

## Students' Perception of Online Mode of Facilitation at the Apapa Centre of the National Open University of Nigeria

### La Perception des Etudiants du Mode de Facilitation en Ligne au Centre d'Apapa de la National Open University of Nigeria

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### Abstract

*The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) adopted the online mode of facilitation among other resources to educate its over 100, 000 students. Students' perceptions of the effectiveness of the online mode of facilitation at the NOUN could be multifaceted. This study employed a quantitative technique to examine the NOUN students' perceptions of the efficiency of the institution's online facilitation in meeting their educational expectations and to identify concerns that can have implications for appropriate intervention by the NOUN's support system. Data were obtained from 80 students at the Apapa Study Centre of NOUN using questionnaire instruments. The questionnaires were administered through systematic random sampling techniques to some selected categories of students across the 72 programs of the 8 faculties of the University. Statistical tools (frequencies and percentages) were used to analyse and determine the students' levels of awareness and effectiveness of the NOUN's mode of online facilitation in enhancing their overall educational pursuits and online learning experiences. The study findings revealed that students' experiences of the*

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*NOUN mode of online facilitation have enhanced their learning efficiency, which enables them to engage in their studies/research at their convenience time, study on their own, and enhance their proficiency in the use of computers and online learning experiences. Nonetheless, there is a need for the NOUN's authorities to continually improve their support systems to enhance the opinions of a few students whose perceptions were relatively negative about the institution's mode of online facilitation.*

**Keywords:** Online facilitation, students' perception, online learning, students' support systems.

### **Résumé**

*L'Université nationale ouverte du Nigeria (NOUN) a adopté le mode de facilitation en ligne, entre autres ressources, pour éduquer ses plus de 100 000 étudiants. Les perceptions des étudiants sur l'efficacité de ce mode de facilitation pourraient être diverses. Cette étude a utilisé une approche quantitative pour examiner les perceptions des étudiants de la NOUN quant à l'efficacité de la facilitation en ligne de l'institution pour répondre à leurs attentes éducatives et pour identifier les préoccupations ayant des implications pour une intervention appropriée du système de soutien de la NOUN. Les données ont été obtenues auprès de 80 étudiants du centre d'études d'Apapa de la NOUN à l'aide d'instruments de questionnaire. Les questionnaires ont été administrés par des techniques d'échantillonnage systématique aléatoire à certaines catégories sélectionnées d'étudiants dans les 72 programmes des 8 facultés de l'Université. Des outils statistiques (fréquences et pourcentages) ont été utilisés pour analyser et déterminer le niveau de conscience des étudiants et l'efficacité du mode de facilitation en ligne de la NOUN dans l'amélioration de leurs poursuites éducatives globales et de leurs expériences d'apprentissage en ligne. Les résultats de l'étude ont révélé que les expériences des étudiants avec le mode de facilitation en ligne de la NOUN ont amélioré leur efficacité d'apprentissage, leur permettant de s'engager dans leurs études/recherches à leur convenance, d'étudier de manière autonome et d'améliorer leur maîtrise de l'informatique et de l'apprentissage en ligne. Cependant, il est nécessaire que les autorités de la NOUN améliorent continuellement leurs systèmes de soutien pour renforcer les opinions de quelques étudiants dont les perceptions étaient relativement négatives à l'égard du mode de facilitation en ligne de l'institution.*

**Mots-clés :** Facilitation en ligne, perception des étudiants, apprentissage en ligne, systèmes de soutien aux étudiants.

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## **Introduction**

The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) was first established in 2002 but started full operations in 2003. It offers an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode of online facilitation. The NOUN is unique as it is the only single mode of ODL federal institution in Nigeria. The online facilitation mode of learning is practicable in the multi-campus system, otherwise known as study Centres (Okopi, 2010; NOUN-DMIS, 2020). The ODL and NOUN mode of operations is flexible and allows students to study at their convenience such as when, where, how, and duration they choose to study. The flexibility of the NOUN programs allows students to study more easily while fulfilling commitments to work and studying as well as attending to routine family or societal demands (Ipaye, 2010; NOUN, 2018). Thus, those living in remote areas, distant places, bad topography, limited transport systems access, and prison/refugee camps can study at their pace and convenience and undertake courses that would otherwise be inaccessible to them when compared to the circular system of education (Okopi, 2010; Agbebaku and Majebi, 2020; Mather and Sarkans, 2018, NOUN-DMIS, 2021).

Furthermore, the NOUN online mode of facilitation provides a variety of study opportunities for programs such as academic pursuit, technical/vocational, personal, and professional development, and basic education to other categories of students such as young adults, adults returning to learning, those preparing to enter trades and other professions, but are interested in acquiring new work-related skills (Ipaye, 2007; NOUN-DMIS, 2021). The NOUN mode of study and facilitation involves a rather low degree of physical interactivity between teachers/tutors and learners/students. Thus, this is part of the features of the ODL services in the separation of learners and teachers in time, space, and place (COL, 2002; NOUN-DMIS, 2021). Some minimal levels of interaction are still considered vital in the ODL single-mode institutions like that of NOUN. These levels of contact are in the areas of screening for entry certificates, examination, clearance, and graduation (Ipaye, 2007; 2010; Okopi, 2010; Agbebaku, 2018).

However, the commencement of the online system of facilitation perhaps because of the COVID-19 pandemic that necessitated social restrictions of persons has further generated diverse perceptions, and inquiries among students at the over 100 Centres offering various programs at different levels (certificates, diplomas, undergraduates, and postgraduate) at the NOUN study Centres (NOUN-DMIS, 2021). It is important to ascertain the extent to which the NOUN's support systems have aided the effective delivery of its ODL and the mode of facilitation from the perspectives of students who benefit from its services. This is necessary, as no previous study has been conducted in this regard, especially in the context of a major study Centre (the Apapa Centre, Lagos State, Nigeria) which is one of the Centres with the largest population of students in the institution. These can help to unravel where there are needs for improvements that can further enhance service delivery to students and provide answers to their questions. Therefore, the objective of this study is achieved by asking and analysing the following questions from the students' perspectives: (a) what are the students' levels of awareness of the mode of online facilitation at the NOUN? (b) what are the students' levels of perceptions of how the NOUN mode of online facilitation enhances their studies/research?; (c) what are the students' levels of perception on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation assists them to study on their own?; (d) what are the students' levels of perception on how the availability of the NOUN mode of online facilitation allows them to continue their education?; (e) What are the students' levels of perception on how the usage of computer and internet facilities have helped them to improve their learning in the NOUN mode of online facilitation?, and (f) what are the students' levels of perception on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation encourages them to study at their convenient time?

## **Conceptual Analyses**

### **Perception of Students about Open and Distance Learning**

The term perception in this study connotes awareness about a program to be accomplished such as the mode of online facilitation of the NOUN. Prospective students have diverse thoughts about the

operations of the ODL system. They are obliged to know about the processes and mode of operations of the NOUN programs and why NOUN programs differ from the circular or conventional education system before embarking on the programs. Before inquiries about NOUN programs, a few of the prospective students believed that there are limited differences between the ODL-NOUN mode of study and the conventional education system. Thus, the difference between the NOUN's mode of study via online facilitation and the conventional methods is in the mode of service delivery of non-face-to-face with students. Inquiries about the ODL and NOUN operations and mode of study can be made easier with the aid of e-facilitation (Okopi, 2010; Agbebaku and Majebi, 2020; NOUN-DMIS, 2021).

### **E-Facilitation**

E-facilitation refers to the different types of online dialogue that are facilitated and managed. The e-mail-based interaction is one of the most frequently used types of online dialogue that enhances the ODL and NOUN mode of online facilitation. E-mail services are a direct form of communicating with students since messages go straight to the inbox of the participating students. Thus, the services of e-facilitation have tremendously helped students in their quest for knowledge about the NOUN programs. In addition, messages about the mode of online facilitation are sent to prospective and continuing learners through the Visitor's Information Call Centre (VICC) and the LSS system of the NOUN (NOUN, 2014; Agbebaku, 2018; NOUN-DMIS, 2021).

### **Online Mode and Non-Face-to-Face-Facilitation**

The online mode of studying and the non-face-to-face facilitation are similar, and these two concepts can be used interchangeably. This dual mode of studying is what is operational in the ODL and NOUN modes of study. The online medium and e-facilitation accommodate all categories of students, without limit to the number of requests by students' time and distance (NOUN, 2014). With the aid of internet-enabled devices including laptops, desktops, mobile phones, and other devices, students can access information, present research findings, study with ease, at their convenience, and participate in examinations

from anywhere (Agbebaku, 2018; LSS, 2021; NOUN-DMIS, 2021). These modes of online facilitation tend to enhance virtual learning interactions between students and facilitators through various internet-enabled platforms (NOUN, 2014; Agbebaku, 2018; NOUN-DMIS, 2021).

### **Learner Support System and Learners Content Management System**

The services of the directorates of Learner Support System (LSS) and Learner Content Management System (LCMS) play an integral part in the ODL and NOUN process. They provide technical, administrative, and counseling support for facilitators and students to enhance the online mode of facilitation of the NOUN. The LSS provides the students with the necessary learning support services that enhance the aims and objectives of the operations of the NOUN-ODL mode of service delivery. These include attending to pre-admission inquiries, orientation, registration, counseling awareness, accessibility of course materials, e-library, e-laboratory e-seminars/research proposal, and project defense presentation (NOUN, 2013; Agbebaku, 2018; Agbebaku and Majebi, 2020; NOUN-DMIS, 2021). On the other hand, the LCMS provides technical support services that enhance the NOUN online mode of facilitation to students. These technical supports are usually through the medium of the instructional delivery components (see plate 1) in the areas of support to facilitators (internal and external) and students. The LCMS also provides platforms for recording live sessions (instructional videos, online facilitation classes, and interactive sessions) and resolving technical challenges (LCMS, 2021). Plate 1 shows the instructional delivery component of the LCMS (NOUN, 2013; Agbebaku and Majebi, 2020; NOUN-DMIS, 2021; LCMS, 2021).



**Plate 1:** Instructional Delivery Component  
**Source:** LCMS, 2021.

## Research Methods

The area of study is the NOUN's Apapa Study Centre, Lagos. The study Centre serves as a replica of other NOUN study Centres across the country. The Centre is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest after the Agidigbi (now known as the Lagos study Centre) in terms of student population and level of security measures among the other 7 study Centres in Lagos state. This is because the Centre is situated within one of the training schools of the Nigerian Navy Service (NNS), Quorra of the Naval Western Command, located along Dockyard Road Apapa, Lagos State. The study Centre's student population was 2,477 (NOUN-DMIS, 2021). The major role of study Centres is to facilitate interaction between students and the operations of the NOUN (Agbebaku and Majebi, 2020; NOUN-DMIS, 2021). The population size (2,477) comprises the study student population across the 8 Faculties and Departments of the different disciplines and programs of studies of NOUN at the time of the survey (2020).

The study sample comprised 80 students from the Apapa study Centre who were randomly selected. The Apapa study Centre was chosen for the study because it is one of the largest hubs of study for civilians and military personnel, a conducive learning environment, and a highly secure environment for learning. The research design adopted for the study was a survey approach involving the use of questionnaire administration. A total of 72 programs are offered in the 8 Faculties and Departments of NOUN. These programs of certification comprise

certificates, diplomas, first degrees, postgraduate diplomas, and postgraduate courses/programs. A total of Eighty (80) copies of questionnaires were designed and administered to students across the 8 Faculties and Departments. The essence of the spread of questionnaire administration across these programs is to validate the objective of the research on the assessment of the levels of student's perceptions of the mode of facilitation of NOUN programs with emphases on the mode of learning and facilitation. The questionnaire was structured in line with the objective of the study to solicit information on students' perception of the mode of facilitation of NOUN. The questionnaire was divided into 2 sections (i.e., A and B). Section A solicits the demographic details of the respondents, including sex, age, marital status, educational qualifications, rank/position, and working experience. Section B of the questionnaire was structured into 11 questions to examine students' levels of agreement with the mode of facilitation in the NOUN using the Likert-5-Point scale: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A) Disagreed (D) Strongly Disagreed (SD), and Undecided (U). Eighty copies of the questionnaires were administered for one week toward the commencement of the NOUN 2020\_2 Semester Examination. On each day of questionnaire administration, a default number of 2 copies were administered per day across each of the 8 Faculty for 5 days, based on the number of students on the ground.

This results in a sub-total of 16 copies per the 8 faculties and 10 copies of the questionnaires were administered in the one-week duration for the questionnaire administration exercise at the study Centre. The essence of the equitable distribution of questionnaires is to have a holistic view of the student's perception of the ODL and NOUN mode of facilitation across the study Centre in Nigeria. The period of questionnaire administration was timely and was carried out immediately after the outbreak of the global COVID-19 Pandemic in February 2021. This timing was ideal because students would have gotten a feel of the global lockdown from the COVID-19 Pandemic and resumed studying and preparing for the semester examination. Data from various sources were analysed with the use of descriptive statistical techniques of mean frequency and percentage. Thus, the distribution and administration of questionnaires across the eight (8)



faculties and thirty (30) departments was presented in Table 1 and Table 2. Table 1 shows details of the number of students per faculty, the total number of programs offered for certification, and questionnaire administration per day at the study Centre. Table 2 shows the number of departments under each faculty at the NOUN.

**Table 1: Questionnaires Administration across the 8 Faculties of NOUN.**

S/N	Faculty	No. of Student Per Faculty	Total Number of Programs Offered per Faculty	Number of Questionnaire Administration					
				Mon Day 1	Tues Day 2	Wed Day 3	Thurs Day 4	Fri Day 5	
1	Sciences	555	12	2	2	2	2	2	10
2	Social Science	754	12	2	2	2	2	2	10
3	Agric. Science	08	03	2	2	2	2	2	10
4	Education	197	15	2	2	2	2	2	10
5	Arts	38	09	2	2	2	2	2	10
6	Management Sciences	773	17	2	2	2	2	2	10
7	Health Sciences	83	03	2	2	2	2	2	10
8	Law	69	01	2	2	2	2	2	10
<b>S-Total Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2,477</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>80</b>
						<b>80</b>			

Source: NOUN DMIS, (2021).

**Table 2:** Faculty and Department of NOUN

S/N	Faculty	Department
1	Agricultural Science	(a)Crop and Soil Science, (b)Agricultural Extension and Economics, and (c)Animal Science and Fisheries
2	Arts	(a)English, Linguistic, (b)Foreign and Nigerian Languages, and (c)Religious Studies
3	Education	(a)Arts and Social Science Education, (b)Education Foundation, and (c)Science Education
4	Health Science	(a)Public Health Science, (b)Environmental Health, and (c)Nursing
5	Law	(a)Law
6	Management Sciences	(a)Financial Studies, (b)Business Administration, (c)Entrepreneurial Studies, and (d)Public Administration
7	Sciences	(a)Biological Science, (b)Chemistry, (c)Computer Science, (d)Environmental Science, (e)Mathematics, and (f)Physics
8	Social Science	(a)Tourism Studies, (b)Peace and Conflict Resolution, (c)Criminology and Security Studies, (d)Economics, (e)Political Science, (f)Development Studies, and (g)Mass Communication and Journalism.

**Source:** NOUN DMIS, (2021).

## Results

The results and discussion on the student levels of perceptions of the NOUN mode of online facilitation at the NOUN's ASC, Lagos are presented in Table 3 based on the 11 items used for the survey.

### Results Presentation

**Table 3:** Breakdown Analysis of the Students' Perception of the Mode of Facilitation of NOUN.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	U
1	Students' levels of awareness about online facilitation mode of learning	47(58.75)	13(16.25)	5(6.25)	10(12.50)	5(6.25)
2	Students' levels of agreement on whether the NOUN mode of online facilitation enhances their learning efficiency.	45(56.00)	10(12.50)	15(18.75)	-	10(12.50)
3	Students' levels of agreement on whether their experience of the NOUN mode of online facilitation enhances their studies/research.	40(50.0)	20(25.0)	5(6.25)	10(12.5)	5(6.25)
4	Students' levels of agreement on whether their experience of the NOUN mode of online facilitation would enable them to recommend NOUN program(s) to others.	43(53.75)	22(27.5)	5(6.25)	10(12.5)	-
5	Students' levels of agreement on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation assists them to study on their own.	49(61.25)	16(20.00)	5(6.25)	10(12.50)	-

6	Students' levels of agreement on how the availability of the NOUN mode of online learning allows them to continue their education.	41(51.25)	24(30.00)	10(12.25)	5(6.25)	
7	Students' levels of agreement on whether the NOUN mode of online facilitation allows them to work and study.	46(57.50)	14(17.50)	5(6.25)	10(12.5)	5(6.25)
8	Students' levels of agreement on how their experience of the NOUN mode of online facilitation has improved their proficiency in computer usage.	39(48.75)	21(26.25)	10(12.50)	10(12.50)	-
9	Students' levels of agreement on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation has helped in boosting their academic performance.	45(56.25)	15(18.75)	10(12.5)	-	10(12.5)
10	Students' levels of agreement on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation encourages them to study at their convenience time.	30(37.5)	25(31.25)	5(6.25)	20(25.0)	-
11	Students' levels of agreement on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation enables them to get used to the online mode of learning.	35(43.75)	15(18.75)	10(12.5)	10(12.5)	10(12.5)

**Key:** Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD), and Undecided (U).

**Source:** Authors' Field Survey (2021).

The presentation of the results from Table 3 shows the analyses of students' perceptions regarding the NOUN mode of online facilitation. The results from Item 1 on students' levels of awareness about the online facilitation mode of learning show that many (75%) of the respondents agreed with this statement, while about 19% of the respondents disagreed. Despite these positive responses, this finding suggests that there is a need for the NOUN's support systems to create more awareness about its online mode of facilitation to reach the few students who are unaware of it, for the enhancement of their learning. The results from Item 2 on the students' levels of agreement on whether the NOUN mode of online facilitation enhances their learning efficiency revealed that many (about 69%) of respondents agreed with this statement. However, only about 19% of the respondents disagreed. This result suggests that there is a need for the University to unravel and address the concerns of a few students who require improvement in online facilitation.

The results from Item 3 on students' levels of agreement on whether their experience of the NOUN mode of online facilitation enhances their studies/research revealed that many (75%) of the respondents agreed with this statement. However, about 19% of the respondents do not agree with the statement. This result also suggests the need for the NOUN's authority to unravel and address the concerns of a few students who seek an improved experience in its online mode of facilitation to enhance their studies.

The results from Item 4 on students' levels of agreement on whether their experience of the NOUN mode of online facilitation would enable them to recommend NOUN program(s) to others revealed that many (over 81%) agreed with the statement. However, about 19% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This suggests that there is still a need for the NOUN's authority to identify and address the concerns of a few students who would not recommend the University to others, even though there are many others who would, based on their experiences of its mode of online facilitation.

The results from Item 5 on Students' levels of agreement on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation assists them in studying on their

own revealed that many (over 81%) of the respondents agreed with this statement. However, about 19% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This also suggests the need for the NOUN's authorities to identify the concerns of the few students who do not agree with the statement with a view to addressing their concerns.

The results from Item 6 on students' levels of agreement on how the availability of the NOUN mode of online learning allows them to continue their education revealed that many (over 81%) of the respondents agreed with the statement. However, about 19% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This result suggests the need for the NOUN's authority to unravel why some students do not think its mode of online facilitation allows them to continue with their education, even though they are enrolled in NOUN's programs.

The results from Item 7 on Students' levels of agreement on whether the NOUN mode of online facilitation allows them to work and study revealed that many (75%) of the respondents agreed with this statement. However, about 19% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This result suggests the need for the NOUN's authorities to identify why a few students are unable to work and study even though the NOUN's system of online facilitation enables them to do so.

The results from Item 8 on Students' levels of agreement on how their experience of the NOUN mode of online facilitation has improved their proficiency in computer usage revealed that many (75%) of the respondents agreed with is statement. However, 25% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This result suggests the need for the NOUN authorities to consider organising practical computer training sessions for students who need to improve/develop their computer skills to enhance their online facilitation experiences. The results from Item 9 on Students' levels of agreement on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation has helped boost their academic performance revealed that many (75%) of the respondents agreed with this statement, while about 13% of them disagreed. Still, this result suggests the need for the NOUN's authorities to further enhance the academic performance of its students by improving its online mode of facilitation.

The results from Item 10 on students' levels of agreement on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation encourages them to study at their convenience time show that many (about 69%) of the respondents agreed with this statement, while over 31% of them disagreed. This result suggests the need for the NOUN's authorities to develop training sessions on time management for students and remind them to access recorded online facilitation sessions when they are unable to attend scheduled lessons.

The results from Item 11 on Students' levels of agreement on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation enables them to get used to the online mode of learning revealed that many (about 63%) of the respondents agreed with this statement, while 25% of them disagreed. This result suggests the need for the NOUN's authorities to introduce training sessions to help some students have improved experiences of online modes of facilitation to enhance their interests in online learning.

## **Discussion**

Research Question 1: a) what are the students' levels of awareness of the mode of online facilitation at the NOUN?

The study revealed that a significant number of the students are aware of the mode of online facilitation at the NOUN and that it enhances their learning efficiency. However, a few students disagreed. These findings are consistent with the study of Mather and Sarkans (2018) which suggests that students are familiar with online facilitation attested to improvement in their learning. Nonetheless, there is a need for the NOUN's authority to improve its awareness of its online mode of facilitation, including organising programmes to educate/reach students who may not be aware of it, for the enhancement of their learning.

Research Question 2: b) what are the students' levels of perceptions of how the NOUN mode of online facilitation enhances their studies/research?



The study revealed that most of the students perceive the NOUN's mode of online facilitation as helpful toward their studies/research. Consequently, the study further revealed that most of the students would recommend NOUN's programmes to prospective students. This shows that NOUN's online facilitation is beneficial to many students for them to be willing to recommend University's programmes to prospective students. To consolidate these positive students' perceptions, the study suggests the need for the NOUN's authority to develop measures that can help to regularly evaluate the perceptions of students to identify concerns that may require appropriate measures to improve their studies via their online facilitation experiences.

Research Question 3: c) what are the students' levels of perception on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation assists them to study on their own?

The study revealed that a substantial number of the students affirmed that the NOUN's mode of online facilitation enables them to study on their own. However, the opinions of a few other students varied. These findings are consistent with the study of Agbebaku and Majebi (2020) which found that although online facilitation enables students to study on their own, they would require the regular presence of online facilitators during scheduled online sessions. This study's findings imply that the NOUN's authorities still need to ensure that facilitators attend their online sessions promptly and participate in training and retraining sessions that can help to improve more students' ability to study on their own.

Research Question 4: d) what are the students' levels of perception on how the availability of the NOUN mode of online facilitation allows them to continue their education?

The findings reveal that a significant number of students can continue their education, study, and work because of the NOUN's mode of online facilitation. Still, the study findings suggest that the NOUN's authorities need to further improve their mode of online facilitation by identifying and addressing other students' concerns to enable them to continue with their education.

Research Question 5: e) What are the students' levels of perception on how the usage of computers and access to the internet has helped them to improve their learning in the NOUN mode of online facilitation?

The study findings revealed that many of the students affirmed that their usage of computers and access to the internet has enhanced their learning and boosted their academic performance because of the NOUN's mode of online facilitation. These findings corroborate Mather and Sarkan's (2018) study which suggests improvement in students' online learning because of their use of information and communication technologies tools. The finding of this study is not surprising because Borup et al. (2019) state the positive aspects of online facilitation too, especially regarding the training of facilitators and tutors on information and communications tools to enhance the online learning experiences of students. Despite this positive result, there is a need for the NOUN's authorities to organise scheduled training sessions for students who require computer appreciation skills to enhance their learning and academic performance when participating in the institution's online mode of facilitation. This is in addition to the continuous training and retraining of facilitators and tutors to improve their capacities and students' experiences.

Research Question 6: f) what are the students' levels of perception on how the NOUN mode of online facilitation encourages them to study at their convenience time?

The study revealed that a significant number of the students indicated that the NOUN's mode of online facilitation enables them to study at their convenience time and get used to the online mode of learning. Yet, it is important that the NOUN's authorities continue to make its mode of online facilitation attractive to encourage more students to study at their convenience time and become more familiar with the online learning system of education.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study has established that the online facilitation at the National Open University of N has given many students invaluable benefits, even though there is room for improvement as regards online course delivery. To consolidate the positive perceptions that most students hold about the University's mode of online facilitation, and to improve the perceptions of a few students whose opinions differ, the University can introduce a pre- and post-semester-based survey to assess the expectations and experiences of students for necessary intervention. This study contributes to the existing literature on online facilitation and open and distance learning and can serve as a guide for other studies in the subject area. Nevertheless, as this study's findings are peculiar to the Apapa study Centre, the study recommends that similar studies be conducted at other key and small study Centres of the NOUN and similar institutions to compare the opinions of students, including identifying their concerns for the institutions' requisite intervention(s).

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