

Evaluation of Information and Communication Technology Skills on Use of University Web Portal by Students of National Open University of Nigeria, Ibadan

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Abstract: *This study investigated ICT skills on use of University Web Portal by students of National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan. Descriptive survey method was used for the research design and the study population was made up of students of NOUN, Ibadan. Simple random sampling technique was adopted for this study to select only 237 as the sample size. The questionnaire was the main instruments employed for data collected and was analysed using simple percentages. Findings revealed the level of ICT as very low. The educational activities carried out on web portal include submission of assignment, register for courses among others. The use of NOUN web portal is frequent for submission of assignment, register for courses etc. The ICT skill influences the use of NOUN web portal by the students. The constraints to effective use of University web portal include internet connection failure, inability to access the web portal properly. The University web portal plays an important role in students study and academic programme. Therefore, management should on admissions to the programme recommend the use of multimedia devices such as iPhone, iPad, Computer system and other supportive gadgets for educational purpose however; this can be incorporated in their tuition fees.*

Keywords: *Information and Communication Technology Skills, Use of University Web Portal, Undergraduate Students, National Open University, Nigeria.*

I. Introduction

The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) was established to provide learning opportunities that is characterized by the separation of teacher and learner in time or place, or both time and place (Jegade 2003). It can also be regarded as a transition from the formal classroom situation, to a system where the learners pursue their studies independently and in their homes. The idea of establishing National open University system for Nigeria, was reflected in the National Policy on Education (NPE), which stated emphatically and unambiguously that "maximum efforts will be made to enable those who can benefit from higher education (HE) to be given access to it (NPE, 1981). Every year since Nigeria got independence, the demand for admission into the universities had remained unmet.

According to UNESCO (2002), open and distance learning represents approaches that focus on opening access to education and training provision, freeing learners from the constraints of time and place and offering flexible learning opportunities to individuals and groups of learners. Mudasiru (2006) defined distance learning as a term to describe the student centeredness of distance education and it deals with the use of print and electric technologies to present individual lessons to learners at a distance.

Correspondence study entails distance learning through postal subgroups, that is, learning at home and communicating with the instructor using print materials. Adebayo (2007) defined open and distance learning (ODL) as the type of education that takes place outside the conventional school system; it is imparted without necessarily having personal interaction with students or learners. The practice of ODL in Nigeria takes various forms, which include Correspondence study education, Distance learning (Sandwich programmes), Part-Time Teacher Training Programme (PTTP), National open University, Weekend programmes, Adult literacy education programmes, National Teachers Institute (NTI) and E-learning. From the above view, one can deduce that distance learning not only shares the goals of the conventional school system, but it also aims to provide access to a historically underserved, place bound, and highly motivated population. The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) was first launched in 1983 but was suspended in 1985 by the military government. President Olusegun Obasanjo re-launched it in 2001 and NOUN now provides instruction for some 60,000 students as at 2002 (ODL Paris 2002).

University Web Portal provides facilities like view fees report, print fee, view past and current result, fill application form for enrolment, eligibility registration, check admission status, class schedule, transcripts, official contact information, downloading of course materials, Continuous assessment, online interaction. The concept of Web Portal is not a new development in the educational sector. It is seen as collection of information and services of an enterprise or as a community accessible to members through a single secure and customizable Web site. Web Portals are websites that provide gateway to a large amount of information. Web portals are seen as positive potential frameworks for achieving order out of chaos and are considered a type of information systems used to gather, manage, share, and utilize information that has been stored in disparate databases throughout the organization (Moraga, Calero and Piattini, 2006).

Mealy and Loller (2000) in a research on the use of educational communication and technology reported that it was as a result of rapid technology related developments, that courses are being delivered to students in various locations to serve their educational needs. Through Information and Communication Technology, distance education programs are provided to students in remote geographic locations. This initiative has led to an increasing interactivity between student and other Open and Distance Learning (ODL) personnel.

1.1 National Open University Nigeria

A diverse range of students from all walks of life are attracted to the National Open University of Nigeria just like other prominent Open Universities such as the National Open University of United Kingdom (OU); for most courses there are no stringent entry requirements other than the ability to study at an appropriate level such as the West African Examination, and other National Diplomas to qualify for a Direct entry admission. Though, most postgraduate courses require evidence of previous study or equivalent life experience. This fundamental open admissions policy makes undergraduate university study accessible to all.

The university administers the Computer-Based-Test (CBT) form of examination to its students in their first and second years. However, Law undergraduates participate in the standard Pen-On-Paper examinations (POP) beginning from their first year of admission, with LAW111-Legal Methods in First Semester of the first year.

Other undergraduates also participate in the CBT system of examination in their first and second years and commence the POP examinations from their third year till the end of their respective course durations. The POP examination system applies to Post Graduate students also. The NOUN also provides a platform for students that needs to access its database of educational materials NOUN e-Courseware Free Download strictly for educational purposes rather than financial or commercial purposes. Books can be downloaded in PDF formats at no cost.

1.2 ICT use by distance learning students

University education is expected to equip the students with skill in reading, inquiry, and independent thinking. Little wonder that Shaw and Giacquinta (2000) suggested that, faculty in addition to integrating computer use in their courses make regularly available a wide range of short-format, hands on workshop and demonstrations in which undergraduates can be given individual attention. Computing technology has tremendous impact on learning and teaching processes. This probably while Sam, Othman and Nordin (2005) quoting Bultzine (2000) and Reiser (2001) remarks that 'educators who advocate technology integration in the learning process believe that it will improve learning and better prepare students to effectively participate in the 21st century workplace'.

Ramirez (2003) carried out a study on the impact of the Internet on the reading practices of College students in National University of Mexico. The findings of the study reveal that there was a growing interest in digital reading and that a significant percentage of the surveyed students increasingly depended on the Internet for their school related activities because it was easy and fast. Anasi (2006) investigated the pattern of Internet use by the undergraduates at the University of Lagos, Main Campus, Akoka, Lagos. She discovered that even though the level of Internet use was low among undergraduates from both the Faculties of Law and Education, the study showed that Internet use has a very high impact on the academic /career related activities of the students.

1.3 ICT skills and distance education

A distance teaching system needs to have the best technological infrastructure it can afford, namely in data processing for academic and administrative management, and internal circulation of information and technologies for producing and publishing learning materials. However, in distributing these materials and assuring good communications with students, some other considerations must be taken into account. In the case of a system aiming at providing education to the largest possible population of users, there is a risk of using technologies that are not available to the majority of the target population. This would create social and economic discrimination, with the possibility of excluding the less-favoured part of the universe of potential users from the corresponding benefits. This is the current

situation in developing countries, where information and communication technologies are not widely distributed throughout the population.

In many cases, even conventional mail is slow and erratic and telephones scarce and unreliable. A way out of this dilemma is to put distance education into a small number of selected resource centres, where a suitable concentration of the necessary technologies can be made locally available to users (Buitendach, 1997). The situation may improve in the future through the use of mobile and wireless ICT's, thus increasing the technological autonomy of these education and training centres. Nevertheless, we must recognise that, in many parts of the world and even in some remote regions in developed countries, technology is sometimes at odds with social equity.

The extraordinary expansion and accessibility of the Internet and the World Wide Web over the last decade seems to offer ODL operators a very valuable tool to further the educational aims of people in our contemporary world. If we look around we realise that it is about the Internet that profound academic debate now takes place. The usually asynchronous nature of the medium and its vast reach make it a powerful tool for both students and teachers around the world who are interested in the same field of knowledge. However, the expression Internet-based learning that we have heard frequently in recent times is, from our point of view, a term we should avoid. We believe that all technologies should be considered as mere tools in the service of distance learning, rather than a seemingly essential factor involved in the learning process.

From another point of view, the use of the Internet fits into the technological change necessary to accommodate some developments in ways and methods of learning. According to Reinhardt (1995), in the information economy knowledge is power but traditional teaching tends to be expensive and slow. With the new technologies learning can be more productive.

1.4 Web portal and distance learning students

A web portal is most often one specially designed web site that brings information together from diverse sources in a uniform way. Usually, each information source gets its dedicated area on the page for displaying information (a portlet); often, the user can configure which ones to display. Variants of portals include mashups and intranet "dashboards" for executives and managers. The extent to which content is displayed in a "uniform way" may depend on the intended user and the intended purpose, as well as the diversity of the content. Winkle (2014) observed that the term portal was used to refer to well-known Internet search and navigation sites that provided a starting point for web consumers to explore and access information on the World Wide Web. This implies that the original portals were much like search engines. The initial value proposition was to offer a full text index of document contents and a chance to take advantage of the hyper-linking capabilities built into the web protocols (Wada, 2014).

The concept of Web Portal is not a new development in the educational sector. It is seen as collection of information and services of an enterprise or as a community accessible to members through a single secure and customizable Web site. Web Portals are websites that provide gateway to a large amount of information. Web portals are seen as positive potential frameworks for achieving order out of chaos and are considered a type of information systems used to gather, manage, share, and utilize information that has been stored in disparate databases throughout the organization (Moraga, Calero and Piattini, 2006).

Tella, Bashorun and Adu (2012) claimed that a student portal is a web based interface to access personalized information, resources, applications, and education/academic options with which students can reach a wide range of internal and external sources through a network connection in a password-protected setting. Inclusion of web portal into the education sector has diversified learning and brought about a more convenience way of learning. Educational institutions develop web portal to secure access to employee or student information. Through this portal, university staff may access employment information from Human Resources, faculty may access student class lists and enter grades, and students may access course materials, grades, and financial aid information.

These web portals work as gateways to various information and services from multiple sources. Generally, these web portals have multiple interlocked pages which present contents like academics, information about colleges and departments, school email, admission, registration, payments, course management system, library system, live transportation information, and campus news etc. Nafsaniath, Ross and Witte (2014) reported that the main purpose of these web portals is to virtually convey necessary information to the students as well as to the faculty members and employees of the universities and to provide them option to conduct academic and related activities online.

1.5 ICT skills and use of web portal by National Open University students

ICT skills are those skills related to the use of computers, other technologies such as the ability to transmit stored information through fixed line networks or through wireless phone networks (Attwell, 2004). This was also corroborated by Education Testing Service (2007) as "using digital technology, communications tools, and/or networks

to access, manage, integrate, value and create information in order to function in a knowledge society. They are competencies in the use of information and communication technologies tools and products.

The ability to use computers effectively has become an essential part of every student's education; these skills constitute a set of computerized practices that form the core ICT skills packages: spreadsheets, word processors, database and presentation (Haywood, Macleod, Haywood, Mogy and Alexander, 2004). ICT skills involve using computer and internet to get information, save and store information and sort and send information. Israel and Edesiri (2013) noted that in a changing world, ICT skills are essential for students to be able to access and apply information. ICT skills are needed in this global village for students to function optimally.

ICT skills as used in this research include computer self-efficacy, internet self-efficacy, computer experience, Internet experience and computer anxiety. All these have been identified as areas of competencies needed for the successful use of web portal for e-learning. Self-efficacy refers to self-judgment of one's capability to perform a task within a specific domain. In other words, self-efficacy is an individual's perception or belief of his or her capability to execute actions in a certain context even though those actions may not be within the realm of that individual's real capabilities (Embi, 2007). Previous Internet experience is positively related to Internet self-efficacy (Eastin and LaRose, 2000). Computer anxiety refers to emotional fear, apprehension, and phobia felt by individuals toward interactions with computers or when they think about working with a computer (Herdman, 1983). ICT skills make it easier and possible for undergraduate students to access information using the computer through the internet to log into e-learning platform available on web portals.

1.6 Challenges of ICT use for distance education in Nigeria

Despite the keenness by institutions of higher learning to establish distance education programs, they are confronted with enormous problems that may have impeded its proper implementation. Some of these problems are: Poor ICTs penetration and usage among Nigerian distance education practitioners. Approximately almost all African countries basic ICTs infrastructures are inadequate; this is as a result of problem of electricity to power the ICTs materials, poor telecommunication facilities, and poor postal system. Above all the lacks of access to the needed infrastructures is made awkward because of insufficient funds.

According to Yusuf (2006), successful distance education cannot be assured without the use of effective communication and technological tools (e-mail, fax, Internet, television, radio, etc.). Poor economic situations and its effects on middle level manpower, stands as the major obstacle towards the implementation of ICTs in distance education. Even an average middle income earner cannot afford basic technological and communication gadgets. Thus, computer related telecommunication facilities might not be useful for most Nigerians, as computer is still a luxury in institutions, offices and homes. This has made the integration of necessary on-line resources (e-mail, newsgroups, worldwide-web, etc.) into distance education in Nigeria most difficult similarly, according to UNESCO (1998), Igwe (2005) and Nwagwu and Ahanihe (2006), efforts to improve ICT access in Africa have been hampered by a number of factors, these are summarized as follows:

- Prospective ICT users that have expertise, competencies and equipment to benefit from access to electronic information networks are minute in number;
- There are shortage and high costs of equipment, software and information compared to situations in the industrialized nations;
- There are lack of reliable and accessible physical telecommunications infrastructure; telecommunications monopoly, associated with overly restrictive regulations and high costs, and
- Lack of interregional networking and cooperation amongst national universities and international institutions.

2.1 Research questions

The following are the research questions for the study.

1. What is the level of information and communication technology skill of students of National Open University of Nigeria, Ibadan study centre?
2. What educational activities do students carryout on National Open University web portal?
3. What is the frequency of use of University web portal by students of National Open University of Nigeria, Ibadan study centre?
4. What is the influence of ICT skill of students on use of National Open University web portal?
5. What are the constraints to effective use of University web portal by students of National Open University of Nigeria, Ibadan study centre?
- 6.

II. Methodology

3.1 Descriptive Survey

The study adopted the descriptive survey design of correlation type. The estimate study population adopted simple random sampling technique during the selection of students from National Open University, Ibadan study centre.

3.2 Study Population

The study population consists of representative students from faculty of education, Arts and Social Science, Science and Technology and Business and Human Resources with a total study population 2,380. Using a random sampling technique, a total of 237 were randomly selected which respondents 10% of the total population of 2,380. This method gives every respondents equal opportunity of being selected.

3.3 Instrument

The questionnaire was the major instrument used for the collection of primary data for this study. The research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such simple percentages, tables, figure, mean and standard deviations with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

III. Results and Findings

4.0 Demographic characteristics of respondents

The information on the demographic characteristics of respondents showed that majority 62 (26.5%) were in 100 level while 29 (12.4%) were in 400 level. This gives credibility to the study as most of the respondents were those who must have registered with the library based on their entrance in the University. The respondents consisted of more females 125 (53.4%) than males 109 (46.6%). Results also showed that the age range of majority of the undergraduates were 26-30 years 97 (41.5%) while 12 (5.1%) expressed that that were <16 years.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents base on Demographic Information

S/N	Variables	Number	Percentage (%)	
1.	Age (Years)	Below 16 Years	12	5.1
		16-20 Years	49	20.9
		21-25 Years	26	11.1
		26-30 Years	97	41.5
		31-35 Years	15	6.4
		Above 36 Years	35	15.0
		Total	234	100.0
2.	Gender	Male	109	46.6
		Female	125	53.4
		Total	234	100.0
3.	Marital Status	Single	108	46.2
		Married	93	39.7
		Others	33	14.1
		Total	234	100.0
4.	Level	100L	62	26.5
		200L	59	25.2
		300L	32	13.7
		400L	29	12.4
		500L	52	22.2
		Total	234	100.0

4.1 What is the level of information and communication technology skills of student of National Open University of Nigeria?

The level of information and communication technology skills of students of National Open University of Nigeria, Ibadan study centre were measured with a scale comprising of thirteen items in order to determine their level of ICT skills. The findings showed that most of the respondents 119 (51.3%), 118 (50.9%) and 137 (59.1%) acknowledged that they can't operate and use the computer system for distance learning, use word packages and print from

downloadable files and capable of getting software up and running respectively with a mean value of (0.97, 1.17 and 1.93). Relatively few of the undergraduates confirmed that they feel no challenge to enter and save data into a file and confident to communicate through the internet with a mean of (1.97 and 2.65) respectively.

Table 2: Level of information and communication technology skills

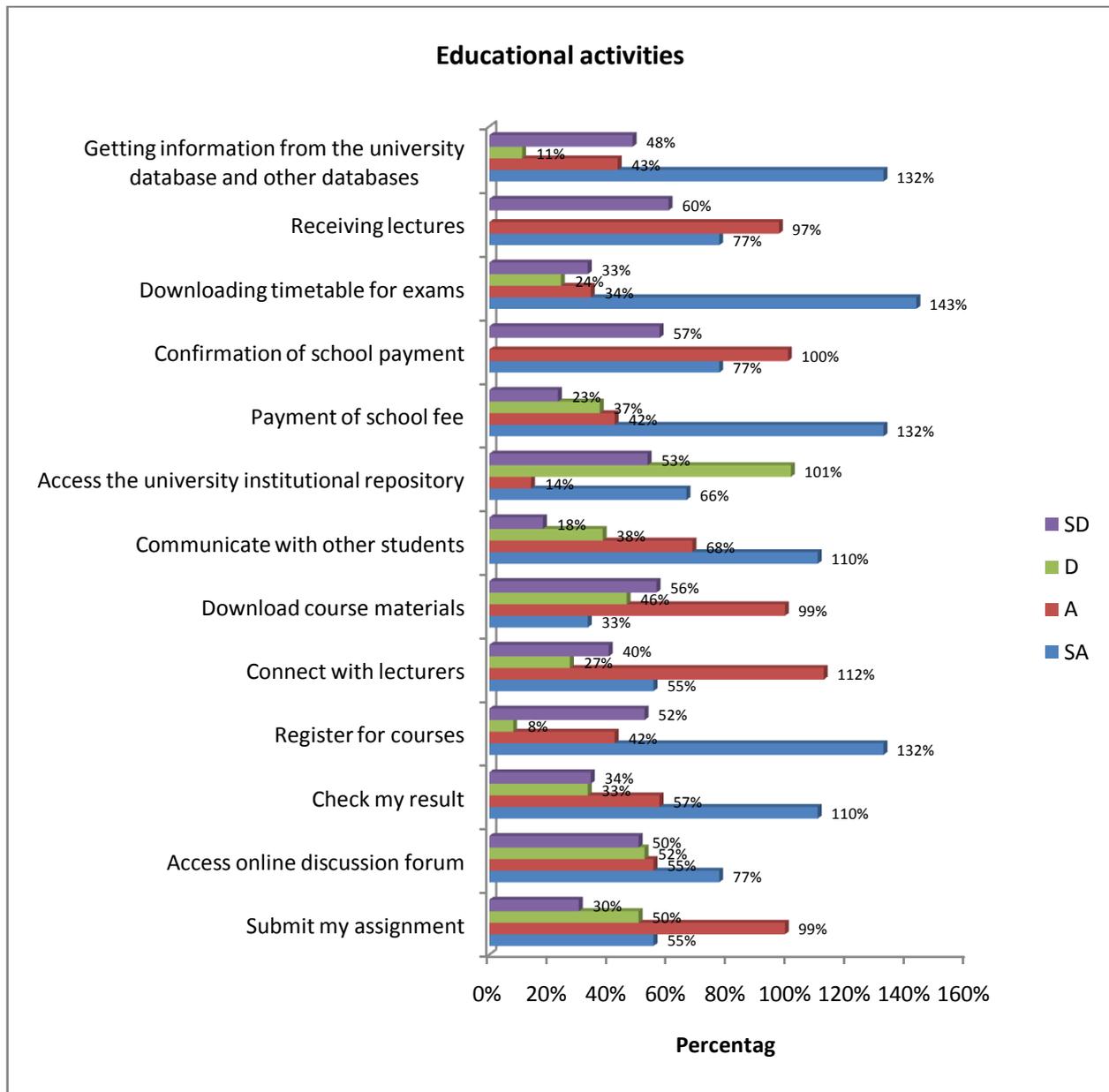
S/N	Items	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	SD
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
1.	I can operate and use the computer system for distance learning	25	10.8	45	19.4	118	50.9	45	19.2	1.17	2.34
2.	I can use word packages and print from downloadable files	35	15.1	25	10.8	54	23.1	119	51.3	.97	3.34
3.	I am capable of getting software up and running	50	21.6	30	12.9	100	43.1	53	22.6	1.93	2.51
4.	I feel can download and upload document on the web portal	60	25.9	35	15.1	40	17.2	97	41.8	1.01	2.47
5.	I can do some minor trouble shooting on the computer/web portal	25	10.8	55	23.7	88	37.6	65	27.8	1.77	2.84
6.	I feel no challenge to enter and save data into a file	15	6.5	45	19.4	55	23.7	118	50.4	1.97	1.62
7.	I am confident to communicate through the internet	50	21.6	65	28.0	97	41.8	21	9.0	2.65	1.86
8.	I am able to navigate between websites	30	12.9	50	21.6	50	21.6	103	44.0	1.93	2.25
9.	I am confident to use e-mail in online discussion forum	60	25.9	35	15.1	105	45.3	33	14.1	.17	3.34
10.	I know how to access the university web portal through smart devices	35	15.1	75	32.3	1	.4	122	52.6	1.93	2.51
11.	I can conveniently register and check my result on the university web portal	65	28.0	45	19.4	69	29.7	54	23.1	1.87	2.34
12.	I know how to synchronisethe university web portal with my smart devices	35	15.1	60	25.9	1	.4	137	59.1	1.75	2.66
13.	I can save document on the university web portal for later use	60	25.9	40	17.2	38	16.2	95	40.9	.33	3.61

4.2 What are the educational activities that are mostly carried-out by students of National Open University of Nigeria, Ibadan study centre on their web portal?

The educational activities mostly carried-out by students of National Open University of Nigeria, Ibadan study centre on their web portal were downloading of timetable for exams, payment of school fee, register for courses, getting information from the university database and to check for result with the following mean value (2.97, 3.67, 2.01 and 3.23). On the contrary, a significant number of students 101 (43.2%) disagreed that they access the university institutional repository on the web portal. The research results show that access to online discussion forum was not part of the activities mostly carried-out by students of the National Open University of Nigeria with mean value of 2.97.

Table 3: Educational activities

S/N	Items	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	SD
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
1.	Submit my assignment	55	23.5	99	42.3	50	21.4	30	12.8	2.17	1.04
2.	Access online discussion forum	77	32.9	55	23.5	52	22.2	50	21.4	2.97	.94
3.	Check my result	110	47.0	57	24.4	33	14.1	34	14.5	2.93	.51
4.	Register for courses	132	56.4	42	17.9	8	3.4	52	22.2	2.01	1.47
5.	Connect with lecturers	55	23.5	112	47.9	27	11.5	40	17.1	3.77	.94
6.	Download course materials	33	14.1	99	42.3	46	19.7	56	23.9	3.97	.72
7.	Communicate with other students	110	47.0	68	29.1	38	16.2	18	7.7	2.85	1.06
8.	Access the university institutional repository	66	28.2	14	6.0	101	43.2	53	22.6	1.23	2.05
9.	Payment of school fee	132	56.4	42	17.9	37	15.8	23	9.8	3.67	.84
10.	Confirmation of school payment	77	32.9	100	42.7	-	-	57	24.4	2.43	2.01
11.	Downloading timetable for exams	143	61.1	34	14.5	24	10.3	33	14.1	2.97	2.04
12.	Receiving lectures	77	32.9	97	41.5	-	-	60	25.6	2.55	2.16
13.	Getting information from the university database and other databases	132	56.4	43	18.1	11	4.7	48	20.5	3.23	.11



4.3 How often is the University web portal used by students of the National Open University of Nigeria, Ibadan study centre?

The frequency of use of the university web portal by students of the National Open University of Nigeria, Ibadan study centre has increase their level of ICT skills. This was defined by the degree of ICT skills possessed by the students as elicited in the research survey. ICT skill helps to remove unnecessary fear and anxiety while using the web portal, ICT skill level reduces error made while using web portal, ICT skill has made me more confident when using the web portal, ICT has helped me to recognize the different types of search engine to get information from the web portal, ICT skill encourages one to use the web portal with the following mean value (2.87, 2.93, 2.67, 2.97 and 3.17) were ranked highest as the ICT skills on web portal. The research results also show that ICT skill gives one the control over the use of web portal which was rated with least mean value of 1.01.

Table 4: ICT skill of students on use of the University web portal

S/N	ICT skills	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	SD
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
1.	I know how to search for needed information on the web portal	101	43.2	69	29.5	42	17.9	22	9.4	3.93	.95
2	My ICT skill has helped me to identify key concepts and terms for search strategy	114	48.7	41	17.5	39	16.7	40	17.1	2.67	2.34
3	ICT has helped me to recognize the different types of search engine to get information from the web portal	132	56.4	48	20.5	28	12.0	26	11.1	2.97	.94
4	My ICT skill has made me more confident when using the web portal	144	61.5	42	17.9	13	5.6	35	15.0	2.93	2.51
5	ICT skill give one the control over the use of web portal	66	28.2	114	48.7	30	12.8	24	10.3	1.01	2.47
6	I feel confident understanding the words and terms used on the web portal	68	29.1	87	37.2	35	15.0	44	18.8	3.77	.84
7	ICT skill helps one to recover from errors encountered on the web portal	133	56.8	58	24.8	30	12.8	13	5.6	2.97	1.62
8	ICT skill helps one to know some helpful guidance in performing tasks on the web portal	109	46.6	23	9.8	61	26.1	41	17.5	3.65	1.86
9	ICT skill level reduces error made while using web portal	145	62.0	39	16.7	31	13.2	19	8.1	2.93	1.25
10	ICT skill encourages one to use the web portal	115	49.1	72	30.8	-	-	47	20.1	3.17	.34
11	ICT skill helps to reduce time spent on the web portal	152	65.0	35	15.0	20	8.5	27	11.5	1.93	2.51
12	ICT skill helps to remove unnecessary fear and anxiety while using the web portal	115	49.1	69	29.5	-	-	50	21.4	2.87	1.34
13	Improved ICT skill is required for using the web portal	145	62.0	39	16.7	8	3.4	42	17.9	1.75	2.66

4.4. What are the constraints to effective use of University web portal by students of National Open University of Nigeria, Ibadan study centre?

Table 5 revealed the constraints to the effective use of National Open University web portal by student of National Open University of Nigeria. The result show that most of the undergraduates 149 (63.7%), 142 (60.7%) and 140 (59.8%) agreed that frequent changes on the web portal interface, web portal not functioning well on a particular search engine and slow server were the major constraints. In addition, 139 (55.4%) of the undergraduates also agreed on log-in problem, 135 (57.7%) agreed to inadequate ICT skills of students as other constraints to effective use of web portals by students.

Table 5: Constraints to effective use of University web portal

S/N	Items	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	SD
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
1.	Internet connection failure	101	43.2	69	29.5	34	14.5	30	12.8	1.17	2.34
2.	Inability to access the web portal properly anywhere but within the university	110	47.0	37	15.8	39	16.7	48	20.5	.97	3.34
3.	Slow loading pace of the web portal	127	54.3	45	19.2	28	12.0	34	14.5	1.93	2.51
4.	Log-in problem	139	59.4	39	16.7	13	5.6	43	18.4	1.01	2.47
5.	Lack of opportunity to personalise pages	62	26.5	110	47.0	30	12.8	32	13.7	1.77	2.84
6.	Processing error	66	28.2	81	34.6	35	15.0	52	22.2	1.97	1.62
7.	Lack of personal computer and internet enabled devices	127	54.3	56	23.9	30	12.8	21	9.0	2.65	1.86
8.	System administrator problem from the web host	103	44.0	23	9.8	59	25.2	49	20.9	1.93	2.25
9.	Slow server	140	59.8	36	15.4	31	13.2	27	11.5	.17	3.34
10.	Power problem	113	48.3	66	28.2	-	-	55	23.5	1.93	2.51
11.	Frequent changes on the web portal interface	149	63.7	30	12.8	20	8.5	35	15.0	1.87	2.34
12.	Congestion on the web portal	111	47.4	65	27.8	-	-	58	24.8	1.75	1.76
13.	It can only function well on a particular search engine and not all.	142	60.7	34	14.5	8	3.4	50	21.4	.33	3.61
14.	Inadequate ICT skills of students	135	57.7	41	17.5	-	-	58	24.8	1.87	2.34
15.	Lack of training and training facilities for students	96	41.0	67	28.6	33	14.1	38	16.2	1.75	2.66

IV. Conclusion

The National Open University and Distance Learning came to being with the hope that what the conventional system cannot absorb, the National Open University of Nigeria system will mop up. National open University and distance education has provided alternative means of education to those who do not want to lose their jobs while adding up to knowledge and those that are old and wish to increase knowledge. However, the use of ICT to support the learning in the National Open University has offered flexibility of time and place which allows higher institutions and their students to deliver or receive learning material in a flexible manner. One great innovation of ICT in National Open University learning is the use of University Web portals. National Open University students ICT skill proficiency is a major determinant to use of university web portal by students. Thus, an effective use of web portal for distance education and e-learning lies in the user's knowledge and skills to navigate through web portals.

V. Suggestions and Recommendations

The idea of establishing National open University system for Nigeria, was reflected in the National Policy on Education (NPE), which stated emphatically and unambiguously that "maximum efforts will be made to enable those who can benefit from higher education (HE) to be given access to it (NPE, 1981).

The National Open University of Nigeria in its effort to take education to the doorstep of the Nigerian populace irrespective of their social status and the developing Economy of Nigeria has deployed and implemented learn portal technology to enhance student's learning experience. The NOUN i-Learn platform has been created to ease access to excellent quality education. The platform provides amongst many, the following: Online class discussions organized by NOUN facilitators thereby creating a virtual classroom environment and facilities for students to get answers to any questions or areas of difficulties pertaining to their course of study. Networking and collaboration tool to help in community of interaction among students, facilitators, and academic staff and faculty members. Better study tools such as the Smart e-Book Digitized lecture video and audio materials for an enhanced student' learning experience available on the platform, Access to assignments, quizzes and self-study assessment tools.

The management of the National Open University of Nigeria should on admissions to the programme recommend the use of multimedia devices such as iPhone, iPad, Smart Phone, Tablet, Computer system and other supportive gadgets for educational purpose however, this can be incorporated in their tuition fees.

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