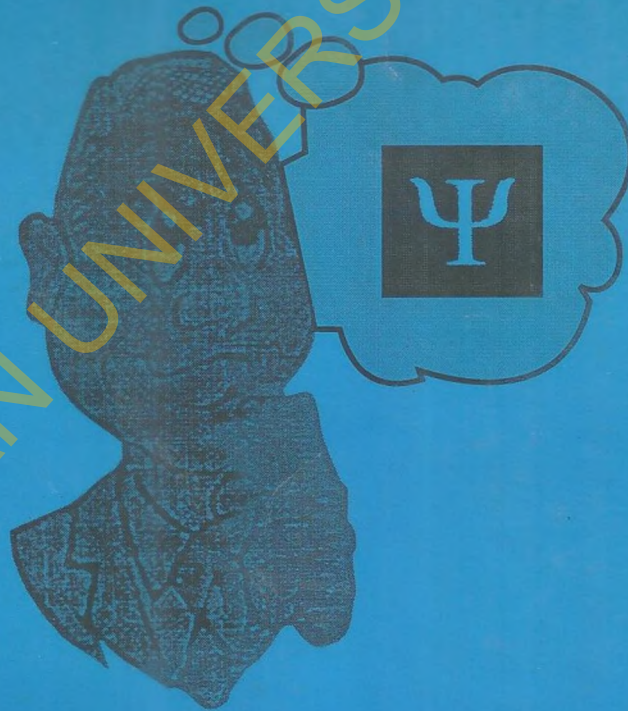


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### Editorial Comments

The Society for Psychology in Sport and Human Behaviour is pleased to announce the stability and continuous impact of the International Journal of Emotional Psychology for meeting the yearnings and dreams of our ever increasing and widely spread and articulate readership. This edition of the journal has added the benefits of continuous numbering starting from the last edition. The Society is therefore pleased to introduce the 14<sup>th</sup> Volume, No.2, 2012 of the International Journal of Emotional Psychology and Sport Ethics (IJEPE). The IJEPE is peer-reviewed and accessible online through the **ajol web site at** (<http://www.ajol/journal>). The Journal e-mail: [mtnlpsychlgy@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mtnlpsychlgy@yahoo.co.uk)

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## **Utilisation of Information and Communication Technologies in Distance Learning programmes in Southwest, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

Distance Learning programmes would simply become impossible tasks without information and communication technologies (ICTs) as well as internet based instructional strategies. These programmes are characterized by learner-centredness, life-long learning, independent learning and recognition of prior learning. Although, the University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre (UIDLC) is well known for the use of ICTs, more advanced technologies are not prevalent feature of the programmes. This study therefore assessed the level of utilisation of ICTs and internet facilities in the University of Ibadan Distance Learning programmes with respect to their availability and adequacy. The Input- Process-Output evaluation model was employed to guide the study. A sample of 200 participants, selected through multistage sampling procedure was involved in the study. Three research questions guided the study. One validated instrument was used to collect data and its reliability index was 0.86. Data was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. In terms of availability, usability and adequacy of Information and Communication Technologies: Radio programme service 147(73.5%); Overhead projector 105(52.5%); Video tapes 147(73.5%); Audio tapes 119(59.5%); Computers 145(72.5%); Internet facilities 175(87.5%) and Electronic board 118(59%) were available and in use in the programme, while Interactive television programme service 13(6.5%); Fibre optics 59(29.5%) and Electricity supply were in short supply in the programme. The distance learning institution (UIDLC) is striving to make use of ICTs and Internet facilities on its programmes. However, impact of ICTs goes wider than just the structure and presentation of courses, it must also aim at improving teaching-learning resources, staff capacity development, learner support services, and increase the number of courses available to prospective candidates in order to position distance education in Nigeria for global competitiveness.

**Key words:** Distance learning, Information and Communication Technologies, Internet Based facilities.



## Introduction

Education is a veritable tool for the emancipation of people from the shackles of ignorance, poverty and deprivation. It is also a vital propellant in the engine of growth and development, hence, education is liberation. The role of education in the socio-political and economic development of a nation is indispensable. Economists and educationists have shown that there is interdependence between economy and education. To this end, education is perceived as investment in human capital and thus a vehicle for national development, since human beings hold the key to all forms of development. According to van de Sand (2005); Almazan-Khan (2005) and Abdulaeva (2006), the world had reached an agreement to ensure education for all by 2015 (UNESCO). To this end, nations of the world are devising appropriate policies and relevant programmes that would facilitate its realization on target. In this direction, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, (ADEA) in its 2002 & 2003 reports (ADEA, 2004), revealed that in spite of the ever-increasing demand for education, funding of the sector in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is declining in real economic terms.

The issue of providing access to education through distance learning has therefore, gained unprecedented prominence. There is no doubt that, distance education is gradually finding its way through a competitive terrain by providing suitable alternative solutions to the ever growing needs of the world, particularly in the developing countries of which Nigeria is one. Although, it may seem to be novel, the idea of distance learning is a creation of the inability of formal educational institutions to meet the educational needs of the teeming populace. It thus provides easy access to education. It is, therefore, a veritable tool in that direction because it is generally believed that education reduces ignorance (FRN, 2004).

Higher Education is expected to produce a critical mass of sufficiently skillful, knowledgeable and competent human resources to drive national developmental efforts. Human capital development objectives are not possible solely through the conventional Face-to-Face mode. Knowledge is power and appropriate application of such knowledge is more powerful. In order to achieve the competency level to participate effectively in today's knowledge economy, higher education institutions of learning must play a significant role in making their programmes accessible to majority of Africans. The distance education process is an effective supplementary and complementary initiative to create wider accessibility to quality tertiary education.

The year 1990 marked the initiative of the International Literacy decade which was adjusted at UNESCO's World Conference in 2000 as Education for All (EFA) by 2015. Despite some gains made in eradicating illiteracy, the 2008 statistics indicate that almost 800 million of the world's adults are

illiterate. There has been a visible explosive demand for quality tertiary education which the current traditional higher institutions of learning cannot effectively cope with as a result of the realization among the population of the role education plays in poverty reduction; the changing needs of employers; the embracing of education, by governments and the population of the world, as a basic human right; and the declining cost of receiving education as a result of distance learning. Prospects of distance learning in tertiary institutions in sub-Saharan Africa are numerous. Among these are: exchange of staff and students; wider accessibility; learning and earning going simultaneously; massification of output (EFA-UNESCO); lack of disruption in the social, family and economic lives of learners; affordability due to reduced cost of education; adaptability for different purposes (skills development and capacity building); lack of barriers (age, geographic) to accessing quality education, synchronously or asynchronously; fluid but demanding (learners responsible for managing their time profitably) and employs blended learning approaches including high tech artefacts (Braithmoh,2010).

Despite the glowing virtues of distance education, this mode is still looked down upon by some people as inferior to the conventional teaching and learning processes (Braithmoh and Lekoko, 2005). Currently, in the Nigerian university system, the delivery of quality university education by the open and distance learning mode is encumbered by capacity gaps at the institutional and regulatory levels (Ramon-Yusuf, 2008). Among these are: inadequate and inappropriate Course Wares; weak Learner Support systems; inappropriate delivery mechanisms; and regulatory capacity gaps which are: standard setting; quality assurance and accreditation. Quality Assurance challenges of distance learning have the propensity to cast doubts on the basic quality of open distance learning programmes with dire consequences on the coherence of higher education communities (Eaton, 2000).

Braithmoh, (2010) in his own contribution highlighted the problems of distance learning for tertiary education in Africa as: inadequate government funding; poor technological development; lack of open distance learning national policy framework; unreliable electricity supply; commercialization of knowledge; poor quality of staff; stiff competition by private institutions to challenge the status quo of public universities and lack of effective coordination of open distance learning activities at the institutional, national, regional and continental levels.

Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) assist the achievement of distance learning faster especially because it is provided on-line. The essence of the concept of distance learning is the mode of instructional delivery to its students from a distance whereby the teacher and the taught are separated from one another most of the time, except



during short contact sessions on few occasions. It is this essence that informs the increasing level of importance being given to it because it thus creates access to education for many who would have otherwise not had such opportunities. Thus, quality is an essential ingredient of distance learning if it were to compete favourably with the regular programme. According to Osasona (2005), in Nigeria, maintaining quality in the university system is not new. It started with the University of Ibadan from inception in 1948. Quality maintenance was through both internal and external processes. Such processes include student admission requirements, curriculum reviews, external examining system and accreditation by professional bodies as well as by National Universities Commission.

The University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre (UIDLC) was conceived as an External Studies Programme of the Department of Adult Education in 1972 but started operations in 1988. By 1993, it graduated its first set of students. The Centre was established with the goal of providing university education to students who are too busy, working or live too far away to attend lectures on a regular basis. It got transformed to Centre for External Studies in 1993 when more departments in the Faculty of Education started the programme, and by the year 2002 the programme got upgraded to become Distance Learning Centre with the status of a faculty (UIDLC Prospectus, 2006 edition). The UIDLC does not have academic staff of its own, but relies entirely on those of the participating departments. The vision of University of Ibadan in embarking on distance learning programmes is to expand the frontiers of knowledge and transform society through motivation (Egbokhare, 2006). The specific objectives of the Distance Learning Centre are to:

- bridge the capacity gap by delivering programmes of global standards in areas of national needs;
- deliver skills-based programmes in order to promote employment and productivity;
- collaborate with communities and private sector to create requisite synergy for quality and competitive education;
- collaborate with reputable foreign institutions in order to deliver global educational graduates to Nigerians;
- key into the global education market by positioning the University of Ibadan as an exporter of knowledge and intellectual resources;
- become the primary centre for learning resources in Africa and provide a platform for reengineering the African consciousness; and



- provide an avenue for forging global cooperation, harmony and understanding through education. **Source:** ([www.dlcui.org](http://www.dlcui.org))

According to the University Official Bulletin, September 29, 2006, it was reported that all the academic courses of the University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre (UIDLC) were fully accredited by the National Universities Commission as at June 2006. The Distance Learning Centre has information centres in Lagos, (Lagos State); Abeokuta (Ogun State) and Ile-Ife (Osun State). It also runs diploma courses in the Faculty of Education and in Departments of Theatre Arts and Statistics. University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre (UIDLC) uses printed materials, face-to-face lectures and tutorials during contact sessions as the major media of instruction but has not been able to perfect the use of multimedia instructional strategy. It also makes use of audio and audio-visual media which are distributed to students as parts of course materials. University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre has 'Diamond F.M' as its Radio Station which covers Ibadan and its environs.

In addition, it also has her Local Area Network (LAN) installed which is linked to the University Service Provider so as to make its programme fully web-based and enhance service delivery. Also, the distance learning institution has links to the University internet services through radio connectivity by proposing fibre optics connectivity to UIDLC as part of the University's ICT expansion programmes. The institution has a resources centre and has moved online for admission, application, entrance examination, payment and registration of distance learning students. It has also decentralized process of distribution of course materials with the introduction of online downloading of course materials by her distance learners which invariably has boosted her e-learning facilities and programme delivery.

The University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre has its administrative building outside the University of Ibadan Campus, and used lecture rooms on the main campus for its contact sessions until year 2009, when it acquired more buildings outside the main campus for lectures during contact sessions. One problem that becomes obvious to the discerning observer of the programme is the reluctance of many departments of the university to participate in the programmes; even though the programme has a long history behind it. This is unlike the situation in other countries such as South Africa, India, The United States of America (USA), Argentina, The United Kingdom, Indonesia and Japan. However, from 2005/2006 academic session, Faculties of Arts, the Social Sciences, Agricultural Science and Forestry, and Science have since joined the distance learning programmes.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have positive impact on distance learning. Jyala (1999) opines that television and video

recording have a great influence on distance education. These technologies with the personal computer and internet have reinvented the way students learn at a distance and aided the development of virtual classrooms and libraries. He thus argues that these technologies should be properly integrated into distance learning to widen its scope, to strengthen the capacity of distance education providers to meet the needs of its clientele. ICTs include print media, audio-visual method, multimedia or interaction television, cable, microwave, satellite lineages and fibre optics (Agunga, 1997). However, Butcher (2001) posits that the use of technology in distance learning programmes is fraught with problems which confront education globally. The problems outlined by him can be summarized thus: broadening the learner base of educational institutions to give access to those hitherto excluded for whatever reasons and emerging crisis of confidence in the conventional approaches to education. These problems gave rise to focusing on the use of ICT to enhance educational efficiency and effectiveness.

According to Mackintosh (1999), distance education is simply an impossible task without Information and Communication Technologies. Dhanarajan (2001) calls for greater expatiation of the use of ICTs as well as internet-based instructional strategies in distance learning programmes. For Perraton and Potashnik (1997), more advanced telecommunications technologies are not prevalent feature of distance programmes in the third world. Saint (2000) observes that although internet connectivity is rapidly expanding yet it is unevenly available mostly because internet usage on the continent is concentrated in urban centres.

However, Mwangi (2001) suggests that if information technology is appropriately adopted and utilized in the areas of teaching and learning, it will facilitate reform and transformation of the African educational system to provide opportunities and accessibility at all levels. Gibson and Berge (2006) posit that e-learning initiatives possess the ability to provide just-in-time and just-in-case training, developed to bring about performance improvement and creativity, while David (2006) believes that e-learning strategy can make immediate impact on the learner. However, Rosenberg (2001) and Weaver (2003) are of the view that the humans are social learners, thus instructor-led face-to-face session does satisfy them more than web-based training can. At present, e-learning moves in the direction of personalizing e-learning products and services, because that is what the learners desire (Barron, 2003; Brockbank, 2006).

Botswana has a national policy to integrate the use of Information and Communication Technology in education provision, and equally possesses a good technological infrastructure for the same purpose. Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning, provides such services as well. It also uses Radio broadcasting in its educational services. Jegede (2001), reports that



Botswana is an example of an African country successfully using ICTs in distance and teacher education. Government policy and initiatives support the development and use of ICTs in education (Naidoo and Schutte, 1999). The University of South Africa (UNISA), which is the oldest distance learning institution in the world, has its main campus in Pretoria and subsidiary campuses in Durban, Cape Town, Nelspruit and Petersburg, through which it provides distance education to its South African clientele. It also has study centres across that country. The rural areas, which it also covers, lack facilities for ICTs usage. It also has a sizeable number of foreign students. Naidoo and Schutte (1999) opine that telemetric enhancement will play an increasingly important role, since it is so very expensive to provide buildings and tutors.

According to Wiechers (1996), even though UNISA has a modern computing system with telecommunication and other required information facilities at its Pretoria campus, it still needs to place greater emphasis on the utilization of technology, to further enhance learning. UNISA is progressing towards, a “virtual University” whereby it uses modern communication and education technologies to improve administration of education and training services for the convenience of tutors and students. Students can at any time on their own access the University massive data -base. It is equally involved in tele- and video conferencing at four of its campuses. Thirdly, UNISA provides an audio version of the learning materials for distant learners in order to help blind students (Naidoo and Schutte, 1999).

Gibson and Berge (2006) assert that assessing a learning programme is important to long-term success of such a programme because implementation of a programme is only a beginning. By implication, assessment and feedback are twin-tools for performance improvement in the learner (Murray and Smith, 2006). In addition, Murray and Smith (2006) suggest that assessment of feedback properties in learning process have proved successful in several programmes. To them feedback is a means of validating the learning of the user of an e-learning package, which could be deceitful if feedback resulting from assessment is not regularly and constructively given on the programme, and to the learner.

Smith-Grau (2006) expresses the view that all over the world universities are increasingly multiplying the number of course offered through the World Wide Web (www) because on-line courses afford both the universities and learners some great opportunities. The on-line environment must be made to meet the needs of learners if it were to meaningfully impact on them. On-line instruction should be meaningfully designed to create an effective web-based learning environment; on-line instruction should be so designed to provide communication of instructional objectives clearly and squarely. Danielson, Locke and Burton (2007) express the opinion that on-line courses should also be so developed to make them user-friendly.



Technology adoption is a key issue in determining the success or failure of a distance education programme everywhere, Nigeria inclusive. In promoting quality and ensuring sustainability of the distance learning education in Nigeria, the possibilities of ICTs and other appropriate techniques would have to be fully exploited in order to meet up with the objectives of the programmes as it would reduce the physical and psychological distance between the tutor and the tutee in distance education programme.

The introduction of ICTs has revolutionized all aspects of human endeavour; has occasioned innovations in the generation and dissemination of knowledge; changed the balance of power between the teacher and student, effectively eroding the traditional “power” of the teacher; broken the monopoly of knowledge; uses search engines such as Google, which has the keys to unlock and demystify any subject; made available the use of e-journals and e-books which have fast-tracked knowledge dissemination; and serves as digital device between the students (ICT natives) and their teachers (ICT immigrants)

In addition, compared to distance learning programmes being run by other countries such as South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, China, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, the UIDLC has not been able to perfect the use of Multi-Media Instructional Strategy. Some of the constraints to ICTs and internet facilities’ penetration in education in Nigeria are epileptic power supply, low bandwidth and lack of experienced personnel in distance learning programmes (Ramon-Yusuf, 2008 and Junaid, 2010). The “Analog” distance learning teacher is observed to be ICT-phobic, petrified by ICT, uses and relies mainly or solely on “talk and chalk”, inextricably tied to his dated lecture notes typed or hand-written on the good old A4 c quarto sized paper and the notes are hardly updated, whereas, the “Digital” distance learning teacher has his lecture notes in digital format and available on the world wide web; is comfortable with new technologies and new media, and can meet ICT natives on their familiar turf i.e. the internet, communicates with his students by e-mail, chats, twitters and has his own blog site on the institutional website or even has his own website.

The digital teacher can also deliver knowledge to students in mixed media (a blend of paper, USB sticks, DVD, e-books etc), interact with students synchronously via videoconferencing, and asynchronously via e-mail, efficient facilitator to scores of students using appropriate mix/blend of technologies and media including social networks such as facebook, and twitter, can chat with students online and offline, is eager to exploit the potentials of Mobile learning (M-learning) via SMS texts- bulk or group SMS, Closed User Groups (CUGs) and Phone links. The only way distance learning institutions in Nigeria can meet up with global best practices is to

convert her “Analog” teachers to “Digital” teachers. Therefore, it becomes imperative to carry out an evaluation research on impact of Information and Communication Technologies and Internet facilities on Distance Learning Programmes in Southwest, Nigeria, using UIDLC, as a case study. The utilization of the results of this study would further move the institution closer to the achievement of her set objectives as well as improve the quality of process (instruction), teaching staff, outputs (graduates) and financial standing as self-financing units of her university. Making a meaningful impact on the society will equally enhance access to distance learning programmes in Nigeria and further reduce the level of illiteracy in the country.

Distance learning has become an alternative means of education globally. Yet, its enrolment is not encouraging in Nigeria, as the programmes are yet to catch up in terms of some aspects that can enhance quality, especially, in the variety of instructional strategies employed and the provision of the various components of learner support to the distance learner, the use of Information and Communication Technology and internet facilities among others. Since constant power supply facilitates the use of modern technologies, the constant power outage in Nigeria also constitutes a problem for quality distance education. There is a need therefore, to seek ways of assessing the use of Information and Communication Technologies in distance learning programmes of at least a distance learning institution in Southwest, Nigeria. It is against this background that the present study assesses the level of utilisation of ICTs on the University of Ibadan distance learning programmes with respect to the programmes’ inputs, process and outputs.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the stated problem, the study provided answers to the following research questions

1. What is the level of availability of ICTs and internet facilities in University of Ibadan distance learning programmes?
2. What is the level of adequacy of ICTs and internet facilities in University of Ibadan distance learning programmes?
3. What is the level of usability of ICTs and internet facilities in University of Ibadan distance learning programmes?

### **Methodology**

This study is an ex-post facto survey research and it adopted Input-Process-Output evaluation model. The target population for the study comprised all UIDLC distance learning students from 2006/2007 to 2010/2011 academic



sessions. Proportional sampling technique was employed in this study. Distance learning students (from 200 to 500 levels) were clustered according to all participating faculties of the institution. Students from each of the five faculties namely: Education, Arts, Agriculture, Sciences and the Social Sciences of the University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre, were chosen using probability proportion to size as sample for the study. The sample comprised 200 distance learning students of the institution. The instrument constructed by the researcher for data collection was Inventory on Information and Communication Technologies Learning Materials and Facilities (IICTLMF). This instrument was developed by the researcher. It was used to solicit information on availability, usability and adequacy of distance learning materials from students of the programme. It has four sections: A, B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>2</sub>, and C. Altogether, the Inventory on Information and Communication Technologies Learning Materials and Facilities (IICTLMF), has 30 items. Validation exercise was conducted on 100 students sample of a similar distance learning institution, after necessary corrections had been effected and the reliability co-efficient of 0.86 was established. Data were collected with the help of six trained research assistants and analysed using frequency counts and percentages.

### **Results and Discussion**

The table below addresses each of the three questions the study found answers to:



**Table 1: Levels of Relevant Information and Communication Technology Learning Materials in terms of Availability in UIDLC**

Variables	Level of Availability	(%)	Level of Usability	(%)	Level of Adequacy	(%)
<b>Learning Materials</b>						
(i) Computers (Desktop)	Not Available Available	18(9.0) 182(91.0)	Not In Use In Use	48(26.4) 134(73.6)	Not Adequate Adequate	11(8.2) 123(91.8)
(ii) Computers (Laptop)	Not Available Available	133(66.5) 67(33.5)	Not In Use In Use	52(77.6) 15(22.4)	Not Adequate Adequate	15(100) 0(0)
(iii) Printers	Not Available Available	9(4.5) 191(95.5)	Not In Use In Use	25(13.1) 166(86.9)	Not Adequate Adequate	0(0) 166(100)
(iv) Electronic Board	Not Available Available	82(41.0) 118(59.0)	Not In Use In Use	118(100) 0(0)	Not Adequate Adequate	118(100) 0(0)
(v) USB Sticks	Not Available Available	57(28.5) 143(71.5)	Not In Use In Use	143(100) 0(0)	Not Adequate Adequate	143(100) 0(0)
(vi) Audio Tapes	Not Available Available	81(40.5) 119(59.5)	Not In Use In Use	13(10.9) 106(89.1)	Not Adequate Adequate	106(100) 0(0)
(vii) CDs	Not Available Available	90(45.5) 110(55.5)	Not In Use In Use	26(23.6) 84(76.4)	Not Adequate Adequate	15(17.9) 69(82.1)
(viii) DVDs	Not Available Available	83(41.5) 117(58.5)	Not In Use In Use	77(65.8) 40(34.2)	Not Adequate Adequate	31(77.5) 9(22.5)
(ix) CD-ROMs	Not Available Available	21(10.5) 179(89.5)	Not In Use In Use	48(26.8) 131(73.2)	Not Adequate Adequate	22(16.8) 109(83.2)

(8) Radio Programme Service	Not Available Available	53(26.5) 147(73.5)	Not In Use In Use	18(12.2) 129(87.8)	Not Adequate Adequate	22(17.1) 107(82.9)
(xi) Interactive Television Programme Service	Not Available Available	187(93.5) 13(6.5)	Not In Use In Use	13(100) 0(0)	Not Adequate Adequate	13(100) 0(0)
(xii) Power Points	Not Available Available	83(28.5) 117(58.5)	Not In Use In Use	16(13.7) 101(86.3)	Not Adequate Adequate	57(56.4) 44(43.6)
(xiii) Overhead Projector	Not Available Available	95(47.5) 105(52.5)	Not In Use In Use	0(0) 105(100)	Not Adequate Adequate	40(38.1) 65(61.9)
(xiv) Electricity	Not Available Available	106(53.0) 94(47.0)	Not In Use In Use	0(0) 94(100)	Not Adequate Adequate	94(100) 0(0)
(xv) Video Tapes	Not Available Available	53(26.5) 147(73.5)	Not In Use In Use	21(14.3) 126(85.7)	Not Adequate Adequate	33(26.2) 93(73.8)
<b>Internet Facilities</b>						
(xvi) e-books	Not Available Available	25(12.5) 175(87.5)	Not In Use In Use	7(4) 168(96)	Not Adequate Adequate	0(0) 168(100)
(xvii) e-journals	Not Available Available	82(41.0) 118(59.0)	Not In Use In Use	16(13.6) 102(86.4)	Not Adequate Adequate	10(9.8) 92(90.2)
(xviii) Individual Student's Modem	Not Available Available	126(63.0) 74(37.0)	Not In Use In Use	2(2.7) 72(97.3)	Not Adequate Adequate	28(38.9) 44(61.1)
(xix) e-mail	Not Available Available	13(6.5) 187(93.5)	Not In Use In Use	0(0) 187(100)	Not Adequate Adequate	0(0) 187(100)
(xx) Mobile learning through SMS, Text bulk, Group SMS, User Closed (CUG's) Phone links	Not Available Available	21(10.5) 179(89.5)	Not In Use In Use	0(0) 179(100)	Not Adequate Adequate	0(0) 179(100)
(xxi) e-Library	Not Available Available	193(96.5) 7(3.5)	Not In Use In Use	7(100) 0(0)	Not Adequate Adequate	7(100) 0(0)
(xxii) On-line Video Conferencing	Not Available Available	198(99.0) 2(1.0)	Not In Use In Use	2(100) 0(0)	Not Adequate Adequate	2(100) 0(0)
(xxiii) Resource Rooms	Not Available Available	28(14.0) 172(86.0)	Not In Use In Use	5(2.9) 167(97.1)	Not Adequate Adequate	0(0) 167(100)



From Table 2 above, the result of findings reveals that the University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre (UIDLC), exposes her distance learning students to Information and Communication Technology based learning materials. Out of the 200 distance learning respondents, 182 (91%) indicated that Computers (Desktop) are available to them during contact session. Out of these, 134 (73.6%) affirmed that Desktop are in use, while 123 (91.8%) agreed that Desktop usage is adequate in their faculties. Also, 191 (95.5%) responded that Printers are available in their faculties, 166 (86.9%) indicated usability and adequacy. With respect to Electronic Board, 118 (59%) indicated that this is available. However, all the respondents 118 (100%) affirmed that Electronic Boards are neither in use nor adequate.

In addition to these, the result of the study also reveals that distance learning students agreed to the availability of Audio tapes with 119 (59.5%), In Use 106 (89.1%) and Adequate 106 (100%). For Interactive Radio Programme Service, 147 (73.5%) indicated availability. 129 (87.8%) indicated In Use while 107 (82.9%) indicated Adequacy. In the area of e-books, 175 (87.5%) responded that they have access to e-books in terms of availability, 168 (96 %) agreed to the fact that they are in use and all of them responded that e-books are adequate. For e-mail, 187 (93.5%) indicated availability and all of them indicated that e-mails are in use and available during contact sessions.

Mobile learning materials have 179 (89%) respondents indicating availability, Usability and Adequacy. Resource Rooms have 172 (86%) indicating availability and 167 (97.1 %) indicating both Usability and Adequacy. Though this could be commendable, however, more effort should be geared towards the dispensation of quality teaching and learning between teachers and students on one hand and among students on the other hand. However, the result further revealed that some internet facilities are not adequately available to distance learners for utilisation. These are: e-library 7 (3.5%) and online video conferencing 2 (1%). In like manner it is seen that those countries that harness the power of multimedia communications, for education and training purpose will be the economic power house of the twenty-first century (Bates, 1995).

Quality cannot be enhanced without proper provision and utilization of multimedia instructional materials in distance learning programmes. Equipment such as telecommunication gadgets, computer system, radio/television sets, and printed course materials have to be made available in large quantities and also within the reach of the students if it is to achieve the desired result and realize stated objectives of the programmes (Dada, 2001). It is however noted that for UIDLC to meet up to international standard in distance education, it must seek ways of collaborating with other developing and developed countries that are already vast in the

application of multimedia instructional materials into their systems and study their strengths in order to garner experience from them.

Access to ICTs in turn improves access to educational opportunity as it is viable in United Kingdom Open University (UKOU), University of South Africa (UNISA), Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Korean National Open University (KNOU) and so on. For instance, the UKOU operates well below the cost of other universities and holds fifth place in national rankings of teaching quality, just above Oxford University. (Daniel and Kanwar, 2006). It is further stated that UKOU came first in year 2005 in a national survey of students' satisfaction conducted on behalf of the UK government (Bamiro, 2007). Thus distance learning via the internet presents massive opportunities. It is active and engages learning that mandates doing instead of watching.

In addition to these, UIDLC does not use printed textual materials alone, but compliments instructions during contact sessions with ICT based learning materials and internet facilities. While the result of finding agrees with Klees, McAnany and Majo (1975), Rufang (1997), Perraton (2000), Moore (2001), NPE FRN (2004) and Mackintosh (2005), on the aim of distance education in developing countries, Nigeria inclusive, as the move to widen participation and life-long learning for non-traditional learners to the development of a strong knowledge economy. The findings however disagrees with Zhang, (2005) who earlier found that developing countries' motive for distance learning are to provide basic and literacy education to a large number of poor people alone.

Since Distance learning is supposed to be operationalized on less of face-to-face (contact) and more of ICT interaction, UIDLC should therefore inculcate this method for greater achievements in future, particularly in rural deprived areas of the country. The proliferation of mobile phones will enhance the development of mobile learning (e-learning) to educate distance learners.

The result further agrees with similar findings by dela pena-Bandalaria (2007) in a survey of information and communication technology used in the Philippines. It was found that Philippine educators used combinations of radio, audio, print and video recordings for distance learners scattered around Filipino Island since 1952. It was further found that because they faced challenges in infrastructure and digital divide between rural and urban population when it comes to using computers and associated technologies for learning, it resulted into using mobile learning to educate the masses which was launched in 2004 at Philippines' Open University to facilitate her programmes in health, literacy and numeracy education.

The Nigerian factor in this is the accessibility of the internet facilities, like e-mail, mobile learning (with the use of phones) and ICTs (computer, CD-ROMs, etc) by the distance learners who live in the rural areas.



### **Recommendations and Conclusion**

- There is the urgent need for UIDLC to collaborate and cooperate with other distance learning institutions intra-nationally and continentally for it to be globally recognised.
- There must be series of capacity building workshops for UIDLC academic and non academic staff on management of distance learning programmes.
- UIDLC should endeavour to foster parity of quality, perception and acceptance between Face to Face and Distance Learning.
- The Nigerian Government should wake up to her responsibilities by financially supporting public universities adequately in order to maintain the quality of tertiary education expected of a nation called "Giant of Africa".
- The Federal and State Ministries of Education must as a matter of urgency give birth to an additional Ministry of Distance Education, and work hard to produce a comprehensive distance learning policy framework which will be different entirely from the general education policy as a mechanism to standardise the quality of distance learning offering across the country.
- Efforts must be made by the Federal Government to find lasting solution to the epileptic power supply which is an essential ingredient to guarantee and sustain an effective, functional and quality distance learning system. The problem of electricity emanates from administrative and selfish motive to amass wealth far more than from technical, infrastructural and skills shortages.
- Judging from the enormity of national economic resources available in Nigeria, backed with appropriate governmental planning including judicious resource allocation and utilization, education should not only become a right for all the citizens of Nigeria, but should also be made free up to the University level.

### **Conclusion**

Distance Learning has the potential of making education accessible to marginalized students in Nigeria. A well-coordinated and adequately resourced distance learning system, characterized by efficient deployment of appropriate ICTs in a regime of blended learning can be a veritable supplement to the face to face mode for enhanced access and the production of quality high-level human resources imbued with the requisite skills, knowledge and competencies to drive the achievement of Nigeria's national development objectives.

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