

Investigation of the Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute Students in University of Lagos

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Abstract – This study examined Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute Students in University of Lagos. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of this study was distance learning institute students in University of Lagos. The sample population of this study is five hundred. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. The instrument used for data collection is a structured closed ended questionnaire titled “SERVICOM SERVICE DELIVERY IN DLI-UNILAG”. Findings revealed that Servicom have not play key role to address service delivery crisis in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos. The findings also identified five drivers of Servicom delivery in Distance learning Institute University of Lagos namely service delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. It showed four guiding principles of Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute University of Lagos namely affirmation of commitment to the service of the Nigerian Nation, Conviction that Nigeria can only realize its full potential if citizens receive prompt and efficient services from the states, consideration for the needs and rights of all Nigerians to enjoy social and economic advancement and finally dedication to deliver services to which citizens are entitled, timely, fairly, honestly, effectively and transparently identified grading sorting, class overcrowding, quality of teaching, quality of infrastructure, missing results, application and collection of transcripts, erratic water and electricity supplies in campus, changes in exam schedules/timetables, unfair treatment by non-academic administrative staff of DLI Unilag, examination malpractices, sex inducement for mark and monitoring compliance to service delivery standards as Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute Students in University of Lagos.

Keywords – Servicom Delivery Crisis, Distance Learning, Distance Learning Students, University Of Lagos, Nigeria.

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of SERVICOM (Service Compatibility with Nigerians) was first introduced in Nigeria in 2004 by the former President, Olusegun Obasanjo. The primary aim of SERVICOM is to establish a yardstick for measuring the quality of service as delivered by government through its various Ministries, Departments, and Agencies. SERVICOM was predicated on the fact that the citizens of Nigeria who patronize government have the right to be served right and enjoy satisfactory services from those who act as agents to government.

Service Compact with all Nigerians (SERVICOM) is an acronym for effective services delivery in Nigeria. Over the

years, the Nigerian Public Service system has been poor and inefficient, characterized with corruption, undue outside influences, individual and group selfish interests, with other impediments plaguing the effective implementation of government policies that are being carried out through various public service administrative systems and establishments in Nigeria.

“Public offices are the shopping floor for government business. Regrettably, Nigerians have for too long been feeling short-changed by the quality of service delivery by which decision are not made without outside influence and files do not move without being pushed with inducements. Our public offices have for too long been the showcases for the combined evils of inefficiency and corruption, whilst

being impediments to effective implementation of government policies. Nigerians deserve better. And we will ensure they get what is better”.

These negative habits therefore, are becoming a way of life or culture in all segments of the public sector and societal lives in Nigeria. The Federal Government of Nigeria realizing that public offices/administrators are employed to offer services to the people, and that it is the citizens right or entitlement to get the expected meaningful services from any government in power, came up with the idea of SERVICOM to address the problems associated with service delivery, and to determine how best to remedy the Nigerian situation.

Servicom presence in Distance Learning Institute University of Lagos is weak and ineffective at the moment. Unfortunately, students are unaware of the gains that they can achieve from Servicom delivery. Distance Learning Institute students are faced with missing results and are compelled to reseat and make payment for missing results. They are not aware that through the Servicom delivery unit they can make strong argument for quality and standard to be adhere by the university management. They lack adequate knowledge of the benefits that Servicom delivery avails them in cases of poor quality education by the school management. The Servicom delivery Unit in University of Lagos is under the office of the Vice Chancellor. Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos has not produced Customer Care policy in place to guide staff treatment of customers. Distance learning institute students are treated unfairly by non-academic administrative staff of Distance learning institute. The awareness level of SERVICOM is low among students, this affects the expectation of the students as well as complaints handling process. Performance Targets are not set for staff in most of the Departments. This makes it difficult to measure the performance and effectiveness of individual staff in service delivery. This paper is aimed at investigating Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute (DLI) Students in University of Lagos.

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS OF THE STUDY

Distance Learning Institute students in University of Lagos (Dli Unilag) are facing challenges in grading sorting, class overcrowding, quality of teaching, quality of infrastructure, missing results, application and collection of transcripts, erratic water and electricity supplies in campus, changes in exam schedules/timetables, unfair treatment by non-academic administrative staff of DLI Unilag, examination malpractices, sex inducement for mark and monitoring compliance to service delivery standards. All of those service delivery crises are having an impact on Distance

Learning Institute students' performance in University of Lagos. Thus, this paper is poised to examine Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute Students in University of Lagos.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is aimed at investigating Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute Students in University of Lagos. Other objectives are as follows;

- Examine the role of Servicom in addressing service Delivery Crisis in Distance Learning Institute University of Lagos.
- Identify the drivers of Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos.
- Discover the principles guiding Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos.
- Find out Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute Students in University of Lagos.
- Recommend on how to improve Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research question were sought so as to provide solutions to the problems of the study.

1. What is the key role Servicom play to address service Delivery Crisis in Distance Learning Institute University of Lagos?
2. What are the drivers of Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos?
3. What are the principles guiding Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos?
4. What are the Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute Students in University of Lagos?
5. How can Servicom Delivery be improved in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos?

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1 The concept of Service Quality

Fogli (2006) defined service quality as “a global judgment or attitude relating to a particular service; the customer’s overall impression of the relative inferiority or superiority of the organization and its services. Service quality is a cognitive judgment. ISO 9000 (2005) also defined quality as

the extent to which a bunch of inbuilt features (relating to products, a process or a system) meet the requirements. The inbuilt features can be physical, sensory, behavioral, temporal, ergonomic or functional, whilst requirements are the stated need or expectations, be it implied or obligatory. Parasuranman (2004) noted that quality is the meeting of the needs and expectations of the customers. Therefore the yard stick for determining service quality is the expectations of customers and not the policy of University of Lagos. This view moreover, has been asserted by Ting (2004) and Jamali (2007).

Edvardsson (2005) maintained that customer perception of service quality is beyond cognitive assessment as it is formed during the production, delivery and consumption of services and not just at the consumption stage. This is made possible as customers play their roles as co-producers

by carrying out activities as well as being part of interaction influencing both process quality and outcome quality. On the role of service quality, Berry & Parasuraman (2002) emphasize on managing the total customer experience. Therefore an emotional reaction is part of a quality and favourable experience (Homburg & Giering, 2001). This is consistent with the finding of Mano and Oliver's (1993) on utilitarian and hedonic consumption judgment, who argues that "satisfaction is naturally tied to cognitive judgments and to affective reactions elicited in consumption" (Mano & Oliver, 1993). Wong (2004) found that negative emotion have a strong effect on satisfaction with quality than positive emotions.

2 Managing Academic Service Delivery

Universities exist to disseminate knowledge through teaching, research and community service. These triple mandates make universities unique organizations whose existence stands for purely academic purposes. There is also no gainsaying the fact that universities are established for the sake of training high level manpower of which students are the main constituents. Students are the major customers and beneficiaries of universities' dissemination of knowledge. They constitute the end product of university education whose quality determines to a large extent the effectiveness of universities in performing their roles. Without students, universities may not be established. Universities render many services one of which is academic service. This is so because their existence centres on executing academic-related activities. It can therefore be rightly pointed out that the ability of universities to fulfill their mandates is a function of their effectiveness in managing their academic service delivery.

Academic service, according to The Design-Based Research Collective (2003) is a teaching method which promotes student learning through active participation in meaningful planned service to the community related to course content. It is founded on theories of experiential learning, transformation theory, critical reflection and education as preparation for civic responsibility.

In this study, academic service delivery shall be consider as provision of adequate teaching infrastructure, prompt keeping to academic calendar, proper release of results, ease to academic transcripts when requested by students, conducive classroom environment, conducive hostel accommodation, Academic Advising, Academic Guidance and Counseling, Administrative Service, Library Service, Health Service, Safety Service, Academic Relations with Students, Academic and Social Support, Hygiene and Care of Physical Areas, and Students' Activities. Academic advising has to do with giving timely and gentle instructions or exhortation to students on how to improve their academic pursuits. Academic guidance and counseling involves measures undertaken to guide and make useful suggestions to students on the need to opt for academic programmes based on their abilities and aptitudes. Administrative service is those expert helps or advice given to students from the offices of the heads of departments, deans of faculties or the principal officers in the university. Library service on its own part, means assistance, expert instructions or directives aimed at enabling students have access to books and other library materials and resources. Health service has to do with tips, professional advice and recommendations offered to students to ensure that they remain healthy at all times while pursuing their academic careers. Safety service involves supplying useful information, professional help or assistance to students with a view to prevent them from exposure to harm and injury. Academic relations with students mean polite and cordial dealings with them on academic matters aimed at fostering peaceful coexistence with the university authority. Academic and social support has to do with helps rendered to strengthen close relationship, promote interaction, and enhance friendly coexistence and sharing of information by students on academic and group matters. For hygiene and care of physical areas, it means measures initiated to pay serious attention to cleanliness and protection of tangible areas to enhance students' wellbeing. Students' activities are those human endeavours within the university which students indulge in. They can take the forms of academic, social, religious or traditional. To manage them is to ensure that they are effectively undertaken to achieve the desired results.

VI. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The researcher considered this design appropriate since the study involves sampling opinion of respondents on a particular phenomenon. The population of this study was distance learning institute students in University of Lagos. The population of distance learning institute students of university of Lagos is over ten thousand students. The sample population of this study is five hundred. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. The instrument used for data collection is a structured closed ended questionnaire titled “*SERVICOM SERVICE DELIVERY IN DLI-UNILAG*”. Five hundred questionnaires were distributed among five hundred students. The study employed descriptive statistical methods. The research questions were analyzed using frequency and simple percentage presented in table and figures.

VII. RESULT AND DATA ANALYSIS

The total number of students who participated in this study was five hundred. But only two hundred and fifty respondents returned questionnaire were found useful for analysis. Results of the statistical analysis of the data are presented in the following tables:

1. Research Questions Analysis:

What is the key role Servicom play to address service Delivery Crisis in Distance Learning Institute University of Lagos?

Table 4.1 Frequency Distribution of Servicom Role in addressing Service Delivery Crisis in DLI-UNILAG

Response	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
SA	15	6.00
A	50	20.00
D	148	59.20
SD	37	14.80
TOTAL	250	

Source: (Field Survey, 2019)

Table 4.1 reveals that majority of the respondents support the view that Servicom have not play key role to address

service Delivery Crisis in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos. The distribution table shows that 6% of the respondents strongly agree that Servicom has play key role to address service Delivery Crisis in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos and 20% agree that Servicom has play key role to address service Delivery Crisis in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos. While 59.20% respondents disagree that Servicom has play key role to address service Delivery Crisis in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos, 14.80% of the respondents strongly disagree that Servicom has play key role to address service Delivery Crisis in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos. Findings above is consistent with one study of Servicom compliance evaluation report conducted by (Abuja Model Study Centre, 2017) of the National Open University of Nigeria in 2017 identified lack of students awareness, absence of customer care policy, absence of

Servicom unit and the process of marking students scripts as key challenges facing quality service delivery in National Open University of Nigeria in spite the implementation of Servicom by the Federal Government in 2004. There is low level of awareness of the existence of a service charter among staff and students of the Abuja Model Study Centre, which shows that the content of the service charter i.e. service standards and timelines are not being adhered to.

2. Research Questions Analysis:

What are the drivers of Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos?

Figure 4.1 above reveals five drivers of Servicom delivery in Distance learning Institute University of Lagos namely service delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. Finding revealed that service delivery was ranked as the most critical drivers with 30% rate. Followed by timeliness 24%, next was information 18%, professionalism 16% and staff attitude 12%. Findings from this study is in agreement with Aliyu (2017) paper presentation on the role of Servicom in Nigerian Universities, were service delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude are identified as key drivers of Servicom delivery

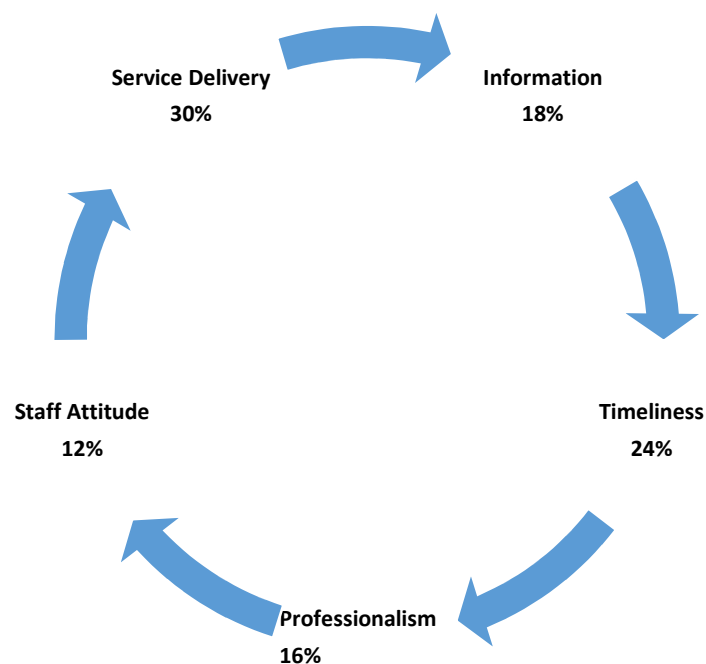


Figure 4.1 : Drivers of Servicom Delivery in DLI-UNILAG

Source: (Field Survey, 2019)

3. Research Questions Analysis:

What are the principles guiding Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos?



Figure 4.2: The Principles Guiding Servicom Delivery in DLI-UNILAG

Source: (Field Survey, 2019)

Figure 4.2 above reveals four guiding principles of Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute University of Lagos namely affirmation of commitment to the service of the Nigerian Nation, Conviction that Nigeria can only realize its full potential if citizens receive prompt and efficient services from the states, consideration for the needs and rights of all Nigerians to enjoy social and economic advancement and finally dedication to deliver services to which citizens are entitled, timely, fairly, honestly, effectively and transparently. Findings above corroborate Adeyinka & Ema (2014) opinion that Servicom Charter of the Federal Government of Nigeria identified affirmation of commitment to the service of the Nigerian Nation, Conviction that Nigeria can only realize its full potential if citizens receive prompt and efficient services from the states, consideration for the needs and rights of all Nigerians to enjoy social and economic advancement and dedication to deliver services to which citizens are entitled, timely, fairly, honestly, effectively and transparently as key principles of Servicom Delivery in Nigeria.

4. Research Questions Analysis:

What are the Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute Students in University of Lagos?

Figure 4.3 above reveals Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute Students in University of Lagos namely grading sorting, class overcrowding, quality of teaching, quality of infrastructure, missing results, application and collection of transcripts, erratic water and electricity supplies in campus, changes in exam schedules/timetables, unfair treatment by non-academic administrative staff of DLI Unilag, examination malpractices, sex inducement for mark and monitoring compliance to service delivery standards. Findings from this study is in agreement with Aliyu (2017) that enlisted grading sorting, missing results, application and collection of transcripts, erratic water and electricity supplies in campus, changes in exam schedules/timetables and monitoring compliance to service delivery standards as challenges in Servicom Delivery in Nigerian Universities.



Figure 4.2: Servicom Delivery Crisis in DLI-UNILAG

Source: (Field Survey, 2019)

5. Research Questions Analysis:

How can Servicom Delivery be improved in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos?

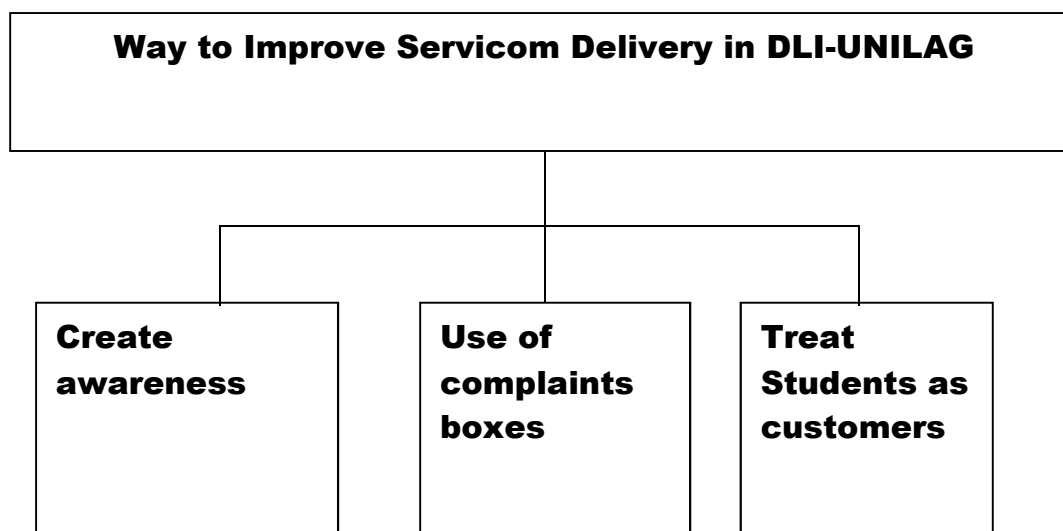


Figure 4.1: Way to Improve Servicom Delivery in DLI-UNILAG

Source: (Field Survey, 2019)

Figure 4.4 above reveals that three actionable measures that could help to improve Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute University of Lagos namely creation of awareness among students of the benefits of Servicom, the use of complaints/ suggestion boxes in classroom and treating of students as customers to the university. Findings above corroborate Aliyu (2017) recommendation for improved Servicom Delivery in Nigerian Universities.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined Servicom Delivery Crisis Confronting Distance Learning Institute (DLI) Students in University of Lagos. Findings revealed that Servicom have not play key role to address service Delivery Crisis in Distance Learning Institute in University of Lagos, identify five drivers of Servicom delivery in Distance learning Institute University of Lagos namely service delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude, reveals four guiding principles of Servicom Delivery in Distance Learning Institute University of Lagos namely affirmation of commitment to the service of the Nigerian Nation, Conviction that Nigeria can only realize its full potential if citizens receive prompt and efficient services from the states, consideration for the needs and rights of all Nigerians to enjoy social and economic advancement and finally dedication to deliver services to which citizens are entitled, timely, fairly, honestly, effectively and transparently identified grading sorting, class overcrowding, quality of

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- There is need to create awareness among Distance Learning Institute students in University of Lagos of the advantage of engaging Servicom Unit with issues related with compliance to quality and standard of academic service delivery.
- There is need for re-affirmation of Service Compact by the FG, so as to convey the political will and commitment to the Servicom Delivery Initiative in Distance learning Institute programmes in Nigerian Universities.
- University community should be encouraged to report cases of service failures through the use of available complaint/suggestion boxes and other avenues.
- Institutionalization of effective performance measurement mechanism to assess the elements of service delivery in university education in Nigeria.

- There is need for implementation of Servicom Unit in all faculties and departments of Nigerian University for proper monitoring of complaints on poor academic service to the appropriate office for action.

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