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A survey of students satisfaction of institutional processes at the National Open University of Nigeria

Une Enquête sur la satisfaction des étudiants à l'égard des processus institutionnels à la National Open University of Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) students' perception of the University's services. Specifically, it explored students' level of satisfaction with the five core aspects of the services provided by the institution of learning: admission and registration, course materials, Information Communication Technology (ICT), Learner support, and Assessment and evaluation. The study adopted the cross-sectional descriptive survey research design implemented expost facto. A total of 2,471 learners which were selected through stratified random sampling method from 12 Study Centres in the National Open University of Nigeria participated in the study. Data were collected with the use of a self-developed 5-point scale of the Likert structure (r=0.82). Data were analysed using selected descriptive statistics. Results revealed students' satisfaction with admission and registration processes, quality of course materials and assessment and evaluation processes but perceived the ICT infrastructure and Learners' Support Services as highly satisfactory. Based on these findings, recommendations point to the effect that the few gaps identified in the study should be used to improve institutional processes and future strategic plans while every staff involved in the critical areas identified should pay greater attention to the issues towards a culture of quality assurance practices in NOUN.

Keywords: Student assessment, Satisfaction, Institutional Processes, Learners' Support Services, Open and distance learning

Résumé

Cette étude a examiné la perception qu'ont les étudiants de la National Open

University of Nigeria (NOUN) des services de cette université. Plus précisément, il a examiné le niveau de satisfaction des étudiants concernant cinq aspects fondamentaux des services fournis par l'institution d'apprentissage: admission et inscription, matériel pédagogique, technologies de l'information et de la communication (TIC), soutien aux apprenants et évaluation. L'étude a adopté le modèle de recherche descriptif transversal mis en œuvre expost facto. Un total de 2,471 apprenants qui ont été sélectionnés par la méthode d'échantillonnage aléatoire stratifiée dans 12 centres d'étude de la National Open University of Nigeria ont participé à l'étude. Les données ont été collectées à l'aide d'une échelle à 5 points auto-développée de la structure Likert (r = 0.82). Les données ont été analysées à l'aide de statistiques descriptives sélectionnées. Les résultats ont révélé la satisfaction des étudiants à l'égard des processus d'admission et d'inscription, de la qualité du matériel pédagogique et des processus d'évaluation, mais ils ont jugé l'infrastructure des TICs et les services d'appui aux apprenants très satisfaisants. Sur la base de ces résultats, des recommandations indiquent que les quelques lacunes identifiées dans l'étude devraient être utilisées pour améliorer les processus institutionnels et les futurs plans stratégiques, tandis que le personnel impliqué dans les domaines critiques identifiés devrait accorder une plus grande attention aux problèmes vers une culture des pratiques d'assurance qualité à NOUN.

Mots-clés : évaluation des étudiants, satisfaction, processus institutionnels, services de soutien aux apprenants, enseignement ouvert et à distance

Background and Literature

Students' satisfaction has been contextualized as short-term attitude demonstrated as a result of their evaluation of schooling activities, educational experience and facilities provided for learning (Weerasinghe, Lalitha & Fernando, 2017). The construct could be taken to explain the extent to which students find various learning processes, experiences and outcomes favourable (Elliott & Shin, 2002). It is a quality principle for measuring students' perceptions and achievement to effectively predict lifelong learning. Satisfaction generally could be taken as pleasure derivable from certain activity especially by subjectively measuring performance against their expectation. When students are seen and treated as customers in educational institutions, necessary observance must be paid to their satisfaction as they are the essential reasons for the existence of the institution and they deserve also to be treated as customers.

The population of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) students in different parts of the world is staggering. In the National Open University of Nigeria as an example, the university gazetted on 27th July 1983, suspended on

25th April, 1984 and resuscitated in 2002, is now a leading provider of ODL in Africa. It provides enhanced, functional, flexible, highly accessible, quality and cost-effective education in Nigeria. As at 2019, it has 78 Study Centres with a student population of over 500,000. Out of this number, about 150,000 students are active (NOUN, 2019). This huge demand for university education though the open and distance window places enormous challenge at the doorstep of the institution especially with the enrolment figure increasing yearly and according to Tenebe (2013), the carrying capacity is infinite.

Considering the special position occupied by academic institutions, Khurshid and Arshad (2012) posit that higher educational institutions have a mandate of imparting employable skills, lifelong learning opportunities and training students for capacity to adapt to changing life circumstances. The successful completion of students in their programmes of study depends on the quality of enhancement afforded the entire process of students' education. The latter is indeed, the major reason for the existence of educational institutions generally and tertiary institutions of learning specifically. This underscores the very essence of educational institutions' tracking of students' level of satisfaction within the scope of learning environment provided (Yusoff, McLeay & Woodruffe-Burto, 2015).

The higher education industry is mostly influenced by globalization waves of the 21st century. This, no doubt, has increased competitiveness among tertiary institutions in their adoption of business-like strategies not only for distinguishing themselves from other providers of the same set or related services but also to attract students, retain them throughout the period of study and ensure the successful completion of the largest proportion possible. Satisfying students' needs and expectations are important and these have the tendency of propagating the strength of the institution among the populace and attract more prospective students into enrolling for the institution's academic programmes (Weerasinghe, Lalitha & Fernando, 2017).

Satisfaction, in its general sense, is a kind of feeling tending towards fulfillment of some expected end results (Hon, 2002). An individual becomes satisfied upon their achievement of certain expectations and an intentional accomplishment of tasks may also result in a disposition of contentment and comfort with the particular activity (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). Satisfaction can also be described either as a feeling of comfort and pleasure or pain or disappointment emanating from a comparison of subjective performance based on perceived expectation (Kotler & Keller, 2012). From this analysis, as customers get satisfied with services which meet their expectations (Petruzzellis, D'Uggento, & Romanazzi, 2006), students need to derive the best measure of satisfaction, perceived or real, from their learning environment and experiences.

Open and distance education has become an acceptable strategy across the world for providing higher education to the teeming population of

citizens (Ogunlela & Ogunleye, 2014). So much efforts and accomplishments have been made and documented, acquired and used in the area of technology development, software development and a variety of course material development templates. However, evidence based decisions from the students' who are the customers and consumers of the learning facilities were reported as missing (Harrison, Gemmell & Reed, 2014). The effectiveness of the ODL instructional template and the institutional processes as they relate to acceptability to students, therefore, remain unclear.

Measuring student satisfaction was earlier undertaken using basic satisfaction frameworks. Higher education-specific satisfaction models, however, have later been invented and are currently being used (Weerasinghe, Lalitha & Fernando, 2017). These models are useful to tertiary educational institutions as they assist the stakeholders in the identifications of the strong and weak points in the educational process with the ultimate goal of fixing aspects requiring improvement. Satisfaction ratings transcend mere teaching assessments and include broader aspects of students' overall learning experience. Student satisfaction is directly related to programme completion rates and grade achievement (Grade Point Average). Students who reported higher levels of satisfaction after their period of study were discovered to have attained better grades and were able to have completed their programme earlier than students who were less satisfied with the institutional processes (BC College and Institute Student Outcomes, 2003).

Elliot and Shin (2002) define student satisfaction as their disposition towards educational outcomes and experience based on their earlier expectation. Therefore, student satisfaction depends on students' experiences and performance in an educational setting and its services (Mukhtar, Anwar, Ahmed & Baloch, 2015; Ogunleye, 2007). Perusing literature on student satisfaction related studies, it was found that Alvis and Rapaso (2006) had probed into the extent to which a Portuguese university image influenced students' satisfaction and their loyalty. In that study, it was reported that the independent variable had direct and indirect effects on satisfaction as well as loyalty. In a related but different study, Nasser et al (Nasser, Khoury & Abouchedid, 2008) investigated university students' knowledge about services and programme as well as their measure of satisfaction at the Lebanese Catholic College. Students with higher awareness of university procedure and expectations held greater educational value and demonstrated greater satisfaction.

In another dimension, Ogunleye (2009b) and Hanssen and Solvoll (2015) held that the prestige of an educational institution, the quality of its environment and facilities greatly determined students' satisfaction. Also, students are regarded as consumers in higher education setting (Thomas & Galambos, 2004). University students' satisfaction is, therefore, extremely important and can determine institutional success. University students'

satisfaction with services rendered by the institution has a lot of individual, institutional and social implications. While it aids students' retention, determines level of academic success, it also has the capacity for boosting the reputation as well as financial status of the institution. Lo (2010) on his own averred that satisfaction could be responsible for improved effectiveness of learning among students during specific learning activity and the programme as a whole.

Student satisfaction is a component of institutions' quality determinant and needs to be given a pride of place in the course evaluation. In blended learning settings, it is an end product that deserves being monitored (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). According to Moore (2005) while relying on the Sloan Consortium, there are five core segments in the framework for the quality of online education. These are student satisfaction, course accessibility, faculty satisfaction, instructional effectiveness and programme efficiency. A number of studies have also confirmed that student satisfaction determines stakeholders' motivation and good performance (Sahin & Shelley, 2008; Wickersham & McGee, 2008). The concept, therefore, cannot be over emphasised in the context of quality evaluation and social acceptability measure.

Determinants of students' satisfaction are student centered learning activity and overall effectiveness of instruction and the duo, to a large extent, determines students' overall disposition with their educational experience (Elliot, 2002). In a different but related study, Bolton, Kannan and Bramlett (2000) pitched loyalty and experience with customer retention and proposing that the latter were determined by the former. The study of Szymanski and Henard (2001) is also instructive for the justification of satisfaction as a vital instrument for the success of any organization, business or educational. To be effective, learning environments have to be redesigned or modified such that learning activities could actually birth learning outcomes desired in the students (Akinsola & Ogunleye, 2003; Hersh, 2007). To this end, good course guidelines would necessarily be formulated and deployed for students learning (Nolen, 2003).

Other findings such as those of Wickersham and McGee (2008) show that principles used for designing learning activities and other institutional factors are linked with student satisfaction. The authors recommended reflexive instructional design that supports deeper learning for improved student satisfaction. Further, Bolliger and Erichsen (2013) investigated differences in students' satisfaction with blended and online learning environments across different students' personality traits and reported that learners were quite satisfied with instructional delivery and the entire programme of study in both environments. All these go to show the quantum of importance associated with student satisfaction in open and distance learning environments. Several other authors worked in online and blended learning

environments with supporting evidence of the need for instructors, facilitators and programme designers to ensure stimulating learning environments for effective learning (Bolliger & Erichsen, 2013; Ginns & Ellis, 2007; Harrington & Loffredo, 2010; Holley & Dobson, 2008; Bolliger & Halupa, 2012; Ke & Kwak, 2013). This also requires reflective practices on instructional delivery processes (Ogunleye & Agoro, 2013).

Efforts that have been suggested towards ameliorating instructional systems that fall short of the desired level of student satisfaction include going back to the drawing board to redesign the programme adequately (Bozarth, Chapman & LaMonica, 2004; Ogunleye, 2012 Ogunleye, 2019); choosing the best of options in terms of instructional models and other incentives that can improve perceptions and attitudes on online students (Braun, 2008); improved personal interaction and learner-centred activities (Chang & Smith, 2008); frequent training for both academic and support staff and effective library services (Dempsey, Fisher, Wright & Anderton, 2008); and an improvement in students skills in technology use and attitude (Koroghlanian & Brinkerhoff, 2008; Ogunleye (2009a). Indeed, online students require a sound and compulsory orientation at the initial entry point into the online learning environment. Hence, educators have been advised to utilize findings from student satisfaction studies to develop an efficient policy on orientation programmes for students and new staff (Kelso, 2011). This has the tendency to make the university environment supportive of students towards successful academic pursuits.

Statement of the Problem

Results of students' assessment of quality in educational provisions, models and delivery is one major aspect in the determination of the extent to which higher educational institutions are living up to expectations of the society that established them. Indeed, students as critical stakeholders have to adjudge the various educational activities as being of good quality. In open and distance education, this is referred to as customer satisfaction and it has great roles to play in the quality assurance of institutional processes which ultimately helps to ensure achievement of set goals and objectives. This study investigated National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) students' perception of the University's services. Specifically, students' satisfaction of five core aspects of the institution's services: admission and registration, course materials, Information Communication Technology (ICT), Learner support, and Assessment and evaluation were involved in the investigation.

Research Questions

Answers were sought to the following research questions.

1. What is the level of satisfaction of students with the quality of admission and registration processes in NOUN?
2. What is the perceptive index of students' satisfaction of the quality of Course Materials used in NOUN?
3. How do NOUN students perceive their satisfaction of quality of ICT available in NOUN?
4. What is the level of satisfaction of students with the quality of Learner Support Services in NOUN?
5. How satisfied are the students about the processes of assessment and evaluation in NOUN?

Research Procedure

The survey research design used was cross-sectional in approach and was carried out *expost facto* since no variables were manipulated. The sample consisted of a total of 2,471 learners which were selected using the disproportionate stratified random sampling technique from 12 Study Centres out of the existing 78 study Centres in the National Open University of Nigeria. Data were collected with a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 'Not Aware', 'Unsatisfactory', 'Satisfactory', 'Highly Satisfactory' to 'Excellent'. The scale was developed around the five key aspects of ODL provisions investigated in this study. For reliability, copies of the instrument were administered to fifty students from a Study Centre outside the list selected for the study. The analysed responses with the use of Cronbach method showed that the questionnaire was reliable (r=0.82). The data collection process was by on-the-spot completion of the questionnaire by the group of students in their respective Study Centres. Descriptive statistics were employed in the course of analysis of data collected. These statistics enabled the provision of answers to the research questions (Akinsola & Ogunleye, 2004; Ogunleye, 2008).

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1: What is the level of satisfaction of students with the quality of admission and registration processes in NOUN?

Table 1: Students' Level of Satisfaction with Admission and Registration
N=2471

S/N	Indices	Levels of Satisfaction					$\bar{x}$	Std. Dev.
		0	1	2	3	4		
1	Admission policies for Nigerian and foreign students.	800 (32.4)	39 (1.6)	628 (25.4)	302 (12.2)	702 (28.4)	2.03	1.60
2	Transparency of processes for admission.	401 (16.2)	140 (5.7)	638 (25.8)	303 (12.3)	989 (40.0)	2.54	1.46
3	Mechanisms for selection of qualified candidates	473 (19.1)	283 (11.5)	618 (25.0)	195 (7.9)	902 (36.5)	2.31	1.52
4	Special provision for disadvantaged groups	659 (26.7)	335 (13.6)	537 (21.7)	209 (8.5)	731 (29.6)	2.01	1.57
5	Full automation of the admission process	188 (7.6)	163 (6.6)	384 (15.5)	301 (12.2)	1435 (58.1)	3.07	1.30
6	Students' admission using set criteria	167 (6.8)	278 (11.3)	584 (23.6)	342 (13.8)	1100 (44.5)	2.78	1.30
7	Admission of prospective students into existing programmes.	450 (18.2)	329 (13.3)	460 (18.6)	346 (14.0)	886 (35.9)	2.36	1.52
8	Placement into higher degree programmes	1012 (41.0)	137 (5.5)	477 (19.3)	210 (8.5)	635 (25.7)	1.72	1.65
9	Liberalisation of number of candidates offered provisional admission.	431 (17.4)	279 (11.3)	480 (19.4)	318 (12.9)	963 (39.0)	2.45	1.52
	REGISTRATION							
10	Students' handbook with list of available facilities and services.	343 (13.9)	420 (17.0)	599 (24.2)	260 (10.5)	849 (34.4)	2.34	1.44
11	Information to prospective learners.	345 (14.0)	217 (8.8)	443 (17.9)	423 (17.1)	1043 (42.2)	2.65	1.44
12	Enrolment based on established norms and set guidelines.	238 (9.6)	156 (6.3)	641 (25.9)	332 (13.4)	1104 (44.7)	2.77	1.33
13	Relevant students' demographic information.	298 (12.1)	178 (7.2)	485 (19.6)	369 (14.9)	1141 (46.2)	2.76	1.41
14	Registrable courses made available to students.	246 (10.0)	321 (13.0)	419 (17.0)	313 (12.7)	1172 (47.4)	2.75	1.41
15	Prompt attention to students' difficulties and challenges.	240 (9.7)	508 (20.6)	534 (21.6)	331 (13.4)	858 (34.7)	2.43	1.39
Weighted mean = 2.46								

Findings on Table 1 indicate that students perceived eight of the fifteen items as 'satisfactory'. These are items 1, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9 on admission processes and items 10 and 15 on registration. The students rated the remaining seven items as 'highly satisfactory'. These comprise three items on admission and four items on registration. In the final analysis, students perceive the admission processes and registration in NOUN as satisfactory (Weighted mean=2.46). This value is adjudged fairly good as it falls below the 2.5 mark which can be approximated to 3.0 indicating 'highly satisfactory'. The processes of admission and registration, could, therefore, be improved upon from the standpoint of the eight items with low mean ratings. This findings generally coincides with the results obtained by Ddarwazeh (2014) that students found admission and registration deliverables satisfactory with respect to tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and courtesy. A similar finding was also reported in the study of Mahmood, Dangi, and Ali (2014) where Malaysian students were satisfied with admission and registration processes of the institution.

Research Question 2: What is the perceptive index of students' satisfaction of the quality of Course Materials in NOUN?

Table 2: Students' Satisfaction with Course Materials
N=2471

S/N	Indices	*Levels of Satisfaction*					Mean	Std. Dev.
		0	1	2	3	4		
1	Courses designed according to programme objectives.	271 (11.0)	357 (14.4)	239 (9.7)	1139 (46.1)	465 (18.8)	2.47	1.25
2	The course materials are learners friendly.	182 (7.4)	261 (10.6)	261 (10.6)	1340 (54.2)	427 (17.3)	2.63	1.11
3	The course materials are designed in line with formats for instructional design and development.	173 (7.0)	162 (6.6)	474 (19.2)	1360 (55.0)	302 (12.2)	2.59	1.02
4	The course materials creativity, critical thinking, independent and team work.	166 (6.7)	194 (7.9)	258 (10.4)	1541 (62.4)	312 (12.6)	2.66	1.02
5	The course materials recognise the learners' learning contexts and styles.	72 (2.9)	235 (9.5)	474 (19.2)	1311 (53.1)	379 (15.3)	2.68	0.94
6	The development processes of course materials incorporate a range of relevant expertise.	163 (6.6)	249 (10.1)	374 (15.1)	1408 (57.0)	277 (11.2)	2.56	1.03

7	The learning objectives are clearly stated.	195 (7.9)	279 (11.3)	282 (11.4)	1242 (50.3)	473 (19.1)	2.61	1.15
8	Instructional design includes assessment of learning.	197 (8.0)	180 (7.3)	494 (20.0)	1322 (53.5)	278 (11.3)	2.53	1.05
9	Course design uses appropriate technology.	211 (8.5)	347 (14.0)	300 (12.1)	1358 (55.0)	255 (10.3)	2.44	1.12
10	The course guides are detailed enough.	29 (1.2)	224 (9.1)	273 (11.0)	1696 (68.6)	249 (10.1)	2.77	0.79
11	The course materials contents are up-to-date.	107 (4.3)	169 (6.8)	288 (11.7)	1657 (67.1)	250 (10.1)	2.72	0.90
12	The course materials avoid oversimplification or over generalisation.	99 (4.0)	242 (9.8)	219 (8.9)	1698 (68.7)	213 (8.6)	2.68	0.91
13	The course materials contain a variety of learning activities.	187 (7.6)	189 (7.6)	228 (9.2)	1707 (69.1)	160 (6.5)	2.59	0.99
14	Available staff and procedures available to assure course material quality.	138 (5.6)	309 (12.5)	231 (9.3)	1629 (65.9)	164 (6.6)	2.56	0.98
15	There are existing mechanisms for collaboration, adoption and adaptation of course materials.	391 (15.8)	188 (7.6)	162 (6.6)	1572 (63.6)	158 (6.4)	2.37	1.21
Weighted Mean = 2.59								

From Table 2, the students rated only three items as 'satisfactory' with mean ratings 2.47, 2.44 and 2.37 (items 1, 9 and 15). These items bother on design of course materials in line with instructional objectives, the use of appropriate technology to engage learners and mechanisms for collaboration among relevant agencies on adaptation of course materials. Efforts, therefore, need to be geared towards improving these aspects of design of course materials particularly. The remaining twelve items were rated as 'highly satisfactory' (means cluster around 3.0) while on the whole, students were satisfied with the status of course materials (Weighted mean=2.59). Investigating the relationships of characteristics of online learning and students' emotions and satisfaction with online learning Ghaderizefreh and Hoover (2018) found that well-designed components of online courses reduced negative emotions such as anger, boredom, and anxiety among students. It was equally found that academic emotions have direct bearings with satisfaction with online courses. This provides explanation for the simple finding obtained in this regard in the present study.

Research Question 3: How do NOUN students perceive their satisfaction of quality of ICT available in NOUN?

Table 3: Students' Ratings of ICT Infrastructure in NOUN
N=2471

S/N	Indices	*Levels of Satisfaction*					Mean	Std. Dev.
		0	1	2	3	4		
1	Robust ICT facility available in NOUN	314 (12.7)	27 (1.1)	628 (25.4)	808 (32.7)	694 (28.1)	2.62	1.26
2	Technical and ICT group in NOUN are able to perform their duties without consultation or assistance from external service providers.	305 (12.3)	150 (6.1)	618 (25.0)	403 (16.3)	995 (40.3)	2.66	1.38
3	There is a competent ICT/technical support group in NOUN	189 (7.6)	285 (11.5)	652 (26.4)	457 (18.5)	888 (35.9)	2.64	1.28
4	There is a friendly and navigable ICT facility in NOUN	225 (9.1)	335 (13.6)	549 (22.2)	657 (26.6)	705 (28.5)	2.52	1.28
5	Students record systems are regularly monitored to ensure they are functioning efficiently	194 (7.9)	167 (6.8)	400 (16.2)	285 (11.5)	1425 (57.7)	3.04	1.31
6	ICT and technical information properly disseminated.	165 (6.7)	286 (11.6)	594 (24.0)	330 (13.4)	1096 (44.4)	2.77	1.30
7	There is a Robust ICT training scheme in NOUN for staff.	362 (14.6)	347 (14.0)	470 (19.0)	428 (17.3)	864 (35.0)	2.44	1.45
8	There is a desktop/laptop for each member of staff.	139 (5.6)	232 (9.4)	497 (20.1)	988 (40.0)	615 (24.9)	2.69	1.11
9	There is constant internet connectivity in NOUN	287 (11.6)	332 (13.4)	496 (20.1)	425 (17.2)	931 (37.7)	2.56	1.40
10	There is a prompt response to ICT challenges in NOUN	240 (9.7)	414 (16.8)	639 (25.9)	329 (13.3)	849 (34.4)	2.46	1.36
11	Navigable module interface is available in NOUN	205 (8.3)	335 (13.6)	445 (18.0)	421 (17.0)	1065 (43.1)	2.73	1.35
12	Students have easy access to online course material	209 (8.5)	159 (6.4)	330 (13.4)	662 (26.8)	1111 (45.0)	2.93	1.26
13	Student can easily access and complete their TMA online	298 (12.1)	154 (6.2)	481 (19.5)	371 (15.0)	1167 (47.2)	2.79	1.40
14	There is a complete list of NOUN registered students	240 (9.7)	305 (12.3)	455 (18.4)	331 (13.4)	1140 (46.1)	2.74	1.39
15	The bandwidth is adequate for NOUN operations	234 (9.5)	502 (20.3)	551 (22.3)	343 (13.9)	841 (34.0)	2.43	1.38
Weighted Mean = 2.67								

From Table 3, results show that there were only three items with low mean ratings: items 7, 10 and 15 having to do with robust ICT training scheme for staff, prompt response to ICT challenges and adequacy of the bandwidth for NOUN operations. The other twelve items yielded relatively high mean ratings revolving around 3.0 indicative of 'highly satisfactory'. With the weighted mean of 2.67, it is summed up that students generally perceive the quality of ICT infrastructure as highly satisfactory. In lie with this finding, Hussain and Abalkhail (2012) had also found a similar result that students were generally satisfied with the institution's library facilities for academic study.

Research Question 4: What is the level of satisfaction of students with the quality of Learner Support Services in NOUN?

Table 4: Students' Evaluation of NOUN Learner Support Services
N=2471

S/N	Indices	Levels of Satisfaction					r	Std. Dev.
		0	1	2	3	4		
1	Learner support as integrated into programme and course material development.	352 (14.2)	57 (2.3)	623 (25.2)	704 (28.5)	735 (29.7)	2.57	1.32
2	Learner support uses a range of media including appropriate ICTs .	114 (4.6)	348 (14.1)	623 (25.2)	326 (13.2)	1060 (42.9)	2.76	1.27
3	Tutors are selected and trained as facilitators.	186 (7.5)	273 (11.0)	631 (25.5)	482 (19.5)	899 (36.4)	2.66	1.27
4	Tutorial group size is effective.	234 (9.5)	356 (14.4)	503 (20.4)	685 (27.7)	693 (28.0)	2.50	1.29
5	Learners' access to facilitators.	201 (8.1)	178 (7.2)	369 (14.9)	314 (12.7)	1409 (57.0)	3.03	1.32
6	The turnaround of assignments.	171 (6.9)	266 (10.8)	634 (25.7)	316 (12.8)	1084 (43.9)	2.76	1.30
7	Academic, administrative and technical staff.	308 (12.5)	327 (13.2)	459 (18.6)	469 (19.0)	908 (36.7)	2.54	1.41
8	Mechanisms to follow up and support for learners.	211 (8.5)	135 (5.5)	449 (18.2)	1030 (41.7)	646 (26.1)	2.71	1.16
9	Appropriate support and facilities provided for learners.	304 (12.3)	313 (12.7)	466 (18.9)	430 (17.4)	958 (38.8)	2.58	1.42
10	Learner support for independent study skills.	249 (10.1)	415 (16.8)	619 (25.1)	342 (13.8)	846 (34.2)	2.45	1.37

11	Opportunities provided for academic and peer interaction	317 (12.8)	234 (9.5)	454 (18.4)	416 (16.8)	1050 (42.5)	2.67	1.43
12	Feedback and monitoring of learner support services.	242 (9.8)	128 (5.2)	323 (13.1)	654 (26.5)	1124 (45.5)	2.93	1.29
13	Staff attitude towards learner-oriented learning.	176 (7.1)	292 (11.8)	493 (20.0)	373 (15.1)	1137 (46.0)	2.81	1.32
14	Mechanisms to facilitate student progression.	255 (10.3)	304 (12.3)	431 (17.4)	323 (13.1)	1158 (46.9)	2.74	1.41
15	Learner support systems target retention.	232 (9.4)	307 (12.4)	529 (21.4)	505 (20.4)	898 (36.3)	2.62	1.33
Weighted Mean = 2.68								

Findings on Table 4 reveal that of all the fifteen items listed, only one: item 10 which had to do with emphasis on development of independent learning skills (mean = 2.45) had a poor rating. All other fourteen items were highly rated denoting 'highly satisfactory' and leading to the high weighted mean of 2.68. Students are highly satisfied with the quality of Learners' Support Services. Herman, Puspitasari and Padmo (2015) reported a similar result to the effect that students attach high importance as well as high satisfaction levels to the quality of learners support services. This implies that the quality of the learners' support services need to be well assured. The earlier offer by Ogunleye and Apata (2018) of integrating intelligent pedagogical agents into learning management systems to assist in students' science experiments in the National Open University of Nigeria is also justified with this finding. In another dimension, Ogunleye and Bamidele (2013) advocated peer-led strategies for improved student academic experience and this can lead to better student satisfaction of institutional processes.

Research Question 5: How satisfied are the students about the processes of Assessment and evaluation in NOUN?

S/N	Indices	*Levels of Satisfaction*					Mean	Std. Dev.
		0	1	2	3	4		
1.	Use of results of assessment for teaching methods improvement.	528 (21.4)	474 (19.2)	364 (14.7)	308 (12.5)	797 (32.3)	2.15	1.56
2.	Range of assessment tools and for measuring learning outcomes.	328 (13.3)	375 (15.2)	619 (25.1)	362 (14.6)	787 (31.8)	2.37	1.40
3.	Relationship between assessment tests and instructional objectives.	328 (13.3)	235 (9.5)	611 (24.7)	346 (14.0)	951 (38.5)	2.55	1.42
4.	The assessment tasks are linked to course requirements.	657 (26.6)	242 (9.8)	517 (20.9)	375 (15.2)	680 (27.5)	2.07	1.55
5.	Details of the assessment techniques.	774 (31.3)	400 (16.2)	571 (23.1)	287 (11.6)	439 (17.8)	1.68	1.46
6.	Both formative and summative assessments are promptly communicated to students.	984 (39.8)	245 (9.9)	515 (20.8)	342 (13.8)	385 (15.6)	1.55	1.50
7.	The automation of assessment and evaluation data is encouraged.	733 (29.7)	367 (14.9)	584 (23.6)	251 (10.2)	536 (21.7)	1.79	1.50
8.	The standards and quality of assessment.	823 (33.3)	307 (12.4)	503 (20.4)	168 (6.8)	670 (27.1)	1.82	1.61
9.	The institution has standardized tutor marking schemes.	775 (31.4)	199 (8.1)	468 (18.9)	327 (13.2)	702 (28.4)	1.99	1.61
10.	Regular quality assurance meetings with facilitators.	683 (27.6)	508 (20.6)	467 (18.9)	187 (7.6)	626 (25.3)	1.82	1.54
11.	Confidentiality of assessment information.	797 (32.3)	367 (14.9)	357 (14.4)	351 (14.2)	599 (24.2)	1.83	1.59
12.	Assessment results are recorded securely and reliably with ease of retrieval.	1476 (59.7)	177 (7.2)	263 (10.6)	182 (7.4)	373 (15.1)	1.11	1.53
13.	The internal quality assurance processes.	1483 (60.0)	197 (8.0)	240 (9.7)	301 (12.2)	250 (10.1)	1.04	1.45
14.	Approved procedures for setting, marking and release of results.	1419 (57.4)	220 (8.9)	384 (15.5)	144 (5.8)	304 (12.3)	1.07	1.44
15.	Assessment strategy and provision for internal and external moderation.	1510 (61.1)	177 (7.2)	285 (11.5)	260 (10.5)	239 (9.7)	1.00	1.42

1	Ethical practices in examinations and students' assignments and projects.	1481 (59.9)	51 (2.1)	265 (10.7)	184 (7.4)	490 (19.8)	1.25	1.65
2	Clearly stated disciplinary procedure for handling examination malpractices.	1393 (56.4)	99 (4.0)	222 (9.0)	148 (6.0)	609 (24.6)	1.39	1.72
3	Adherence to established disciplinary procedure.	1421 (57.5)	221 (8.9)	291 (11.8)	209 (8.5)	329 (13.3)	1.11	1.49
4	Learner satisfaction surveys conducted.	327 (13.2)	183 (7.4)	365 (14.8)	1239 (50.1)	357 (14.4)	2.45	1.22
5	Completion, retention and progression rates being monitored.	315 (12.7)	412 (16.7)	355 (14.4)	1123 (45.4)	266 (10.8)	2.25	1.23
6	Mechanism for the review of the learning processes.	430 (17.4)	265 (10.7)	277 (11.2)	1136 (46.0)	363 (14.7)	2.30	1.33
7	The institution provides periodic reports on academic performance.	481 (19.5)	248 (10.0)	283 (11.5)	1061 (42.9)	398 (16.1)	2.26	1.37
8	Publication of results of annual surveys of graduate employment.	353 (14.3)	316 (12.8)	196 (7.9)	1128 (45.6)	478 (19.3)	2.43	1.32
Weighted Mean = 1.79								

Table 5 presents twenty-three items out of which only one: item 3 on assessment tasks used to assess learners actually focusing on the learning outcomes, yielded high mean rating of 2.55 indicating highly satisfactory. The remaining twenty-two items shows that students were either 'satisfied' (16 items) or not satisfied (6 items) with the different aspects of assessment and evaluation processes of the university. On the whole, the weighted mean of 1.79 shows that they perceived assessment and evaluation processes as satisfactory. The documentations of the findings obtained by Dong and Lucey (2013) had laid a strong foundation for the current finding as they linked student satisfaction with the quality of assessment.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings reveal critical areas for improvement. These include policies on admission, mechanisms for selection of admitted candidates, provision for students with special needs, capacity postgraduate admission, quality of student information handbook and prompt attention to students' challenges. Other areas requiring improvement efforts are: course design, deployment of appropriate technology for learners' support, ICT training for staff, prompt response to ICT challenges, bandwidth for the university's operations, emphasis on development of independent leaning skills and most of the processes of student assessment and evaluation. These gaps identified in the

study need to be used to design strategic plans by the university management while every staff involved in these critical areas should pay greater attention to the issues towards a culture of quality assurance practices in NOUN.

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