



Assessing Utilization of Instructional Delivery and Evaluation Strategies in National Teachers' Institute in Implementation of Nigeria Certificate in Education Programme by Distance Learning System in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed utilization of instructional delivery and evaluation strategies in National Teachers' Institute in implementation of Nigeria Certificate in Education Programme by Distance Learning System in Rivers State. Descriptive survey design was adopted. Population of the study consisted of 903 NCE year 4 students in NTI in Rivers State. Sample size was 452 respondents. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. Utilization of Instructional Delivery and Evaluation Strategies Assessment Scale (UIDESAS) with 0.74 reliability coefficient was used for data collection. Mean scores and One-Way ANOVA were used to analyze research questions and test hypotheses respectively. Results showed that: NTI do not effectively utilize most of the vital instructional delivery strategies, but utilizes different evaluation strategies effectively in the implementation of its NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State. Results also showed that: there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students on effective utilization of instructional delivery and evaluation strategies in the implementation of NCE (DLS) programme in NTI in Rivers State. It was recommended among others that National Teachers' Institute (NTI) should endeavour to fully integrate and effectively utilize all the various instructional delivery strategies in implementing its NCE programme by Distance Learning System (DLS).

Keywords: National Teachers' Institute, Nigeria Certificate in Education, Distance Learning System, Instructional Delivery Strategy, Evaluation Strategy, Implementation.

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, Nigerian education has witnessed some innovations such as distance learning system popularly known as distance education premeditated to meeting the educational needs of the nation. Distance learning system is a platform or system of study which give everyone both old and young, working and non-working an opportunity to be educated at their own time, pace and comfort zone/ location with the aid of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) facilities and some levels of face-to-face interaction with the course facilitator (s). Okoye (2015) defined distance learning as a mode of study where a learner may complete all or part of an educational programme in a geographical location apart from the institution hosting the programme. According to the Distance Education and Training Council (1996), distance education is a study at a distance, with an educational provider that conducts organized formal learning opportunities for students.

Distance learning system is very flexible; and capable of exposing the learners (students) to the world of technology and varied opportunities to interact with learning materials and facilitators

all over the world as well as provide learners access to quality education at a distance. It is convenient for both students and instructors, flexible and thus provide students option to participate in education on an individual basis, and it is as effective as traditional instruction when appropriate methods and technologies are used (Torupere, 2016). As noted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2002), distance learning offers unique opportunities for: life-long learning to working adults; out of school programmes for children and youths who are unable to attend ordinary school as a result of disability, illness or remote location; education opportunities for nomadic and itinerant groups and pre-service teachers preparation and in-service development, among others. Distance learning has been playing crucial roles in teacher education programmes over the years both in conventional and non-conventional institutions. This is because teacher education programmes can be run by both conventional and non-conventional institutions either on part time, in-service or distance learning system with the main aim of upgrading the quality of the existing teachers as well as producing fresh but qualified teachers who can effectively facilitate active learning within and outside the classroom environment. Considering the challenges of education and development both in developing and developed countries, it is not surprising that open and distance learning programme is often seen as an important new approach and strategy which could make a significant contribution towards resolving problems of access, quality and equity (Dokubo, 2013), which seem to have characterized the traditional education system nowadays.

In order to adequately address the challenges of shortage of quantity and quality of teachers in Nigeria for the effective implementation of the then Universal Primary Education (UPE) and now the Universal Basic Education (UBE) through an in-service training or distance learning system, the National Teachers' Institute (NTI) Kaduna was established in 1976. According to Okodoko and Samuel (2009), the National Teachers' Institute was originally set up to manage Teachers Grade II (TCII) examinations in three core subjects (Mathematics, English Language, and General Paper). These were the three core subjects which were federally examined for the award of Teachers Grade Two Certificate, which was then almost the highest qualification needed for teaching at the Primary School level (Osong, 2014). The institute, as observed by Aminu (2013) has so far mounted four teacher training programmes by distance learning system, which includes:

- a. The Teachers Grade Two Certificate by Distance Learning System (TC II by DLS).
- b. The Nigeria Certificate in Education by Distance Learning System (NCE by DLS).
- c. Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) affiliated to Usman Dan Fodio University.
- d. Advanced Diploma in Education by Distance Learning System (in School Supervision and Instruction; Early Childhood Education; and Guidance and Counseling).

Among these programmes, the Nigeria Certificate in Education by Distance Learning System (NCE by DLS) tends to have become more pronounced and well populated. This could be attributed to it's strive towards training, upgrading and retraining of teachers to meet the demands of today's education. As prescribed by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2013) in her National Policy on Education, the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) shall be the minimum qualification for all teachers in the school. The policy further stated that the objectives of the NCE/DLS/NTI programme are to:

- a. Train and upgrade all qualified grade two teachers to NCE level.
- b. Provide basic background for teachers who may later wish to pursue their studies at higher levels; and
- c. Help produce the number of teachers required for the successful implementation of the National Policy on Education.

In addition, the Decree No 7 that established the NTI on 10th April 1976 empowered it to:

- a) Upgrade under-qualified and untrained teachers.
- b) Provide refresher and other upgrading courses for teacher.
- c) Organise workshops, seminars and conferences which assist in the improvement of teacher

- d) Conduct examinations.
- e) Carry out research in conjunction with other bodies on any matter relevant to educational development in the country.
- f) Formulate policies and initiate programmes at all levels of education designed to improve, by way of research, the quality and the content of education in Nigeria.
- g) Assess from time to time the training programmes offered by the institutions controlled by or associated with the institution, with a view to ascertaining the professional competence of those institutions.
- h) Offer such assistance, either alone or in cooperation with educational bodies as may be requested by the institutions controlled by or associated with the institute.
- i) Foster and enhance international co-operation in the education of teachers.
- j) Perform such other functions as necessary or expedient for the full discharge of all the functions of the Council under the Act.

In order to effectively perform these tasks nationwide, the NTI has to establish a zonal offices in each of the geopolitical zones and state offices in all the thirty-six (36) states as well as in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). According to the Martins Library (2017), National Teachers' Institute (NTI) has over 500 study centres across Nigeria. The reasons for which NTI establish several study centres across the states of the federation are not farfetched. It is a way to ensure that all those who were unable to secure admission in a conventional higher institution are given opportunity to study. It also creates an avenue for many people irrespective of their work tight schedules, age, social status and location to receive quality education at their own time, pace, comfort and location. However, strategies utilized in implementing the NTI/NCE programme at the various study centres across the states are very paramount. This study assessed the utilization of instructional delivery and evaluation strategies in implementing the NCE by DLS in NTI in Rivers State.

Instructional delivery strategy or instructional delivery system deals with the mode or procedure which allows the students of the institute to have access to learning materials as well as receive instructions from the facilitators at a distance. In order to improve students' access to study modules and quality education across the globe, NTI adopted varieties of ICT facilities. As stated by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2013) in her National Policy on Education, NTI uses a variety of media and technologies to provide and or improve access to good quality education for large number of learners wherever they may be. The NTI also make use of text materials and some level of face-to-face contact sessions such as lectures and tutorials in its mode of instructional delivery.

The face-to-face contact sessions usually take place on week-ends or during holiday periods. Some of these instructional delivery systems in distance education such as the NTI/NCE (DLS) include telephone (both landline and global satellite mobile (GSM) services), instructional computer network, bulletin board services, facsimile (fax), satellite transmission (video and audio conferencing) audio CD and video CD-ROM, and internet facilities (electronic mail, website) (Asodike & Jegede, 2010). Asodike and Jegede also found that the print and its different formats such as assignment brochures, textbooks, workbooks, and course books were the main course delivery systems used in the study centres.

The strategy for evaluating or assessing students' performance in the NTI/NCE (DLS) programme is another important factor in the implementation process of the NTI/NCE programme by distance learning system. Evaluation strategies could be regarded as the methods or techniques used in ascertaining the extent to which a student (learner) can perform after being exposed to a set of instruction. In NTI/NCE (DLS) programme, evaluation strategies could reveal to the course facilitators the areas which they need to improve upon for effective instructional delivery in the implementation of the programme. Evaluation strategies will also reveal the extent to which students have gained knowledge or can perform as trainee teachers in the classroom during or at the end of the programme.

The major form of evaluation or assessment in NTI programme as observed by Osong (2014) is Continuous Assessment (which is generated from seminars, tests and assignments), examination and projects. This strategy of distance learning system (DLS) is sensitive to the Federal Government Commitment to quality teacher production and retention as stipulated in the National Policy on Education (Jegede, 2003). In addition to the use of continuous assessment, Osong (2014) who evaluated the NCE by DLS of NTI in Cross River State affirmed that NTI in Cross Rivers State utilizes different evaluation strategies to implement the NCE through distance learning system. In Rivers State, however, there seems to be scanty empirical studies in recent times to show whether the various distance learning instructional delivery and evaluation strategies are effectively utilized or not by NTI in implementing the NCE (DLS) programme, hence the need to carry out this study.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, observations have shown that there are some misconceptions by some employers of labour about the effectiveness of the programme in producing quality teachers that will meet the demands of today's education and this could have resulted to apathy in the employment of NTI/NCE holders by some employers of labour in Nigeria. While some studies (Asodike & Ebong, 2012; Asodike & Jegede, 2010) have been conducted on the various NTI/NCE courses and resource adequacy for the NTI programme in various states in Nigeria, there seems to be scanty current studies that investigated the effective utilization of distance education strategies in implementing NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State, and this gives stakeholders great concern. The problem of this study as posed in question form is: How are the distance education instructional delivery and evaluation strategies effectively utilized in the implementation of the NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State? This study provided answers to the above problem.

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the adequacy of the implementation strategies of the NTI/NCE programme by distance learning system in Rivers State. Specifically, the study investigated:

- a. Effective utilization of the instructional delivery strategies used in implementing the NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State.
- b. Effective utilization of the evaluation strategies used in implementing the NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent is distance education instructional delivery strategies effectively utilized in the implementation of the NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State?
2. To what extent are evaluation strategies effectively utilized in the implementation of the NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students on the effective utilization of distance education instructional delivery strategies in implementing NTI/NCE (DLS) programme across the three senatorial zones in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students on the effective utilization of evaluation strategies in the implementation of NTI/NCE (DLS) programme across the three senatorial zones in Rivers State.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research design is an attempt to gather and interpret data about a social institution, an event, a group or an area (Dike, 2017). This research design was considered appropriate for the study because ~~the~~ it focused on the utilization of instructional and evaluation strategies in NTI as an institution of learning. The study area is Rivers State. The population of the study consisted of 903 NCE year 4

(final year) students for the 2017/2018 academic session in the 14 accredited NTI/NCE study centres in Rivers State (Source: NTI, Rivers State Zonal Office, as at 16/8/2018). The sample size of the study is 452 respondents, which represents 50% of the population. The study adopted multi-stage sampling technique. First, the stratified random sampling technique was used to stratify the study centres based on senatorial district strata (Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West). In each of the senatorial district, 3 study centres were randomly selected for equal representation since one of the senatorial district- Rivers South East has only three study centres. Furthermore, simple random sampling technique was used to select 248 students from Rivers East, 92 students from Rivers South East and 112 students from Rivers West senatorial districts in Rivers State. Table 3.1 below is the sample distribution.

Table 3.1: Sample distribution

S/No.	Senatorial District	No. of Study Centres Selected	No. of NCE 4 (final year) Students Selected
1.	Rivers East	3	248
2.	Rivers South East	3	92
3.	Rivers West	3	112
	Total	9	452

The Utilization of Instructional Delivery and Evaluation Strategies Assessment Scale (UIDESAS) was used for data collection. The instrument consisted of sections A, B and C. Section A centered on respondents' bio-data, while sections B and C elicited information on the utilization of various instructional delivery and evaluation strategies in the implementation of the NTI/NCE programme by distance learning system. Sections B and C contains 14 items each prepared on a four point scale of Very Low Extent (1 mark), Low Extent (2 marks), High Extent (3 marks) and Very High Extent (4 marks). The face and content validities of the instrument was determined by two experts in Adult and Community Education and Educational Measurement and Evaluation all in the Department of Educational Foundations, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt. The experts scrutinized the instrument in terms of its quality, relevance, clarity, appropriateness and sufficiency of the items, and made some corrections which formed the basis for the final print out of the instrument. The internal consistency reliability coefficient of 0.74 was obtained for the instrument using the Cronbach Alpha method. Research questions were analyzed with mean scores and standard deviation at the acceptable mean score of 2.50 and above, while One-Way ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *To what extent are distance education instructional delivery strategies effectively utilized in the implementation of the NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the effectiveness of the instructional delivery strategies used in implementing NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State ($S_2 = 452$)

S/N	Instructional Delivery Strategies	Rivers East		Rivers S/East		Rivers West		Decision	
		[$n_4=248$]		[$n_5=92$]		[$n_6=112$]			
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
1.	Print materials	3.62	0.49	3.59	0.50	3.53	0.68	High Extent	
2.	Face-to-face contacts	3.60	0.49	3.56	0.50	3.48	0.37	High Extent	
3.	Audio-radio broadcast	1.19	1.61	1.39	1.02	1.38	1.00	Low Extent	
4.	Audio-tape (both cassette and CD)	1.13	0.34	1.13	0.83	1.25	0.62	Low Extent	
5.	Television(Audio-visual facilities)	1.51	0.70	1.43	0.74	1.32	0.36	Low Extent	
6.	Telephone line/mobile phone	1.47	0.59	1.30	0.61	1.38	0.70	Low Extent	
7.	Instructional computer network Delivery	1.25	0.52	1.37	0.49	1.64	0.61	Low Extent	
8.	Internet facilities (electronic mail and website)	1.85	0.37	1.74	0.83	1.68	0.35	Low Extent	
9.	Bulletin board services	2.10	0.52	2.12	0.94	2.27	0.58	Low Extent	
10.	Satellite transmission (audio and video conferencing)	1.46	0.60	1.49	0.54	1.44	0.64	Low Extent	
11.	Films	1.38	0.78	1.41	0.96	1.29	0.60	Low Extent	
12.	Graphic materials	2.60	1.03	2.58	0.96	2.92			
13.	Slides	1.51	0.46	1.47	0.50	1.60	1.11	High Extent	
14.	Photographic materials	2.10	0.85	2.22	0.96	2.15	0.49	Low Extent	
	Grand Mean &SD	1.91	0.67	1.91	0.74	1.95	1.01	Low Extent	
							0.65	Low Extent	

Note: * S_2 is the total sample of students, while n_4 , n_5 and n_6 are the sub-samples of students for Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West respectively.

- Acceptable mean score (mean cut-off point) is 2.50 and above.

From the results in table 1, it can be observed that the mean scores (\bar{X}) of students from the study centres in Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West senatorial districts respectively on items 1, 2 and 12 are 3.62, 3.59, 3.53 for item 1; 3.60, 3.56, 3.48 for item 2 and 2.60, 2.58, 2.92 for item 12 respectively and are higher than the acceptable mean score of 2.50 and above set by the researcher. Also, the mean scores (\bar{X}) of the respondents (students) from the study centres in Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West senatorial districts on items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14 respectively are all lower than the acceptable mean score of 2.50 set by the researcher. Results in table 1 above, implies that print materials, face-to-face contacts and graphic materials are the three effectively utilized instructional delivery strategies in the implementation of NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State. It could therefore be inferred that NTI do not effectively utilize most of the vital instructional delivery strategies for distance learning or education such as audio-tape (both cassette and CD), audio-tape (both cassette and CD), instructional computer network delivery in its NCE (DLS) programme implementation.

Research Question 2: *To what extent are evaluation strategies effectively utilized in the implementation of the NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the effectiveness of the evaluation strategies used in implementing NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State ($S_2 = 452$)

S/N	Evaluation Strategies	Rivers East		Rivers S/East		Rivers West		Decision		
		[$n_4=248$]		[$n_5=92$]		[$n_6=112$]				
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD			
1.	Assess students through many evaluation techniques			2.93	0.96	3.12	0.84	2.97	0.91	High Extent
2.	Use of continuous assessment Scores			3.43	0.57	3.32	0.59	3.52	0.71	High Extent
3.	Use of Terminal examination or semester examination			3.16	0.76	2.96	1.07	3.23	0.99	High Extent
4.	Use of class work			2.98	1.04	3.07	0.86	2.94	0.92	High Extent
5.	Use of term paper/ project work			3.18	0.70	3.33	0.87	3.09	0.76	High Extent
6.	Use of assignment			3.02	0.84	2.98	0.89	3.09	0.80	High Extent
7.	Use of portfolio assessment			1.63	0.62	1.92	0.65	1.17	0.42	Low Extent
8.	Use of test			3.16	0.82	3.12	0.85	3.26	0.70	High Extent
9.	Field trip/ excursion			1.53	0.52	1.30	0.46	1.66	0.48	Low Extent
10.	Use of practicum			1.81	0.42	1.75	0.51	1.54	0.71	Low Extent
11.	Use of teaching practice exercises			3.11	0.81	3.18	0.96	3.20	0.87	High Extent
12.	Use of micro teaching			1.54	0.58	1.23	0.49	1.44	0.53	Low Extent
13.	Organize practical laboratory experiment for students			1.50	0.52	1.91	0.28	1.75	0.43	Low Extent
14.	Encourage students to ask questions			3.28	0.90	3.19	0.86	3.31	0.96	High Extent
	Grand Mean &SD			2.59	0.72	3.00	0.73	2.58	0.73	High Extent

Note: * S_2 is the total sample of students, while n_4 , n_5 and n_6 are the sub-samples

of students for Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West respectively

- Acceptable mean score (mean cut-off point) is 2.50 and above

Table 2 reveals that the mean scores of students from the study centres in Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West senatorial districts on items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11 and 14 are 2.93, 3.12, 2.97 for item 1; 3.43, 3.32, 3.43 for item 2; 3.16, 2.96, 3.23 for item 3; 2.98, 3.07, 2.94 for item 4; 3.18, 3.33, 3.09 for item 5; 3.02, 2.98, 3.09 for item 6; 3.16, 3.12, 3.26 for item 8; 3.11, 3.18, 3.20 for item 11 and 3.28, 3.19, 3.31 for item 14 respectively and are all higher than the acceptable mean score of 2.50 and above set by the researcher, indicating that the items are effectively utilized. On the other hand, the mean scores of students from the study centres in Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West senatorial districts on items 7, 9, 10, 12 and 13 are 1.63, 1.92, 1.17 for item 7; 1.53, 1.30, 1.66 for item 9; 1.81, 1.75, 1.54 for item 10; 1.54, 1.23, 1.44 for item 12 and 1.50, 1.91, 1.75 for item 13 respectively and are all lower than the acceptable mean score of 2.50 set by the researcher, which indicates that the items are not effectively utilized. However, with the grand mean scores of 2.59, 3.00 and 2.58 for students from Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West senatorial districts higher than the acceptable mean score of 2.50 and above, it could be concluded that to a high extent, NTI effectively utilize different evaluation strategies among which include continuous assessment scores, semester examination/ terminal examination, assignment, class work/test, term paper/project work, teaching practice exercises in the implementation of NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students on the effective utilization of distance education instructional delivery strategies in the implementation of NTI/NCE (DLS) programme across the three senatorial districts in Rivers State.

Table 3: One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) of the mean ratings of students on the effective utilization of distance education instructional delivery strategies in the implementation of NTI/NCE (DLS) programme across the three senatorial districts in Rivers State

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	.127	2	.064	.100	.204	NS
Within Groups	284.042	449	.633			
Total	284.169	451				

NS = Not Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Results in table 3 above shows that at 0.05 significance level and degrees of freedom (2, 449), F-value = 0.100 and P-value = 0.204. Since the P-value is greater than 0.05 (i.e $P > 0.05$), the F-value (0.100) is not statistically significant at 0.05 significance level ($F_{(2, 449)} = 0.100, P > 0.05$). The hypothesis 1 is therefore, accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students on the effective utilization of distance education instructional delivery strategies in implementing NTI/NCE (DLS) programme across the three senatorial districts in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students on the effective utilization of evaluation strategies in the implementation of NTI/NCE (DLS) programme across the three senatorial districts in Rivers State.

Table 4: One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) of the mean ratings of students on the effective utilization of evaluation strategies in the implementation of NTI/NCE (DLS) programme across the three senatorial districts in Rivers State

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	.047	2	.024	.040	.461	NS
Within Groups	266.481	449	.593			
Total	266.528	451				

NS = Not Significant at 0.05 level of significance

From the results in table 4 above, it can be observed that at 0.05 significance level and degrees of freedom (2, 449), F-value = 0.040 and P-value = 0.461. Since the P-value is greater than 0.05 (i.e $P > 0.05$), the F-value (0.040) is not statistically significant at 0.05 significance level ($F_{(2, 449)} = 0.040, P > 0.05$). The hypothesis 2 is therefore, accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students on the effective utilization of evaluation strategies in the implementation of NTI/NCE (DLS) programme across the three senatorial districts (Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West) in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION

From the results in table 1, it was observed that all the respondents (students) from the three senatorial districts (Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West) of Rivers State agreed that only print materials, face-to-face contacts and graphic materials are the three effectively utilized

instructional delivery strategies in the implementation of NTI/NCE (DLS) programme in Rivers State. Also, results in table 3 for hypothesis 1 indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students on the effective utilization of distance education instructional delivery strategies in implementing NTI/NCE (DLS) programme across the three senatorial districts in Rivers State ($F_{(2, 449)} = 0.100, P > 0.05$). This implies that most of the vital instructional delivery strategies for distance learning are not well utilized by NTI in its NCE (DLS) programme implementation; hence the students are yet to be exposed to varied and diverse learning mechanisms necessary for quality distance education. This finding is in agreement with Asodike & Jegede (2010) who reported that the print and its different formats such as assignment brochures, textbooks, workbooks, and course books were the main course delivery systems used in the study centres. However, they also observed that the challenge of inconsistent power supply may not encourage the students to patronize the use of certain electronic media such as instructional computer delivery, satellite transmission, internet facilities used in course delivery systems in distance education in the developed societies.

Results in table 2 showed that the NTI effectively utilize different evaluation strategies such as use of continuous assessment scores, terminal examination or semester examination, class work, term paper/ project work, assignment, test, teaching practice exercises and encourage students to ask questions in the implementation of the NTI/NCE (DLS) programme to a high extent with the mean score of the items higher than the acceptable mean of 2.50. Results for hypothesis 2 as shown in table 4 revealed that at 0.05 significance level and degrees of freedom (2, 449), F-value = 0.040 and P-value = 0.461. Since the P-value is greater than 0.05 (i.e. $P > 0.05$), the F-value (0.040) is not statistically significant at 0.05 significance level, which implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students on the effective utilization of evaluation strategies in the implementation of NTI/NCE (DLS) programme across the three senatorial districts (Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West) in Rivers State. This finding is in agreement with Osong (2014) when he revealed in one of his findings that the NTI in Cross Rivers State utilizes different evaluation strategies to implement the NCE through distance learning system. The continuous assessment strategy of distance learning system (DLS) is sensitive to the Federal Government Commitment to quality teacher production and retention as stipulated in the National Policy on Education (Jegede, 2003). The finding of this study and that of Osong tend to be in line with what is observable and applicable in conventional NCE awarding institutions in Nigeria. There is need for continuous evaluation of the performance of the teachers who themselves are products of teacher education programmes in the country (Igwe & Rifai, 2012).

CONCLUSION

The National Teachers' Institute is very strategic and pivotal in delivery of distance education in Nigeria at large. However, from the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the National Teachers' Institute (NTI) is not yet effectively utilizing all the various distance education instructional delivery strategies in the implementation of its Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) by Distance Learning System (DLS) in Rivers State. The two effectively utilized distance education instructional delivery strategies by the NTI/NCE by DLS in Rivers State are print materials and face-to-face contacts, which are not enough for the learners to access quality education at a distance. However, it was also concluded that the NTI is effectively utilizing different evaluation strategies in the evaluation and assessment of her NCE (DLS) students in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

1. The National Teachers' Institute (NTI) should endeavour to fully integrate and effectively utilize all the various distance education instructional delivery strategies such

- as ICT and multi-media learning facilities (video and audio conferencing, computer based learning, etc) in the implementing of its Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) programme by Distance Learning System (DLS) in order to reduce much reliance on face-to-face contacts and print materials (course books) for instructional delivery.
2. The NTI management should make efforts to build at least one e-library /resource room as well as an ICT mediated classroom in each of the three senatorial districts in Rivers State for better interactions and research between and among the students and facilitators.

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