Scale: 0 = Highly
Dissatisfied (HD), 1 = Dissatisfied (D), 2 = Moderately Dissatisfied
(MD), 3 = Slightly Dissatisfied (SD), 4 = Somewhat Dissatisfied
(SWD), 5 = Neutral (N), 6 = Somewhat Satisfied (SWS), 7 = Slightly
Satisfied (SS), 8 = Moderately Satisfied (MS), 9 = Satisfied (S), 10 =
Highly Satisfied (HS).

Based on the mean and the pooled mean results, the pre-enrolment
learners who participated in the survey indicated that they were
moderately satisfied with the 'Form purchase/application process", and
"Registration and screening exercise" with a mean response rating of
7.66 (8) and 7.64 (8) respectively. The learners were slightly satisfied
with the "Help Desk", "Information Unit" and "Visibility of DLI
programmes" with mean response ratings of 7.48 (7), 6.71 (7) and 6.87
(7) respectively. Generally, the pre-enrolment learners revealed that
they were slightly satisfied with DLI quest for educational
enhancement at the pre-enrolment stage with a mean response rating of
7.27 (7). The results were supported by the congruency or internal
consistency of the items employed for data collection with a reliability
result of 0.940>0.70. The reliability of the results was further supported
by the factor loadings which showed the variances explained by the
items well represent the items with values > 0.70 respectively.

Research Question 2: To what extent have the Admission and Registration procedures been satisfactory to learners?

Table 3: The extent the Screening and Registration procedures have been satisfactory to learners

Variable	Mean	STD	Scale	Remark	Factor Loading	Reliability
Registration procedures are efficient and effective.	8.05	2.325	8	Moderately Satisfied	0.827	
Screening/ registration of prospective learners are done by trained DLI officers.	7.83	2.476	8	Moderately Satisfied	0.811	
DLI provides online information on procedures for screening and registration.	7.70	2.542	8	Moderately Satisfied	0.834	
Online information, DLI notice boards are also used to disseminate information on screening and registration for prospective learners.	7.44	2.594	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.825	
There is enough information on ODE method of learning and the nature of each programme.	7.20	2.600	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.821	
Pooled Mean	7.64	2.065	8	Moderately Satisfied	1.000	0.881

Source: Field Survey 2022. SD = Standard Deviation, Scale: 0 = Highly Dissatisfied (HD), 1 = Dissatisfied (D), 2 = Moderately Dissatisfied (MD), 3 = Slightly Dissatisfied (SD), 4 = Somewhat Dissatisfied (SWD), 5 = Neutral (N), 6 = Somewhat Satisfied (SWS), 7 = Slightly Satisfied (SS), 8 = Moderately Satisfied (MS), 9 = Satisfied (S), 10 = Highly Satisfied (HS).

Based on the mean and the pooled mean results, the pre-enrolment learners who participated in the survey indicated that they are moderately satisfied with the 'Registration procedures are efficient and effective", "Screening/ registration of prospective learners are done by

trained DLI officers", and "DLI provides online information on procedures for screening and registration" with a mean response rating of 8.05 (8), 7.83 (8) and 7.70 (8) respectively. They were slightly satisfied with the "Online information, DLI notice boards used to disseminate information on screening and registration for prospective learners." and "There is enough information on ODE method of learning and the nature of each programme" with a mean response rating of 7.44 (7), and 7.20 (7) respectively. The pooled mean result revealed that the pre-enrolment learners were moderately satisfied with the screening and registration procedures with a mean response rating of 7.64 (8). The results were supported by the internal consistency of the items with a reliability result of 0.881>0.70. The reliability of the results was further supported by the factor loadings which showed the variances explained by the items are adequate with a value > 0.70.

Research Question 3: What is the level of learners' satisfaction being met by DLI at the Learning Process Stage?

Table 4: Level of learners' satisfaction being met by DLI at the Learning Process Stage

Variable	Mean	STD	Scale	Remark	Factor Loading	Reliability
Exam Registration and Examination Procedures	6.99	2.080	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.854	0.865
Photo card	6.82	2.271	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.899	0.859
Course Advisers /Lecturers	6.73	2.480	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.780	0.850
Timetable	6.42	2.213	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.822	0.846
Docket	6.39	2.246	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.823	0.839
Invigilation	6.36	2.213	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.769	0.820
Quality Assurance	5.96	2.158	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.713	0.818
Physical Library	5.94	2.434	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.747	0.815
Study Centre Facilitation	5.77	2.306	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.713	0.813
Residential Programme and Accommodation	5.57	2.796	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.721	0.804
Online Interactions/Learning	5.56	2.232	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.727	0.803

Management System (LMS) and Continuous Assessment						
Exam materials	5.52	2.573	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.852	0.801
EXAM Results	5.52	2.573	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.852	0.792
E-Library	5.37	2.313	5	Neutral	0.715	0.791
Medical Centre Registration and Services received	5.29	2.848	5	Neutral	0.757	0.780
Working Conditions and Schooling	5.13	2.395	5	Neutral	0.793	0.776
Deferment, Reabsorption Process and Reabsorption fees	5.11	2.444	5	Neutral	0.726	0.770
Store Services	5.10	2.643	5	Neutral	0.758	0.762
Counselling	4.96	2.479	5	Neutral	0.774	0.757
Affordability of Tuition fees/Prices of Course materials	4.66	2.659	5	Neutral	0.754	0.753
Adequacy of Course materials/ resources	4.49	2.616	4	Somewhat Dissatisfied	0.799	0.748
Radio Lectures and Video lectures	4.26	2.566	4	Somewhat Dissatisfied	0.709	0.717
Pooled Mean	5.63	1.794	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.713	0.869

Source: Field Survey 2022. SD = Standard Deviation, Scale: 0 = Highly Dissatisfied (HD), 1 = Dissatisfied (D), 2 = Moderately Dissatisfied (MD), 3 = Slightly Dissatisfied (SD), 4 = Somewhat Dissatisfied (SWD), 5 = Neutral (N), 6 = Somewhat Satisfied (SWS), 7 = Slightly Satisfied (SS), 8 = Moderately Satisfied (MS), 9 = Satisfied (S), 10 = Highly Satisfied (HS).

Based on the pooled mean results, the learners in the process stage who participated in the survey indicated that they were slightly satisfied with the level of learners' satisfaction being met by DLI at the learning process stage with a mean response rating of 5.63 (6). The results were supported by the internal consistency of the items with a reliability result of 0.869>0.70. The reliability of the results was further supported by the factor loadings which showed the variances explained by the items are adequate with values > 0.70 respectively.

Evaluation of Learners' Satisfaction with Open Flexible and Distance
Learning Services at the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute

41

Research Question 4: What is the level of learners' satisfaction with the general assessment of DLI services at the Learning Process Stage?

Table 5: Extent General Assessment of DLI Services able to meet Learners Satisfaction

Variable	Mean	STD	Scale	Remark	Factor Loading	Reliability
Management/Staff	6.57	2.395	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.846	
DLI Physical Environment	6.54	2.235	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.866	
Technological Support	6.01	2.485	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.898	
Administrative Support	5.76	2.356	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.956	
Restrooms	5.02	2.771	5	Neutral	0.800	
Pooled Mean	5.98	2.133	6	Somewhat Satisfied	1.000	0.946

Source: Field Survey 2022. SD = Standard Deviation, Scale: 0 = Highly Dissatisfied (HD), 1 = Dissatisfied (D), 2 = Moderately Dissatisfied (MD), 3 = Slightly Dissatisfied (SD), 4 = Somewhat Dissatisfied (SWD), 5 = Neutral (N), 6 = Somewhat Satisfied (SWS), 7 = Slightly Satisfied (SS), 8 = Moderately Satisfied (MS), 9 = Satisfied (S), 10 = Highly Satisfied (HS).

Based on the pooled mean results, the learners in the process stage who participated in the survey indicated that they were somewhat satisfied with the general assessment of DLI services to meet learners' demands with a mean response rating of 5.98 (6). The results were supported by the internal consistency of the items with a reliability result of 0.946>0.70. The reliability of the results was further supported by the factor loadings which showed some variances explained by the items are adequate with values > 0.70 respectively.

Research Question 5: What is the amount of satisfaction received by learners at the Programme Completion Stage?

Table 6: Amount of Satisfaction Received by Learners at the Programme Completion Stage

Variable	Mean	STD	Scale	Remark	Factor Loading	Reliability
Result Procession/Convocation	7.74	1.879	8	Moderately Satisfied	0.780	0.892
Tracer Study	7.44	2.197	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.756	0.887
Technological Support	7.32	2.260	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.740	0.875
Clearance for Certificate/ Certificate collection	7.30	2.139	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.741	0.827
DLI Physical Environment	7.12	2.052	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.791	0.825
Management/Staff	7.04	2.129	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.858	0.821
Reference Letter	7.01	2.203	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.839	0.823
Administrative Support	6.70	2.268	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.797	0.813
DLI graduates and N.Y.S.C	6.46	2.848	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.710	0.818
Transcript	6.16	2.344	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.825	0.805
Restrooms	4.83	2.820	5	Neutral	0.650	0.789
Pooled Mean	6.87	1.780	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.993	0.928

Source: Field Survey 2022. SD = Standard Deviation, Scale: 0 = Highly Dissatisfied (HD), 1 = Dissatisfied (D), 2 = Moderately Dissatisfied (MD), 3 = Slightly Dissatisfied (SD), 4 = Somewhat Dissatisfied (SWD), 5 = Neutral (N), 6 = Somewhat Satisfied (SWS), 7 = Slightly Satisfied (SS), 8 = Moderately Satisfied (MS), 9 = Satisfied (S), 10 = Highly Satisfied (HS).

Based on the pooled mean results, the DLI graduates who participated in the survey indicated that they were slightly satisfied with the programme completion process with a mean response rating of 6.87 (7). The results were supported by the internal consistency of the items with a reliability result of 0.928>0.70. The reliability of the results was further supported by the factor loadings which showed variances explained by the items are adequate with values > 0.70.

Evaluation of Learners' Satisfaction with Open Flexible and Distance
Learning Services at the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute

43

Research Question 6: What is the feedback on the level of satisfaction with ODL services received by learners after graduation?

Table 7: Feedback on the Level of Satisfaction of ODL Services Received By Learners after Graduation

Variable	Mean	STD	Scale	Remark	Factor Loading	Reliability
My degree and my employer	7.48	2.383	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.930	
Competency and skills career advancement	7.40	2.232	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.937	
Collection of Certificate of Exemption	6.53	2.897	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.914	
Registration for Certificate of Exemption	6.52	3.076	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.949	
Desk officer for Certificate of Exemption	6.44	2.786	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.936	
Exemption of DLI graduates from N.Y.S.C.	6.33	3.398	6	Somewhat Satisfied	0.870	
Feedback	6.95	2.117	7	Slightly Satisfied	0.758	0.896

Source: Field Survey 2022. SD = Standard Deviation, Scale: 0 = Highly Dissatisfied (HD), 1 = Dissatisfied (D), 2 = Moderately Dissatisfied (MD), 3 = Slightly Dissatisfied (SD), 4 = Somewhat Dissatisfied (SWD), 5 = Neutral (N), 6 = Somewhat Satisfied (SWS), 7 = Slightly Satisfied (SS), 8 = Moderately Satisfied (MS), 9 = Satisfied (S), 10 = Highly Satisfied (HS).

The pooled mean results indicated that the DLI graduates who participated in the survey were slightly satisfied with the feedback on the level of satisfaction with ODL services with a mean response rating of 6.95 (7). The results were supported by the internal consistency of the items with a reliability result of 0.896>0.70. The reliability of the results was further supported by the factor loadings which showed variances explained by the items are adequate with values > 0.70.

Discussion

The research aimed to assess the extent of learner satisfaction at various stages of the educational programmes of the Distance Learning Institute (DLI) and to understand the factors influencing this satisfaction. The findings from the analysis of research questions shed light on the learner experience and the key factors affecting their satisfaction with DLI services. For Research Question 1, the findings of the study revealed that pre-enrolment learners are moderately satisfied with the initial stages of their DLI journey, including the form purchase/application process and registration and screening exercises. These results suggest that DLI has less room for improvement in satisfying learners at the pre-enrolment stage, but there is room for improvement in enhancing the satisfaction of prospective learners, especially concerning the help desk, information unit, and the visibility of DLI programmes. The high reliability and factor loadings of the data support the validity of these findings.

Similarly, the study showed that pre-enrolment learners are also moderately satisfied with the screening and registration procedures. The learners expressed higher satisfaction with the efficiency and effectiveness of these processes, suggesting that DLI's procedures in this regard are generally satisfactory. However, there is room for improvement in providing information and using notice boards for dissemination.

At the learning process stage, the study found that learners' satisfaction is at a slightly satisfied level, indicating learners' mean response on a scale of 10 to 7 suggesting that there is still room for improvement in this stage of their educational journey. The learners expressed satisfaction with certain aspects, such as exam registration and examination procedures, but there are areas, like the adequacy of course materials and radio lectures, where they are somewhat dissatisfied. This suggests that DLI needs to focus on enhancing the quality of course materials and the delivery of radio lectures to improve learner satisfaction. Regarding the general assessment of DLI services, the study found that learners in the process stage expressed a slightly satisfied level of satisfaction. This suggests that, overall, DLI services

are meeting their needs to some extent. However, there is room for further improvement, as learners indicated some areas of dissatisfaction, such as restrooms. The high reliability and factor loadings support the consistency and validity of these findings.

At the programme completion stage, the study revealed that DLI graduates are slightly satisfied with the programme completion process. They expressed satisfaction with aspects like result processing and convocation, but areas like restrooms received lower satisfaction ratings. This indicates that DLI should focus on improving the restroom as one of the facilities and related services to enhance graduate satisfaction. The level of satisfaction with ODL services received by learners after graduation indicated that DLI graduates are slightly satisfied. While they are content with factors like their degree and employer satisfaction and competency for career advancement, certain areas like the collection of a certificate of exemption received lower satisfaction ratings. This suggests that DLI should work on improving post-graduation services, particularly in the area of certification processes.

The findings from this study suggest that DLI has been moderately successful in satisfying learners at different stages of their educational journey. There are areas where satisfaction levels are higher, but there is consistent room for improvement across stages, including pre-enrolment, learning process, programme completion, and post-graduation services. The study highlights the need for DLI to focus on enhancing the quality of course materials, improving physical environments, and streamlining processes, such as certification and exemption procedures. Moreover, the study emphasises the importance of maintaining strong post-graduation support to meet the expectations of DLI graduates. The results also emphasise that DLI graduates tend to be more satisfied with DLI services, indicating that the institute's efforts to meet the needs and expectations of learners may become more effective as learners progress through their educational journey. However, continuous improvement in all stages is essential to ensure higher levels of satisfaction and to maintain DLI's reputation for delivering quality distance learning programmes.

Managerial Implications of the Findings

The managerial implications of the findings of this study are briefly highlighted below:

1. Continuous Improvement: The findings suggest that the administrators of UNILAG DLI should adopt a continuous improvement approach, focusing on specific areas of the educational journey where satisfaction levels are lower. It is crucial to address the concerns raised by learners and enhance services accordingly.

2. Customised Support at Each Stage of the Learner's Journey: Understanding the different stages of learners' journeys is vital. Tailoring support and services to the specific needs of pre-enrolment learners, those in the process stage, and graduates can help improve overall satisfaction.

3. Improved Communication: Effective communication is key to learner satisfaction. The DLI administration should ensure clear and timely communication regarding registration, course materials, procedures, and services.

4. Investment in Infrastructure and Facilities: Addressing concerns about facilities such as restrooms and other aspects of the physical environment can significantly impact the overall learner experience.

5. Monitoring and Feedback: UNILAG DLI should establish mechanisms for ongoing monitoring of learner satisfaction and collecting feedback can help identify issues and areas for improvement promptly.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings provide valuable insights for DLI to enhance its services and better meet the diverse needs and expectations of its learners. Specifically, the study examined the extent to which DLI has been able to satisfy learners in their quest for educational enhancement at the Pre-enrolment stage. Second, it assessed the level of satisfaction that learners received during the Screening and Registration Process. Third, the study investigated the level of learners' satisfaction being met by DLI at the Learning Process Stage.

Evaluation of Learners' Satisfaction with Open Flexible and Distance
Learning Services at the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute

47

Additionally, the study ascertained the level of satisfaction received by learners at the Programme Completion Stage as well as after graduation from UNILAG DLI. Finally, the study examined the extent to which DLI services generally have been able to meet learners' satisfaction. The findings of this study demonstrate that DLI services generally meet the satisfaction of learners but also reveal specific areas that require attention and improvement, especially at the learning process stage. To enhance overall satisfaction, DLI should consider refining its course materials, providing more effective support services, and enhancing the learning environment. Additionally, feedback mechanisms should be strengthened to maintain positive engagement with graduates and ensure their ongoing satisfaction. By addressing the identified areas of improvement and building on the strengths of the program, DLI can further enhance learner satisfaction and maintain its position as a reputable distance learning institution.

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