



REDEFINING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND FRAMEWORKS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING (ODL) IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

Osuji Catherine U. & Nkemjika Chika V.

Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Rivers State University, Port-Harcourt

ABSTRACT: *The study was carried out to redefine organizational structure and frameworks for effective implementation of open and distance learning in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The population of the study was all school administrators (196) in the eight (8) tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The population was manageable, hence, census sampling techniques were used to employ all the population in the study. The instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire which was titled “Redefining Organizational Structure and Frameworks for Effective implementation of Open and Distance Learning in Tertiary Institutions Rivers State”. The instrument was validated by experts and tested for reliability using Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient. The reliability index of the instrument was 0.79. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze responses that were gathered from the respondents. The study found that the ways of re-defining organizational structure of open and distance learning requires obedience to the rules of laws among members, centralization of power, encouraging limited span of control among others. Also it was found that organizational framework policies of open and distance learning were sub-grouped into academic, governance, faculty, collaboration, culture, legal, technical student support and national government. The study also found that societal demand, availability of resources (human, and material resource) among others are factors influencing the choice of organizational structure and framework. It was recommended that organizational structure and frameworks of open and distance learning should be carefully selected in such a way that it takes the form that will both give equal priority to both students who learn face-to-face and distance learners.*

KEYWORDS: Redefining, Open, Distance, Learning, Implementation, Organizational, Structure, Frameworks.

INTRODUCTION

The continuous rise in human populace has equally posed an ever increasing demand on the education system. Education is often regarded as the bedrock of every society because it is the medium by which norms and values of the society are transferred from one generation to the other. So, it remains the yardstick of building a sustainable society as posterity is equipped with appropriate knowledge to transform the society. Based on the rising notable impact of education on both individuals and the large society, the educational system has become a standard for growing young individuals for social and personal impact. This amounts to the reason why tertiary institutions over the years became a high demanding commodity among the young and even the adults.



The present society is fast developing as the rise in knowledge and willingness to learn new things keeps creating more quest for enrolment into higher institutions of learning. According to the Joint Admission Matriculation Board in Agboola and Adeyemi (2015), the number of the nation's universities have increased from one University College in 1948 to one hundred and two in 2009, with a total student population of about 1,218,312. A report from JAMB (2009) revealed that between 1999 and 2009, the universities in Nigeria have not admitted up to twenty percent (20%) of the applicants demanding university education. The reasons adduced for this trend was that there are limited available space, human and material resources in the nation's universities (Adeyemi, 2001; Aghenta, 2006). Agboola and Adeyemi (2015) making use of extrapolation equations projected that by 2020 over 5million students are expected. Due to the high number of learners and financial restrictions in higher education, increases are observed in classroom sizes.

When institutions fail in providing adequate educational resources to accommodate the rising enrollment or fail at performing their duties of providing feedback and mid-term assessments, learners' bond with each other and with the school weakens. These shortcomings may result in students' failure to complete their higher education in due time (Stephen, O'Connell, & Hall, 2008). To address this negative trend, some universities have opted to offer online courses with their advanced internet and computer technologies. The compelling need to provide education for all (EFA) irrespective of environmental, social or cultural circumstances have meant that the country must out of necessity find an appropriate and cost effective means to respond adequately to the huge unmet demand for education.

Open and distance learning is a medium of accommodating more learners into tertiary institutions having been constrained with limited space and educational resources. Open learning is introduced for the purpose of increasing the educational service capacity for the society regardless of distance. It is considered a phenomenon for promoting education in some parts of the world. Hedge and Hayward (2004), defined it as an innovative approach for delivering electronically mediated, well-designed, learner-centered and interactive learning environments to anyone, anyplace, anytime by utilizing the internet and digital technologies in concern with instructional design principles. On the other hand, Distance Education (DE) is a system of education characterized by physical separation between the teacher and the learner in which instruction is deliver through a variety of media including print and other ICTs to learner who may either have missed the opportunity earlier in life or have been denied the face-to-face formal education due to socio-economic, career, family and other circumstances (Ajadi, Salawu & Adeoye, 2008).

Open learning can take place anytime and anywhere because the devices being used are not constrained by distance. These attributes make distance education programmes to be easily carried out. Online learning is therefore intertwined with distance education which resulted in what is now being called Open and Distance Learning (ODL). The applications and process of open and distance learning include computer-based learning, web-based learning, virtual classroom and digital collaboration where contents are delivered via the internet, intranet/extranet, audio and or video tapes, satellite TV and CD-ROM (Ajadi, Salawu & Adeoye, 2008).



According to Osuji and Amadi (2020) distance education enables students to be educated without in-person interaction among their instructors or peers. Oftentimes, the students learn in the comfort of their homes or satellite areas set up by their schools. It could also be seen as approaches to learning that focus on freeing learners from constraints of time and place while offering flexible learning opportunities.

According to Khakhar (2001), there are four main types of distance-education provider. (i) Single mode institutions, where the management's sole responsibility is designing and delivering courses for distance learners. All planning, funds, staff and other resources are devoted to this purpose. (ii) Dual-mode institutions, which in addition to providing conventional teaching deliver distance-education programmes administered by a special management unit. (iii) Mixed-mode institutions, where distance-teaching programmes are designed, delivered and administered by the same people who provide conventional programmes. (iv) consortia, in which arrangements of a nation's or state's distance teaching resources are organized under a single management unit, usually made up of representatives of the institutions providing the resources. Okonkwo (2012) outlined the principles underlying the philosophy of distance education as that:

- Learning opportunity should be lifelong and should encompass both education and training;
- The learning process should centre on the learners build on their experience and encourage independent and critical thinking;
- Learning provision should be flexible so that learners can choose where, when, what and how they learn as well as the pace at which they will learn;
- Prior learning, prior experience and demonstrated competencies should be recognized so that learners are not unnecessarily barred from educational opportunities by lack of appropriate qualifications.
- Learners should be able to accumulate credits from different learning contexts; providers should create the conditions for a fair chance of learner success.

The learners were asked to compare their traditional learning experiences and their online learning experience of the DLP. The learners talked about the convenience and advantages of the DLP, and expressed that it has fewer distracting factors than that of the traditional classroom environment and that they feel closer to the course instructor. The reasons for these given views can be said to result from the fact that they are very familiar with computers and that computer use is an inseparable part of their lives, and they read and write on paper less often than the other learners (Durak & Ataizi, 2016).

Unlike the developed countries, African tertiary institutions are yet to fully embrace open and distance learning programmes. As many are saddled with beliefs that learning cannot be active as it is in the four walls of the schools. In fact, many organizations in Nigeria pay little or no attention to degrees obtained through open and distance learning. Although some institutions such as University of Ibadan, University of Lagos, University of Benin, University of Abuja and Obafemi Awolowo University have long ago incorporated open and distance learning into their system. Because of this incorporation these universities are called dual mode universities. The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), was established in July, 1983, by an Act of the National Assembly as the first distance learning tertiary institution in Nigeria when it



became crystal clear to the then Federal Government that the ever growing demand for education by her people cannot be met by the traditional means of face-to-face classroom instructional delivery. This is called a uni-mode university.

However, there is a need for systems of operation, frameworks and organizational structure for both unimode and dual mode universities for effective implementation of open and distance learning in Nigeria tertiary institutions.

Organizational structure is an essential system that defines the functionality of an organization. It is an interwoven system that shows the diverse levels of authority or hierarchy of functions in an organization. Rainey (1997) described organizational structure as the configuration of the hierarchical levels and specialized units and positions within an organization, and the formal rules governing these arrangements. It is the grouping of related functions into manageable units to achieve the objectives of the enterprise in the most efficient and effective manner (Montana & Charnov, 1993). Similarly, Grossi, Royakkers and Dignum (2007) organizational structures is a framework that shows the relations that exist between roles of an organization. According to Robbins and Coulter (2007) an organizational structure is a formal framework by which job tasks are divided, grouped and coordinated. Walton (1986) identifies structure as the basis for organizing, to include hierarchical levels and spans of responsibility, roles and positions, and mechanisms for integration and problem solving. Based on the forgoing, organizational structure could therefore be described as the elemental design that shows the interrelationship between functions, specialties, and geographical divisions of the organization towards the achievement of organizational goals and objectives.

Organizational structure has significant impact on overall success, leadership effectiveness, and competitiveness (Jones & George in Marfalane, 2011). Marfalane maintained that organizational structure is particularly important in achieving goals and results in any organization. It provides the means for clarifying and communicating the lines of responsibility, authority, and accountability (Montana & Charnov, 1993). Organizational structure is a systematic arrangement of units which makes up the whole. The significance of organizational structure lies in the breakdown of responsibilities and goals of the organization. It helps the organization to compartmentalize their overall goals and daily responsibilities.

There are various factors that can lead to organizational success, some of these factors include decision making, teamwork and taking responsibilities. Organizational structure is extremely instrumental in ensuring the collaboration of every unit within an organization towards actualizing a single goal. Organizational structure is particularly important for decision making (Suttle, 2010). It is in the context of organizational structure that we make decisions and participate in the decision process relative to our roles and functions, authority and responsibilities. This also helps to shape the response of subordinates to superiors or followers to leaders and determines the conduciveness of developing and developed organizational culture to success and survival (Marfalane, 2011). Organizational structure also enables companies to better manage change in the marketplace and marketspace, including consumer needs, government regulation, and new technology. Gonzalez, Johnson, and Lundy (2006) agree that organizational structure can have a significant impact on performance because of the types of internal incentives that affect performance for teams and individuals. The fact that organizational structures have been conceptualized in social systems theory (Dissanayake & Takahashi, 2006) attests to the interrelated and intricate connections existing between organizational structure, performance, outcomes, and their environments.



In tertiary institutions of learning, there are various organizational structures that are often adopted. For instance, single mode tertiary institutions are usually autonomous with open and distance learning as their dominant or primary function. Examples of such institutions in Nigeria include National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). Also in dual mode institutions open and distant learning forms a specific unit of the institutions. Dual mode institutions have it primary to be delivery of educational services either by face-to-face interaction or by the use of sophisticated information and communication technologies as a means of conveying learning at any distance. These tertiary institutions incorporate online teaching in the academic system for the purpose learners who are interested in obtaining higher degrees but restricted by distance and resources. In this type of tertiary institutions open and distance learning (ODL) becomes an integral aspect of organizational structure. Examples of dual mode institutions in Nigeria are University of Benin, University of Ibadan, and University of Lagos among others.

According to Awe (2013), the choice of organizational structure depends on certain factors such as educational goals, political and economic circumstances. He went further to state that some of the factors include scale of the educational needs, educational purpose, and resources available as well as the degree of autonomy and control. According to Khakhar (2001), the national government is perhaps a major factor influencing the distance education policy of an institute. Government plays a vital role by promoting information infrastructure and by regulating education policies. In the view of Ipaye (N.D) the choice of organizational structure is solely anchored on the philosophy underlying the establishment of the institution, economic restrictions, societal demand, political dictates and institutional control. These identified factors control the forms of structure that dual mode tertiary institutions take.

Normally universities in Nigeria have a complex structure in the sense that their patterns were fragmented, hierarchical in structure, participatory in decision-making, centralisation of authority and high level of formalisation (Abdulkareem & Gabadeen, 2015). Since there is need for strictness, division of labour, hierarchical supervision of tasks and compliance with rules and responsibilities, university organizational structure is considered bureaucratic (Miller, 1999). Abdulkareem and Gabadeen, (2015) opined that “the institutions are pervaded with such bureaucratic features as: clear division of labour, hierarchy of authority, policies and procedures, impersonal orientation, career orientation, and documentation and formalization which are reflected in staff and students personnel management practices”.

Organizational structure of Nigerian university according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (2001) entails; The Council, The Senate and The Administration or University Management Committee. These is sub-sectioned into the following: The Pro-Chancellor (The Council Chairman), The Chief Executive Officer/ Vice Chancellor (The Senate Chairman), The Deputy Vice Chancellors, The Registrar, The Bursar, The Librarian, The Director of Physical Planning and Development, The Director of Academic Planning and Control, The Provost(s) of College(s), The Deans of Faculties, and The Heads of Department. (FRN, 2001). These are the pivotal frameworks of Nigerian university. However, open and distance learning (ODL) departments are often neglected among these essential frameworks of the university. This calls for redefinition of university structures and frameworks especially in the era of advancement in technology and increase in demand for educational services

According to Awe (2013) bimodal structures can take two forms, that is, subject-oriented departments or distance education departments. In this form, open and distance learning is only meant for a specific programme within the institution. Secondly, the distance education



department takes main responsibility for planning and running open and distance learning within a bimodal institution. Owing to the need to extend educational services to all, distance education needs not exist as either subject-oriented department nor distance education department. When open and distance learning exists as a department, it seems to limit the scope of the programme. It can restrict the learners to certain programmes within an institution.

However, institutions need to create an administrative and organizational structure that encourages and facilitates the use and development of distance education in all areas of academic pursuit and endeavour. Distance education, unlike many other means of educating, requires the participation of several and sometimes many partners to create and deliver instruction to students (Khakhar, 2001). Since every department in a dual mode university possesses various educational resources for teaching and learning, it can equally be utilized for open and distance learning programmes in that department. In order to avoid restrictions of academic programmes in open and distance learning, every department within the institution can have sections for open and distance learning services. Distance-education institutions have been among the leaders in developing and implementing schemes for institutional collaboration, often across national borders, and the trend towards such collaboration seems likely to accelerate. At the same time governments, particularly those in developing countries, have begun to encourage their institutions to enter into collaborative arrangements, as they recognize the possibilities of distance education as a mechanism for national and regional development (Khakhar, 2001). In the view of Robbins and Coulter in Abdulkareem and Gabadeen (2015) organizations, could either be mechanistic or organic in its structure. The mechanistic structure organisation is rigid and tightly controlled; while the organic structure organisation is highly adaptive and flexible. While the former is prone to an unproductive system, the latter is proactive and thus paves the way for productivity of goods and effective service delivery (Abdulkareem and Gabadeen, 2015).

For Khakhar (2001) in bimodal institutions, it is important that distance education programmes are developed as an integral part of the university's teaching mission, not in a separate division devoted to the teaching of off-campus students. He further stated that distance education activities should be conducted in relation to plans and priorities and under policies and working arrangements that have the full authority of the university, are funded and monitored properly, and which are evaluated regularly. It is for the vice-chancellor and his/her management team to ensure that this is so.

Open and Distance Learning Education System is the system that provides learner with interacting activities with the instructor through a system of modern technologies etc (Osuji & Amadi, 2020). Open and distance learning provides wide access to education at a number of different levels in a relatively cheap or at least, cost-effective manner. It has been found to be more appropriate for individuals who are in full-time employment and have challenges and responsibilities that demand them to stay with their families. Upon the potential benefits of open and distance learning, many tertiary institutions especially in the developing countries possess no policy or organizational framework for effective implementation of open and distance learning (Braithwaite and Lekoko, 2005).

The framework policy of running open and distance learning in a bimodal university, is ideal for guiding the practice of distance education movement in a country, within a region or even internationally. Gellman-Danley and Fetzner (1997) indicated that the presence of policies can provide a framework for operation, an agreed-upon set of rules that explain all participants'



roles and responsibilities, otherwise, its absence can compromise the quality of programme and the entire practice can adversely be affected. The frameworks form a basis for effective implementation and management of open and distance learning in dual-mode University. Dual-mode universities have to acknowledge that their distance-education activities must be managed in ways that are foreign to most face-to-face teaching responsibilities (Kharkar, 2001). Braimoh and Lekoko (2005) having modified the frameworks of open and distance learning from Gellman-Danley & Fetzner (1998) and Berge (1998) developed ten variables aimed at improving the efficiency of open and distance learning. These ten variables by Braimoh and Lekoko (2005) serve as the basis for the framework policies of improving the implementation of open and distance learning include; academic, governance, faculty, collaboration, culture, legal, technical, students support, economics, and national government. They maintained that the framework is to be seen as general statements of intent (goals or objectives) to guide the professional activities, competences, and attitudes of an institution and its staff. Such policies need to be in accord with the mission, vision and the value orientation of the institution and these are expected to be consistent with the governing regional or national legislations. This study sought to obtain the opinion of administrators in tertiary institutions on organizational structure and frameworks

Purpose of the study

The main objective of the study is to redefine organizational structure and frameworks for effective implementation of open and distance learning in dual mode tertiary institutions in Rivers state. In specific terms the study sought to determine:

1. Strategies to redefine organizational structure for effective implementation of open and distance learning in a dual mode tertiary institution in Rivers state
2. Framework elements for effective implementation of open and distance learning in dual mode tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
3. Factors influencing the choice of organizational structure for open and distance learning in dual mode tertiary institutions in Rivers State

Research Question

The following research questions were posed

1. What are the ways of redefining organizational structure for effective implementation of open and distance learning (ODL) in dual mode universities in Rivers State?
2. What are the framework elements for effective implementation of open and distance learning in dual mode universities in Rivers State?
3. What are the factors influencing the choice of organizational structure open and distance learning in dual mode universities in Rivers State?



METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Rivers State. The design of the study employed was a descriptive survey. The design was used based on the fact that the opinions of the school administrators were collected to redefine the organizational structure and frameworks of open and distance learning in dual mode tertiary institutions, Rivers State. The population of the study was all school administrators in the tertiary institutions in Rivers State. These administrators include the vice chancellors, deputy vice chancellors, registrars, provosts, rectors, deans, head of departments and other administrative heads in Rivers state tertiary institutions. According to Nigeria University Commission (2020), there were 196 administrators in all the tertiary institutions who fell into the listed categories. Based on the fact that the population is manageable, the researcher engaged all the population in the study. Hence, there was no sampling procedure carried out. The instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire which was titled “Redefining Organizational Structure and Frameworks for Effective implementation of Open and Distance Learning in Dual Mode Tertiary Institutions Rivers State (ROSFEIODL)”. This instrument adopted and integrated items in the questionnaires of Abdulkareem and Gabadeen (2015) and frameworks developed by Braimoh and Lekoko (2005). The face and content validity of the instrument was done by experts in the department of educational management, Rivers state university. The internal consistency of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha reliability techniques. The reliability index obtained using this formula was 0.79, which implies that the instrument is reliable. Administration of the instrument was done by the researcher and research assistant by face-to-face and emails to the respondents. However, 196 copies of the instrument were distributed but only 102 copies were returned. This low turns up was as a result of the lockdown due to Covid-19 Pandemic. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze responses that were gathered from the respondents.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the strategies for redefining organizational structure for effective implementation of open and distance learning (ODL) in dual mode tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 1: Strategies for redefining organizational structure for effective implementation of open and distance learning (ODL) in a dual mode tertiary institutions in Rivers State

S/N	Items	Mean	Standard Dev.	Remark
Tertiary institution administrators should				
1	highly structure and be hierarchical in the line of authority in institutions.	3.06	0.90	Agreed
2	enforce obedience to the rules of laws among members.	3.43	0.98	Agreed
3	integrate centralization of the power system in the school administration.	3.32	0.80	Agreed
4	encourage limited span of control.	3.09	0.78	Agreed



5	allow subordinate staff to receive directives from a single senior officer.	3.08	0.60	Agreed
6	define a proper channel of communication flow within the system.	3.11	0.87	Agreed
7	encourage complexity for effective management.	2.34	1.03	Disagreed
8	enable division of labour among the senior and subordinate staff.	3.50	0.56	Agreed
9	facilitate effective coordination and control of organizational activities.	3.10	0.68	Agreed
10	integrate decentralization of power between top and middle level management.	2.12	1.13	Disagreed
11	accommodate changes and innovations in the area of management practices.	3.08	0.83	Agreed
12	enhance creativity in discharging responsibilities.	3.65	0.63	Agreed
13	allow collaborations within the systems.	3.50	0.75	Agreed
14	allow participatory decision-making processes on the matter of common interest.	3.53	0.82	Agreed
15	promote job standardization for optimal organizational functioning.	3.49	0.98	Agreed
	Grand Mean & S.D	3.16	0.82	

Field Survey, 2020

Table 1 shows the ways to redefine organizational structure for effective implementation of open and distance learning (ODL) in a dual mode tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Results showed that among the stated items only items 7 and 9 were rejected. Other items stated in table 1 were adjudged to be agreed. The items are a blended mode of organic and mechanistic organizational structure. The response helps to filter the needed aspects of each of the organizational structure.

Research Question 2: What are the framework elements for effective implementation of open and distance learning in dual mode tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean responses of the respondents on the framework elements for effective implementation of open and distance learning in tertiary institutions

S/N	Items	Mean	Standard Dev.	Remark
	Academic			
15	Curriculum development	3.86	0.63	Agreed
16	Quality assurance	3.67	0.52	Agreed
17	Course integrity	3.23	0.82	Agreed
18	Programme accreditation	2.80	0.90	Agreed



19	Credit transfer form one institution to another	3.76	0.53	Agreed
20	Learning outcome assessment	3.08	0.61	Agreed
21	Certification	3.45	0.72	Agreed
	Governance			Agreed
22	Goals, vision and mission	3.76	0.49	Agreed
23	Institutional policy practice	3.80	0.30	Agreed
24	Admission criteria	3.46	0.64	Agreed
25	Fiscal regulations	3.01	0.82	Agreed
26	Programme offerings	3.08	0.89	Agreed
27	Budget allocation	3.65	0.92	Agreed
28	Programme evaluation	3.59	0.83	Agreed
29	Staffing-hiring retention and discipline	3.82	0.45	Agreed
	Faculty			
30	Professional development	3.28	0.82	Agreed
31	Skills training	3.57	0.69	Agreed
32	Workload/tenure	3.34	0.72	Agreed
33	Compensation/stipend	3.01	0.80	Agreed
34	Staff appraisal/ promotion	3.45	0.94	Agreed
35	Conducive working environment	3.82	0.85	Agreed
36	Guaranteed job satisfaction	3.04	0.63	Agreed
	Collaboration			
37	Course offering	3.02	0.82	Agreed
38	Curricula	3.06	0.67	Agreed
39	Infrastructural support	3.41	0.81	Agreed
40	Staff training/ exchange	3.40	0.89	Agreed
	Culture			
41	Beliefs and Norms	2.57	0.84	Agreed
42	Organizational Values	2.89	1.00	Agreed
43	Language and customs	2.74	1.02	Agreed
44	Adoption of innovation	2.91	0.99	Agreed
46	The people, food and dressing	2.01	0.78	Disagreed
	Legal			
47	Intellectual property	3.09	0.86	Agreed
48	Copywriter owner	2.56	0.94	Agreed
49	Royalty payment	2.56	1.02	Agreed
50	Licencing	2.70	1.09	Agreed
51	Institutional liability	2.53	0.90	Agreed
52	Plagiarism.	2.79	1.08	Agreed
	Technical/ ICT Network			
53	Physical delivery network	3.65	0.98	Agreed
54	System reliability	3.80	0.77	Agreed
55	Access and connectivity	3.82	1.09	Agreed
56	setup, equipment and maintenance	3.56	1.08	Agreed



57	Use appropriate technology	3.60	0.98	Agreed
58	Sustain funding for ICT	3.53	0.78	Agreed
59	Expertise and technical knowhow	3.29	0.76	Agreed
Student support services				
60	Access to learning facilities	3.60	0.91	Agreed
61	Learner centered learning approach	3.76	0.64	Agreed
62	Equal funding eligibilities	3.51	0.84	Agreed
63	Registration, counselling and advising	3.42	0.63	Agreed
64	Turnaround time for assignment	3.09	0.78	Agreed
65	Equal tuition with full time students	3.51	0.89	Agreed
66	Authenticity/legitimacy of clientele	3.43	0.70	Agreed
National government				
67	Political issues	3.61	0.80	Agreed
68	Legislation and statues	3.30	0.90	Agreed
69	Changes in national education policy	3.42	0.67	Agreed
70	Government intervention in university management	3.20	0.89	Agreed
71	Funding of university courses	3.51	0.94	Agreed
72	Courses to be supported	3.07	0.76	Agreed
73	Students loans/bursaries	2.04	0.48	Disagreed
74	Appointment of key university officers	2.61	0.64	Agreed

Field Survey, 2020

Table 2 presents the elemental frameworks for effective implementation of open and distance learning in tertiary institutions in Rivers state. The results showed that almost all the items in the table were agreed to be elemental frameworks of open and distance learning in Rivers State tertiary institutions. However, respondents rejected item 46 and 73 as not necessary in the essential frameworks of open and distance learning in tertiary institutions.

Research Question 3: What are the factors influencing the choice of organizational structure and frameworks in dual mode tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 3: Factors influencing the choice of organizational structure and frameworks

S/N	Items	Mean	Standard Dev.	Remark
75	Philosophy underlying the establishment of the institution	3.52	0.63	Agreed
76	Economic Restrictions	3.67	0.54	Agreed
77	Societal demand	3.40	0.64	Agreed
78	Political dictates	3.80	0.56	Agreed
79	Institutional control	3.62	0.57	Agreed



80	Availability of resources (human, and material resource)	3.86	0.43	Agreed
81	Educational needs	3.50	0.69	Agreed
82	Educational purpose	3.21	0.81	Agreed

Field Survey, 2020

Table 3 presents factors influencing the choice of organizational structure and frameworks. Findings showed that respondents agreed to items 75-82 as the factors that influences the choice of organizational structure and framework.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Result from table 1 revealed the strategies for redefining organizational structure for effective implementation of open and distance learning (ODL) in dual mode tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Findings showed that centralization of power, effective coordination and control of organizational activities, enhancing creativity in discharging responsibilities among others are strategies for redefining organizational structure for effective implementation of open and distance learning. This finding is in line with Abdulkareem and Gabadeen, (2015) that opined that “the institutions are pervaded with such bureaucratic features as: clear division of labour, hierarchy of authority, policies and procedures, impersonal orientation, career orientation, and documentation and formalization which are reflected in staff and students personnel management practices”. Awe (2013) supports the findings by stating that allowing effective collaboration between the two modes of teaching will help in the effective implementation of open and distance learning in tertiary institutions.

Secondly, findings of the study showed that elemental frameworks for effective implementation of ODL are included in academic, governance, faculty, collaboration, culture, legal, technical and students’ support services. These findings are in conformity with Danley & Fetzner (1998), Berge (1998) and Braimoh and Lekoko (2005) who in their different studies found that academic, governance, faculty, collaboration, culture, legal, technical, students support, economics, and national government serves as the basis for the framework policies of improving the implementation of open and distance learning. They maintained that the framework is to be seen as general statements of intent (goals or objectives) to guide the professional activities, competences, and attitudes of an institution and its staff.

Lastly, findings of the study revealed that philosophy underlying the establishment of the institution, institutional control, economic restrictions, societal demand among others are the factors influencing the choice of organizational structure and frameworks. This finding is in line with Ipaye (N.D) who observed that the choice of organizational structure is solely anchored on the philosophy underlying the establishment of the institution, economic restrictions, societal demand, political dictates and institutional control. Also Khakhar (2001) maintained that national government is perhaps a major factor influencing the distance education policy of an institute. In the opinion of Awe (2013), the choice of organizational structure depends on certain factors such as educational goals, political and economic circumstances.



CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that ways of re-defining organizational structure of open and distance learning requires obedience to the rules of law among members, centralization of power, encouraging limited span of control, allowing subordinate staff to receive directives from single senior officer, definition of proper channel of communication flow within the system, complexity for effective management, division of labour among the senior and subordinate staff, effective coordination and control of organizational activities among others.

Organizational framework policy of open and distance learning according to the findings were subgrouped into academic, governance, faculty, collaboration, culture, legal, technical student support and national government. Finally, the study also concluded that, philosophy underlying the establishment of the institution, economic restrictions, societal demand, political dictates, availability of resources (human, and material resource) among others are factors influencing the choice of organizational structure and framework

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that

- Organizational structure and frameworks of open and distance learning should be carefully selected in such that it takes the form that will give equal priority to both students who learn face-to-face and distance learners.
- Students' needs and welfare should be considered when choosing frameworks for successful implementation of open and distance learning. This will enable students to comfortably fit and function effectively within the university system.
- Although centralization of power is required in a system whereby strict compliance to rules anchors decisions, however, for effective implementation of open and distance learning, power needs to be decentralized to heads of departments.
- In order to effectively carry out the education for all agenda, the government needs to provide the tertiary institutions with necessary facilities to incorporate open and distance learning into each of their programmes.



REFERENCES

- Agboola and Adeyemi, J.K. (2015) Projecting Enrollment for Effective Academic Staff Planning in Nigerian Universities. *Educational Planning*, 21(1) 5-17
- Aghenta, J. A. (2006). Human resources development and planning in Nigeria. Second Faculty of Education Distinguished Lecture Series, University of Benin, Benin City. 24-26
- Ajadi, T.O., Salawu, I.O. & Adeoye, F.A. (2008). E-learning and distance education in Nigeria. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology – TOJET* (7) 4 Article 7
- Anderson, T., & Dron, J. (2011). Three Generations of Distance Education Pedagogy. *International Review of Research in Open & Distance Learning*, 12(3).
- Berge, Z. L. (1998). “Barriers to online Teaching in Post-Secondary Institutions: Can Policy Changes Fix It?”, *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 1(2) (2/24/99).
- Commonwealth of Learning International (2001): Building capacity to deliver distance education in Nigeria’s federal university system. *A Report prepared for the World Bank Vancouver: COL international.*
- Dissanayake, K., & Takahashi, M. (2006). The Construction of Organizational Structure: Connections with Autopoietic Systems Theory. *Contemporary Management Research*, Vol.2, No.2, September 2006, pp. 105-116.
- Garrison, G. R. (1985). Three generations of technological innovation in distance education. *Distance Education*, 6(2), 235-241
- Gellman-Danley, B., & Fetzner, M. J., (1998) “Asking the really tough questions: Policy issues for distance learning”, *Online Journal of Distance Administration*, 1(1) Accessed online 13/08/04, at <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/king32.html>.
- Gonzalez, C., Johnson, N., & Lundy, M. (2006). Social Capital and Organizational Structure in Colombian Enterprises. Research Workshop on Collective Action and Market Access for Smallholders, 2-5 October 2006, Cali, Colombia.
- Grossi, D., Royakkers, L., & Dignum, F. (2007). Organizational structure and responsibility: An analysis in a dynamic logic of organized collective agency. *Artif Intell Law* (2007), 15; pp. 223–249.
- Gurhan Durak & Murat Ataizi (2016) Learner views about a distance education course. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 7(1), 85-105
- Ikegulu, B. Oranusi, S. (2014) Distance and open learning in Nigeria: Progress, concerns and prospects. *Journal of Education and Practice* 5 (35), 167-171
- Joint Admission Matriculation Board (n.d). Statistics. Retrieved from <http://www.jambng.com:8080/jamb/> on 7th July 2020
- Khakhar, D (2001). *A framework for open and distance learning — organization and management*. Portland press
- Marfalane, D.A (2011) Comparison of organizational structure and pedagogical approach: Online versus Face-to-face. *Journal of Educators Online* 8 (1) 1-43
- Montana, P. and Charnov, B. (1993). *Management A Streamlined Course for Students and Business People*. (Hauppauge, New York: Barron’s Business Review Series, 1993), pp. 155-169
- Okonkwo, U.M. (2012): Open and Distance learning in Nigeria in Ivowi U.M.O. and Akpan B.B: Education in Nigeria from the Beginning to the Future, *A book of readings in honour of Prof. Obioha C. Nwana*; pp. 359-386.



-
- Osuji, C.U. & Amadi, J.C. (2020). Global Education Marketing: Using Distance Learning to Export Knowledge Implications on Globalization. *Journal of Education and Entrepreneurship* 7(1) 14-25
- Rainey, H. G. (1997). *Understanding and managing public organizations*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.
- Robbins, S.P., & Coulter, M. (2007). *Management, 9th edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall
- Suttle, R. (2010). The Importance of Organizational Structure. The Houston Chronicle. Retrieved November 2, 2010, from <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/importance-organizational-structure-2783.h>
- Walton, R.E. (1986) "A Vision-led approach to management restructuring organizational dynamics", Spring, Vol. 4, 1986, pp.5-17.
- Yusuf, A. (2006). Problems and Prospects of Open and Distance Education in Nigeria. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education* 7 (1) 22-29