Assessment of E-Learning Facilities in Open and Distance Learning and Information Need by Students

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Abstract : Electronic learning is increasingly popular learning approach in higher educational institutions due to vast growth of internet technology. This approach is important in human capital development. An investigation of open distance and e-learning facilities and information need by open and distance learning students was carried out in Jalingo, Nigeria. Structured questionnaires were administered to 70 registered ODL students of the NOUN. Information sourced from the respondents covered demographic, economic and institutional variables. Data collected for demographic variables were computed as frequency count and percentages. Assessment of the effectiveness of ODL facilities and information need among open and distance learning students was computed on a three or four point Likert Rating Scale. Findings indicated that there are more men compared to women. A large proportion of the respondents are married and there are more matured students in ODL compared to the youth. A high proportion of the ODL students obtained qualifications higher than the secondary school certificate. The proportion of computer literate ODL students was high, and large number of the students does not own a laptop computer. Inadequate e -books and reference materials, internet gadgets and inadequate books (hard copies) and reference material are factors that limit utilization of e-learning facilities in the study areas. Inadequate computer facilities and power back up caused inconveniences and delay in administering and use of e learning facilities. To a high extent, open and distance learning students needed information on university time table and schedule of activities, availability and access to books (hard and e-books) and reference materials. The respondents emphasized that contact with course coordinators via internet will provide a better learning and academic performance.