Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Education in Nigeria: Challenge of Academic Quality

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Abstract : As open and distance education is gradually becoming an acceptable means of solving the problem of access in higher education, quality has now become one of the main concerns among institutions and stakeholders of open and distance learning (ODL) and the education sector in general. This study assessed the challenges of academic quality in the open and distance learning (ODL) education in Nigeria using Distance Learning Institute (DLI), University of Lagos and National Open University of Nigeria as a case. In carrying out the study, a descriptive survey research design was employed. A researcher-designed and validated questionnaire was used to elicit responses that translated to the quantitative data for this study. The sample comprised 665 students of the Distance Learning Institute (DLI), and National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), carefully selected through the method of simple random sampling. Data collected from the study were analyzed using Chi-Square ($X2$) at 0.05 Level of significance. The results of the analysis revealed that; the use of ICT tools is a factor in ensuring quality in the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) operations; the quality of the materials made available to ODL students will determine the quality of education that will be received by the students; and the time scheduled for students for self-study, online lecturing/interaction and face to face study and the quality of education in Open and Distance Learning Institutions has a lot of impact on the quality of education the students receive. Based on the findings, a number of recommendations were made.