An Assessment of Student Support Services within the Open Distance E-Learning Programme in Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT

The student support services in an Open Distance e-Learning system are a vitally important component of achieving quality education. The focal point of this paper was to assess the student support services in the Open and Distance e-Learning (ODe-L) programme in one selected university in Zimbabwe. The study employed a mixed methods research approach following a parallel convergent research design. The study population comprised ODe-L students, coordinators, and lecturers. A stratified random sampling method was employed to come up with a study sample of 50 participants, consisting of 40 students, 3 coordinators, and 7 lecturers. Online questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions were used to generate data on student support services within the ODe-L setting. Quantitative data was analysed descriptively and qualitative data was analysed thematically. The study revealed that the ODe-L program offered academic, administrative, and emotional support services. A Chi-square test based on Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance was used to test the level of agreement among the rankings of the support services in terms of their importance and accessibility. There was high level of agreement among the rankings done by the participants. Learning support services were ranked the most important and accessible support service category by students. Emotional support services were ranked the least accessible. The results implied that the ODe-L students were not adequately given emotional support, which was also deemed important. The researchers recommended that the university where the study was conducted should employ student advisors who have expertise in adult student guidance and counselling. Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommend that there is a need for lecturers and student affairs department to inform students about available support services. The researchers recommended that the university where the study was conducted should employ adequate student advisors who have expertise in Learner Support Services.

Keywords: student support services, accessibility, importance, open and distance e-learning, Zimbabwe

INTRODUCTION

The increase in the number of secondary school graduates desiring to pursue higher education and working people seeking to advance their careers are among the factors that fuelled the growth of Open and Distance e-Learning in various universities across the globe. Open and Distance e-Learning (henceforth ODe-L) entails that the learner and the teacher are separated in terms of time, space, or both. In addition, the learners receive learning instruction through various electronic media, which include videos, webinars, audios, and written notes. In an ODe-L space, the students may learn synchronously or asynchronously. According to Maboe (2018), ODeL is a relatively new mode of lesson learning that has dramatically changed how higher education institutions conduct their instruction. This mode of learning is convenient for people who cannot attend the conventional classroom such as the working class. Students learn at their own time and pace. It allows them to further their education without finding ways of excusing themselves from their workplaces. Moreover, it is expedient for students who cannot always travel to their learning campuses because of

various reasons, for instance, the disabled and those in foreign countries.

However, previous studies revealed that open and distance e-learning is normally associated with a high dropout rate due to a lack of sufficient student support from the universities (Shikulo & Lekhetho, 2020; Simpson, 2012; Usun, 2004; Woodley & Simpson, 2013). Usun (2004) noted that most universities concentrate more on institutional needs instead of their students' needs. In traditional learning situations, the lecturer provides the students with the support required during the learning process. However, in the ODe-L, the students are physically separated from their institutions, lecturers, and peers. The role of the lecturers in ODe-L is simply to connect the students to the learning resources. The students are forced to find ways to juggle the demands of studies, families, and work. For that reason, there is a need for the institutions of higher learning to provide student support to ODe-L students.

Previous research studies have shown that the success of students in open and distance learning is determined by the amount of support given to the students during their study (Chatto-padhya, 2015; Shikulo & Lekhetho, 2020). However, providing support services to the students may not necessarily mean that all the students access and benefit from the existing support services. The services may not be reachable for some of the students. After noticing that ODe-L programmes at several higher learning institutions in Zimbabwe were affected by high student attrition and dropout, the current researchers thought it essential to explore the support services given to the ODe-L students. The purpose of the study was to assess the student support services provided to Ode-L students by the university system. It went further to examine the challenges associated with the provision of student support services. The study will provide considerable insight into the field of student support in open distance education. The study will also contribute to already expanding knowledge of student support by identifying student support services that are important for their success and motivation. This study was guided by the two research questions: What are the student support services provided by the university system? and how do the students rank the accessibility of the existing support services provided by the university system? In addition, two hypotheses were tested using the Chi-square test, based on Kendall's coefficient of concordance. The Kendall's coefficient of concordance was used to find whether the students' rankings on the importance and accessibility of the support services were in agreement. The next section discusses literature review related to the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Open distance learning

Open and Distance e-Learning is a concept that refers to distance learning that occurs via electronic materials, providing interactive open distance learning (Aparicio, Bacao & Oliveira, 2016). Arinto (2013) asserts that ODe-L is an expansion of the term 'open and distance learning(ODL), which utilise electronic means to enable multiple forms of interaction and dialogue to bridge the distance between teachers and learners (Anderson, 2008; Calvert, 2005; Garrison, 2009). In addition, ODe-L, can be defined as learning that takes place either synchronously or asynchronously. Thus, in an ODe-L environment, the students are not only physically isolated from their lecturers but also other students and the institution. The distance learning institutions can overcome student isolation through the provision of appropriate student support services.

The Student Support Services in Higher Learning Institutions

There is growing recognition of the central role of student support services in making distance education more effective and retaining students. The provision of quality student support services contributes to student academic success, motivation, and retention. It was, therefore, crucial to assess the student support services provided within the ODe-L programme in Zimbabwe. Student support is a fairly broad concept, and

people conceptualise it differently. Ahsan (2017) describes student support as all the activities beyond the production and delivery of course materials that can assist the student to learn. According to Ahsan, in distance education, the support comprises a wide range of human and non-human resources that help to guide the student and facilitate the learning process. Kaur (2016) posits that student support services serve as the interface between the institution and the student. In this study, the student support services refer to a cluster of activities that are meant to assist students to perform well in their studies as well as improve the quality of distance learning. Malboe (2018) asserts that the students' support assists the students to find ways to develop effective learning skills that enable them to balance the demands of families, jobs, and studies. Simpson (2012) clustered student support as either academic or non-academic. The academic support services address students on learning, learning skills development, assessment, and feedback. On the other hand, the non-academic support services address administrative and emotional needs such as student orientation, counselling, registration, and fees payment.

Soderman and Beiter (2004) observed that at the university level student support services comprise one or more departments or divisions of services that operate to enhance student growth and development. The type of services offered to the students by these departments includes admission, orientation, financial aid, counselling, study advice, career advice, sports facilities, wellness advice, disability support, and international student services. Some universities even give alumni services. In most cases, a service desk is established to respond to students' questions and requests through telephone, email, skype, and other communication media. Shikulo and Lekhetho (2020) reported that at open universities in Namibia, students support services were rendered through student support officers and tutors. The student support staff gave mainly administrative support to the students whilst tutors offered academic support. Meyer and Barefield (2010) observed that funding, counselling, and general guidance were the administrative services that were given to the open and distance students. Academic support was offered in the form of tutorials that were meant to motivate the students by improving their achievements (Fluke et al., 2014).

The reviewed literature revealed that although institutions of distance learning were making effort to ensure that their learners get study support, some possible challenges hindered the provision of the support services. Soderman and Beiter (2004) stated that the student support programmes in most universities appear to be perfect on paper but on the ground, students fail to access the services due to various reasons that include the hierarchy that the students have to follow to get assistance. The researchers noted that some students preferred a situation in which universities employ students to help other students. Unfortunately, some members of staff at the universities were against involving students in student support. Raihan and Kamal (2014) found some challenges that led to students' failure to access support services from their institutions. The challenges included a shortage of skilled manpower to offer expert support. Those researchers reported that most of the staff members at the student support centres had a traditional on-campus mentality, which prohibited them from providing students with real-time support services. Non-response to queries and delayed feedback were also factors that led to students' failure to receive the much-needed support in distance learning (Pandey & Venkatachalam, 2017). Pandey and Venkatachalam reiterated that distance students complained of their failure to get timeous feedback on their performance in assignments and other learning activities. Reju (2016) identified unreliable and limited internet connectivity as a major challenge to open and distance learners. The next section discusses the conceptual framework that guided the study.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study from which this paper is written utilised a framework for student support adopted from Simpson (2012). Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework for the study.
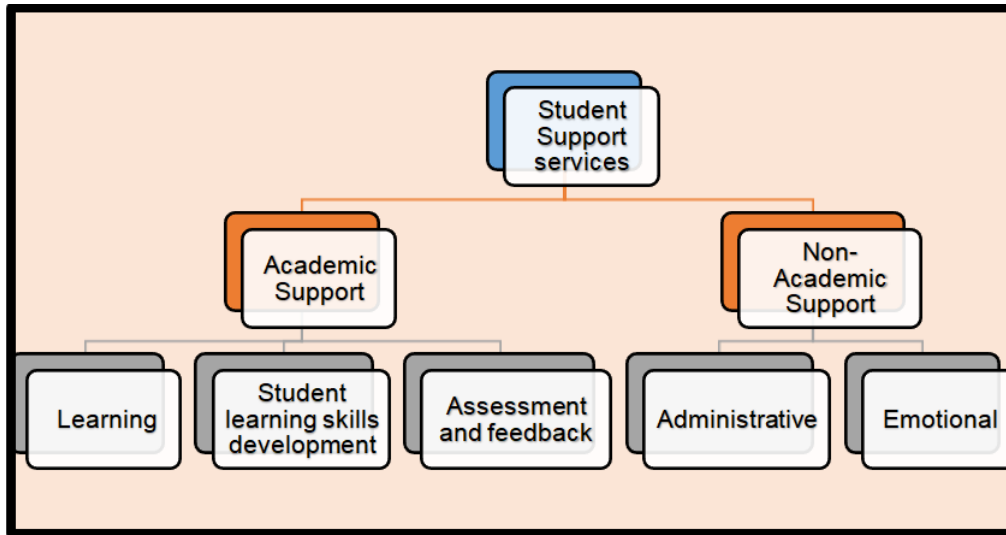
Figure 1: Framework for student support services [Adapted from, Simpson, 2012]

As shown in Figure 1, student support can be classified into two main categories, which are academic and non-academic support. Academic support deals with developing the student's cognitive and learning skills. It also involves assessing and giving feedback to the students on their learning progress. The assessment can be formal, informal, or both. The feedback given to the students highlights their strengths and weaknesses. Non-academic support encompasses organisational (administrative) and emotional support. According to Simpson, organisational support helps students to manage their studies. It helps them to manage time and keep pace with course outlines. Thus, providing non-academic support services to ODe-L students is an important part of creating the feeling of attachment and belonging for students to their learning institution. The organisational support also include the help given to students in terms of registration, orientation, and choice of courses. Emotional support helps students to deal with their emotional and social needs. It takes into account helping the students to manage the stress resulting from the work, study, and family matters. The section that follows discusses methodology of the study.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed methods research approach with a parallel convergent research design in one Zimbabwean university that offered diploma and degree learning programmes to students through open and distance e-learning. The mixed methods research approach was employed to get a better understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2015). The study population comprised ODe-L students, lecturers, and coordinators. The study selected a stratified random sample of fifty participants comprising 40 students, 7 lecturers, and 3 ODe-L coordinators. Stratified random sampling was used to ensure that the sample was a proportional representation of the study population. All the participants were involved in an open and distance e-learning program. Table 1 gives the demographic information of the students who participated in the study.

Table 1. Demographic information of the students who participated in the study.

	Level of study				Total
	Diploma	Undergraduate	Master's degree	PhD	
Females	4	12	8	1	25
Males	4	6	4	1	15
Total	8	18	12	2	40

Table 2 gives the demographic information of the students who participated in the study. However, the participant selection was not based on gender status but on the basis that there were rich informants for the study. Gender was not the focal point in this study.

Table 2. Demographic information of the lecturers and coordinators who participated in the study

	Work experience with ODe-L			
	Less than 3 years	Between 3 and 5 years	More than 5 years	Total
Lecturers	1	2	7	10
Coordinators	0	1	2	3
Total	1	3	9	13

From Table 2, majority of the lecturers and coordinators had more than five years work experience. The data on work experience was sought because the researcher assumed that the length of the ODe-L experience positively corrected to the provision of the student support services. Thus, the underlying assumption in this study was that ODe-L staff who had longer work experience were likely to be more knowledgeable than those with relatively fewer years in service.

The researchers collected data from the participants through a questionnaire, semi-structured face-to-face interviews, and focus group discussions. As a measure to combat the spread of COVID-19, the researchers opted to administer the questionnaire online. The questionnaire had four sections. The first section required the ODe-L student participants to indicate the support services offered by the university. The second section required them to rank the support services in order of their importance to them. In the third section, they ranked the support services in order of their accessibility to them. The fourth section asked the students to state the challenges that affected the effective provision of student support services. Four online focus group discussion, each having 10 students, were held on Microsoft teams as a way of triangulating the data obtained through the questionnaire. Face-to-face interviews were held with 10 lecturers and 3 ODe-L coordinators. Ethical issues were observed during the process of collecting data. Participants were informed of the intention of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured. To further maintain and gain the anonymity of other participants, pseudonyms were used.

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected for analysis. Qualitative data was analysed qualitatively using content analysis and categorised according to the emerging themes. Whilst quantitative data was analysed using inferential statistics. Kendall's coefficient of concordance was used to determine the level of agreement of the participants' rankings on the support services in terms of their importance and accessibility. The values of Kendall's coefficient of concordance ranges from 0 to 1. The Kendall's coefficient of concordance value of zero means no agreement and the higher the value, the stronger the agreement. The following formula, adopted from Legendre (2010), was used to calculate the Kendall's coefficient of concordance, denoted as W, is calculated by the equation

$$W = \frac{12S}{m^2(k^3 - k) - mT}$$

where S is the sum of squares of the row totals of the ranks assigned to the support services. It is calculated as;

$$S = \sum_{l=1}^{k} (R_l - \bar{R})^2$$

m is the number of students who participated in the study (the variables), k is the number of categories of the support services (the objects),R_l is the sum of the ranks assigned to the lth object and $\bar{R}$ is the mean of the R_l, and T is the correction factor of the of ties. T is calculated as;

$$T = \sum_{l=1}^{k} (t_l{}^3 - t_l)$$

where t_l is the number of ties in each of the objects.

However, the number of participants was large (above 20), therefore it was more expedient to use the Chi-square test than Kendall's W (Jeevanand, 2017; Legendre, 2005). For that reason, the Kendall's coefficient of concordance was transformed into a Chi-square statistic with k-1 degrees of freedom using the following formula.

$$X^2 = m(k - 1)W$$

The Chi-square statistic was then used to test the level of agreement among the ranks assigned by the participants at a 5% significance level. Microsoft Excel was used to make the calculations.

RESULTS

Student support services offered to the open distance e-learn students

According to the data obtained from the participants, the university had twelve regional centres. Each province had one regional centre. The regional centre was responsible for providing support services to the university students in the province. At each regional centre, there was a students' advisor whose mandate was to provide emotional support to the students. Regional programme coordinators who represented faculties at regional centres assisted the students with academic support. Administrative officers gave administrative support. The services undertaken by the regional centres are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3. Support services offered by the regional centres

Learning	Student skills development	Assessment and feedback	Administrative	Emotional
Provision of study material	Provision of study orientation	Assignment setting and marking	Admission of students	Providing games and sporting facilities
Network provision	Computer skills training	Conducting examinations	Facilitating student's financial assistance	Providing disability and inclusion support
Provision of library services		Grading of students	Providing alumni assistance	Providing health and wellness support

Provision of virtual lessons			Staffing	Providing student counselling
Initiating teleconferences			Handling students' results and records	
Organising seminars			International student support	

Table 3 shows the support services given by the university. It is apparent from the data collected that a wide range of support services were offered by the institution. Besides the data on support services offered by the institution, the study also established information on how the students' participants ranked these support services in terms of importance and accessibility.

Students' ranking of the importance of the support services offered by the university

The researchers asked the students to rank the support services from a five pre-identified support service category in terms of accessibility. A 5-point Likert scale of 1(representing least accessible) to 5(representing the most accessible). The mean ranking scores for each support service were calculated and the mean ranking score of 3.00 or higher indicated a high level of importance. The mean ranking score of 2.00 to 2.99 indicates a medium level of importance and a mean score of less than 2.00 indicates a low level of importance. Table 4 shows the summary of the results obtained.

Table 4. Summary of the students' ranking of the importance of the support services

Student support service Category	Sum of the ranks	Mean ranking	Standard deviation (s)
Learning	41	4.4	0.39
Student learning skills development	112.5	2.48	0.98
Assessment and feedback	74.5	3.75	1.04
Administrative	88	2.9	1.09
Emotional	132	1.37	0.7

Table 4 shows that the majority of the students indicated that the support services classified under learning were the most important to them. Fourteen (46.7%) of the students assigned a '5' to this category. The 'learning category' had the least standard deviation (This indicated that the students' rankings on this category were close to each other. Emotional support services were viewed the least important service. Table 4 indicates that the sum of the ranks in this category was 132, which was the largest of the five categories. The standard deviation shows that the assigned ranks were closer to each other. Hence, there was consistency in the ranking by participants.

A Chi-square test, based on Kendall's coefficient of concordance, was used to determine the level of agreement among the students in terms of the importance of the support services given by the university. The hypotheses tested were:

H_0: There is no agreement among the students on the importance of the support services.

H_1: There is an agreement among the students on the importance of the support services

Table 5 shows the results of the statistics calculated from the students' ranking.

Table 5. Kendall's coefficient of concordance and Chi-square statistics from the students' ranking of the importance of students support services

Kendall's coefficient of concordance	Chi-square	Degrees of freedom	p-value	Significance level (a)
0.81	65.86	4	0.0031	0.05

As shown in Table 5, the probability value is less than the significance level () hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the conclusion is that the students were concordant with each other on the rankings of the importance of the support services. There was high agreement in the participant's rankings of the support services in terms of their importance(W=0.81).

Students' ranking of the accessibility of the support services offered by the university

The researchers asked the students to rank the support services from a five pre-identified support service category in terms of accessibility. A 5-point Likert scale of 1(representing least accessible) to 5(representing the most accessible). The mean ranking scores for each support service were calculated and mean ranking score of 3.00 or higher indicated a high level of importance. The mean ranking score of 2.00 to 2.99 indicates a medium level of importance and a mean score of less than 2.00 indicates a low level of importance. Table 6 shows the summary of the results obtained.

Table 6. Summary of the students' ranking of the accessibility of the support services

Student support service category	Sum of the ranks	Mean ranking	Standard deviation (s)
Learning	78	4.3	1.05
Student learning skills development	130	2.6	0.12
Assessment and feedback	42	4.7	1.01
Administrative	113.5	3.78	0.32
Emotional	141	1.4	0.21

The data in table 6 revealed that assessment and feedback support services received the highest accessibility rating. However, the standard deviation in this category was high indicating that the rankings were widely spread. Support services classified under the 'learning category' were ranked second in terms of accessibility whilst student learning skills development was considered to be moderately accessible. According to the students, emotional support services were the least accessible support service. The Chi-square test, based on Kendall's coefficient of concordance, was done to find whether the students' rankings on the accessibility of the support services were in agreement. The hypotheses tested were:

H_0: There is no agreement among the students on the accessibility of the support services

H_1: There is an agreement among the students on the accessibility of the support services

Table 7 shows the values of the Chi-square statistics obtained from the students' rankings.

Table 7. Kendall's coefficient of concordance and Chi-square statistics from the student's ranking of the accessibility of the support services.

Kendall's coefficient of concordance	Chi-square	Degrees of freedom	p-value	Significance level
0.781	93.72	4	0.0024	0.05

The probability value is less than the value of the significance level () therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It follows that the students' rankings were concordant, that is in agreement. There was high agreement in the participant's rankings of the support services in terms of their accessibility(W=0.78).

Challenges associated with the provision of support services

The participants reported that a number of challenges affected the provision of support services to the students. Table 8 shows the challenges that impeded the effective provision of support services to open and distance e-learners. It also shows the number of participants who agreed.

Table 8. Challenges affecting the effective provision of student support services (N=50)

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of qualified and experienced personnel	13	26
Inadequate resources	43	86
Irrelevant and outdated resource materials	41	82
Malfunctioning and outdated computers	23	46
Limited and unreliable internet connectivity	47	94
Work and family-related issues	9	18
Remoteness of the areas in which the students lived	9	18
Failure to attend orientation exercises	4	8
Unavailability of well-resourced modern library	34	68
Delayed feedback	18	36
Non-response to requests	13	26
Inaccessibility of the support services	7	14
Attitude and ineffectiveness of the service providers	9	18
Non-availability of the services	3	6
Lack of electricity and power cuts	5	10

According to the data obtained from the participants in Table 6, indicate that one of the major challenges was limited and unreliable internet connectivity. Both the students and the lecturers stated that they had problems with the internet. According to the participants, power cuts sometimes affected the internet. Some said the internet providers charged exorbitant prices that made it difficult for the students to purchase data bundles to use for their studies at home. One of the lecturers had the following to report:

"The greatest enemy in ODe-L is internet. It is quite embarrassing. 20 % of the time, it is down. The prices are beyond the reach of many. I even feel pity for the students. They have to be financially strong otherwise; they will not cope with the requirements. It defeats the openness of the ODe-L programme," (Lecturer C, pers. Com).

A student added on by saying:

"Mmmmm the cost of data bundles is unbelievable. We are really paying excessively. It is only that we need to learn otherwise, I should have quitted long back. I urge the government to subsidise data for students in its state institutions," (Student A, pers. com).

The study also revealed that inadequate, irrelevant, and out-dated resources provided by the university libraries also impeded the effective provision of student support services. One of the regional programme

coordinators shared the following statements during an interview:

"We seem not to be moving with time. If you look at the laptop I have here you will notice that it is no longer compatible with modern technology. I tried to install some software on the computer and it had no space. I installed some anti-virus software sometime and the processing speed of the computer was reduced. It was disappointing," (Coordinator A, pers. com).

The above comments were further confirmed by the ODe-L coordinators during interviews. More than half of the participants (68%) indicated that improvements and modernisation of the university libraries would improve the effectiveness of the student support services. All the coordinators interviewed reported that they were receiving requests from students on the matter. The data obtained from the students revealed that some of the support services required by the students were not available. The non-available services mentioned by the students were financial and wellness support services.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that the university provided both reactive and proactive support services to the students. For instance, the provision of orientation exercises was proactive and student counselling was done reactively. This was in line with the suggestions by Simpson (2012) who stated that both proactive and reactive forms of support were important in open and distance learning. Both proactive and reactive support services were provided at regional centres. The researchers felt that the arrangement was beneficial to the students as the university decentralised the provision of the support services so that the support centres get closer to the students. More than one department at the regional centres was responsible for the provision of the support services. Regional programme coordinators offered academic support, administrative officers offered administrative support and a students' advisor was responsible for emotional support. Open universities in Namibia used a similar arrangement (Shikuto & Lekhetho, 2020). The only difference in the arrangement was that Shikuto and Lekhetho did not report the presence of the student's advisor among those who provide support services to the students.

Although the university made efforts to provide support services to the students, the students did not view all the services provided as equally important to them. Provision of learning materials, assessment, and feedback was rated the most important. Emotional support and learning skills development were rated the least important. In our view, the students involved in open and distance e-learning were adults who had been involved in some form of higher learning before, therefore they thought they had developed learning skills that could assist them to do their studies without any external assistance. The other reason could be that the students found emotional and learning skills development support services not accessible to them and because of that, they viewed them as not useful. When the students were asked to rank the services in terms of accessibility, they rated emotional and learning skills development services as the least accessible. It follows that the presence of students' advisors at regional centres was not effective in the provision of emotional support. However, Tait (2000) noted that sometimes the students fail to make use of the available resources. It could be that the students were not making use of their student support providers.

Soderman and Beiter (2004) reiterated that student support programs at most universities appear perfect on paper but practically they face a number of challenges. This study revealed that despite the efforts made by the university, a number of challenges impeded the provision of effective student support services. The most prevailing challenges were the lack of adequate, relevant, and modern learning materials. This was also combined with the existence of limited and unreliable network connectivity. However, the provision of adequate learning materials and reliable network connectivity form the backbone of open and distance e-learning since the students rely mostly on the internet. Reju (2016) also noted that limited and unreliable internet connectivity caused some challenges to open and distance students. The results of the study also

agreed with those obtained by Pandey and Venkatachalam (2017) in that the participants complained of non-response and delayed feedback.

In the current study, the researchers observed that the attitude of the service providers affected the effective provision of student support services. Raihan and Kamal (2014) also had the same observation in their study. Raihan and Kamal observed that most service providers had a traditional on-campus mentality that prohibited them from offering support that suited modern standards.

Apart from the challenges found in the literature, this study revealed other challenges affecting open and distance e-learning students at the university. Probably these challenges were related to the economic and social status of the area of study. The challenges included non-availability of some support services (for instance financial services), remoteness, lack of electricity, power cuts, and use of out-dated computers.

CONCLUSION

In this study, the researchers found that the university provided a number of student support services. Both academic and non-academic support services were provided. The academic student support services provided included the provision of learning materials, learning skills development, assessment, and feedback. The non-academic support services comprised administrative and emotional support services. The open and distance e-learners felt that provision of learning materials, assessment, and provision of timeous feedback were the most important support service they required. The students rated emotional and learning skills development least important. According to the students, emotional and learning skills development support services were the least accessible to them. The institution could increase the aspect of emotional support services by offering more counselling support. The provision of support services to the students had a number of challenges. The greatest challenges were the lack of suitable learning materials and ineffective internet connectivity.

Based on the findings from this study, the researchers recommended that the university employ students' advisors who are computer literate and have expertise in counselling adult students. Student friendliness makes the advisors approachable to the students when the problem arises. Computer literacy equips the advisors with skills to communicate effectively with students in different locations. The advisors should also possess skills to deal with adult students. They should understand problems that affect them and the type of support they require.

The researchers also recommended that the university should be partnered with stakeholders that offer financial support to its students. The study revealed that financial assistance was not available at the university. Lack of financial assistance may lead to high drop out. Related to this point, the researchers recommended further study on possible causes of dropout and attrition in the ODe-L program. Furthermore, the researchers recommend that there is a need for lecturers and student support services providers to inform students about available support services. This might increase the access to student support services available.

Lastly, the researchers suggested that the university employ students to counsel other students. This suggestion is based on the principle that 'what is planned for us without us is not for us.

AREA OF FURTHER STUDY

This study could be replicated with a lager sample and more ODe-L centres in Zimbabwe.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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