Impact of Examinations' Results Queries amongst Open and Distance Learning Students in Higher Learning Institutions

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of examinations' results queries to students studying through open and distance learning (ODL) in higher learning institutions, the Institute of Adult Education (I.A.E) in particular. This study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data collected through questionnaires and interviews. This study used a qualitative approach. This study focuses on exploring the effects of examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions. The study findings revealed that examinations result from queries bring the following effects in higher learning institutions which are; increase of failure of students in higher learning institutions, drop out of students in higher learning institutions, limitations of many people to complete higher education, and decline of production of skilled labour. The study suggested that there must be an examination department that should have qualified personnel to supervise examinations in higher learning institutions so as to improve quality in the evaluation system. Facilitators should consider the principles and rules of creating questions in examinations. There must be planned for sufficient time for conducting examinations based on the nature of the subject and the language used in examinations and understandable ones. The study recommended that facilitators should know that the process of assessment is for measuring the achievement of the objectives of the course to students and not to make students suffer. Therefore, they must develop examinations that are effective in assessing students without creating queries in conducting examinations. The higher learning institutions should put more emphasis on assessment and evaluation by having a strong and effective department to supervise all examinations process so as to ensure quality assessment and evaluation for the development of the program, course and institution at all.

Keywords: *Examinations' results queries; Facilitators; Higher learning institutions; Institute of Adult Education; Open and distance learning and Students.*

1. Introduction

Examinations results are the tools used in the act of assessing or the evaluation of a student's achievement on a course. They are of several types according to the structural and decision of either a lectures or institutions (Wisker 2008). There has been a debate from the higher learning students on what is the source of examinations' results queries in their institutions. Various scholars have tried to explain on where do examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions.

Griesel and Parker (2009), commented that warm-ups in the class can be source of examinations queries. Unfortunately, class warm-ups can sometimes be downtime for students while the classroom teacher takes attendance and performs other tasks. In these cases, the warm-up activity provides a vague start to class and an opportunity for students to shut down (particularly if the warm-up questions are too difficult), which sets the stage for unproductively and encouraged a teacher to use those questions they failed to attempt during warm up as examinations' results queries so as to make them have the habit of self-motivation on learning. In many other cases, however, there are some facilitators who used the warm-up questions to provide valuable information about the extent to which students understood yesterday's work or work from days ago. Facilitators in this setting can respond to their students' successes on the warm-up activity to adjust that day's instruction.

Also Maxwell (2012), suggested checks for understanding in class can help to generate examinations queries. Every time facilitators ask the class a question during instruction, they receive formative assessment data about

where their students are in their learning. But sometimes, the same three or four students answer all of the questions (and are usually right). This can produce skewed data that does not represent the class's mastery as a whole. To lessen this effect, many facilitators have students respond to global questions using examinations' results queries which will make each student gives what he or she thinks on that questions asked.

Baker (1995) and Nyangarika et al (2020) said that take home assignments can be used by facilitators as a source of examinations queries. Take home assignment is a work for students to practice and grapple with ideas and skills learned during class time. Meaningful take home assignments can provide facilitators with valuable formative assessment data about where students are in their understanding. There are lots of ways for facilitators to assess the results of any given take home assignment, but even if just a sampling is reviewed, they can get a good sense for how students are proceeding in their mastery of the material. Facilitators can pick some of the best take home questions and make them examinations queries. This is for helping them to know how many students have been able to capture what he or she provided to them (Baker, 1995).

Like take home, work undertaken in class provides lots of information about student mastery. Facilitators circulate among students completing class work, this is a perfect time for facilitators to not only assess student understanding, but also to determine how effective they found the lesson. It's much easier to backpedal during class work to correct misunderstandings than it is to teach an entire unit because the teacher found out too late. Therefore, a teacher can generate the examinations' results queries after met those who didn't understand well in the class and help them (Smyth, 2004).

Occasionally during instruction, facilitators can poll students to see where they think they are in their understanding, particularly during more complex content instruction. To do this, I prefer heads-down voting so students feel safe to respond honestly and unpressured to vote as their classmates are voting. Heads-down voting involves a show of fingers using the following scale (which I leave on a poster in the classroom). If many student will vote and said they understand a part of the topic studied, a teacher can formulate questions to them on that part to test their capacity of understanding (Wisker, 2008) and Bundala et al (2020a).

Examinations' results queries may have a negative effect on student motivation, particularly for students performing below grade level. Careless implementation of examinations' results queries may have negative consequences, especially when the needs of special education students are not considered (Griesel and Parker, 2009). Only a written formal assessment does not provide an overall picture of student achievement. Students that perform better with oral and visual skills or who display superior creativity are at a disadvantage. Basing teacher effectiveness on standardized test scores may encourage facilitators to narrow the curriculum to teach to the test.

The significance of this study lies in the contention that any attempt to curb the negative effects of examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions to students studying through open and distance learning should be linked to learners support services. Many students in ODL programmes lack learner support services which in turn adversely affect their dreams to achieve their educational goals. The sources of the problems of examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions are influenced by both facilitators and students themselves.

The education stakeholders have been debate on the effective examinations' results queries so as to improve the assessment process in higher learning institutions but still the examinations result queries remain threats to higher education learners. That's why this study will be conducted to assess the impact of examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions so as to find solutions and good ways of formulate and use examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions so as to bring effective results of assessment process.

2.   Material and Methods

Various scholars have tried to explain the source of the examinations' results queries. One of them is Ajayi, (2009), who shows the source of examinations' results queries can be from their daily class content which they have been studied. If facilitators did not teach well in the class and provide the examinations which will be hard to the learners, then the queries of the examination will arise from the teaching ability of the teacher. (Ajayi, 2009) and Bundala et al (2020b).

Also other scholar like Gee, (1992) said the examinations' results queries can be developed from the seminar presentations or projects which students have been given to do. If students did not understand well the question and recite incorrectly then the examinations to them will be hard. Others can be derived from the current

situation occurred in the society and also the surrounding environment. If the environment of conducting examinations is characterized with noise and disturbance, students will face hard situation in attempting examinations (Gee, 1992).

Omari (2007), also show properly to write multiple choice questions has been the problem and the design of the multiple choices (MC) version of the problems included choosing distractors or wrong answers. The correct choice of alternatives in MC questions is important and can be the more time consuming part of developing MC questions and items. There is no reason to use random alternatives which students can immediately discard because they are obviously wrong, for example there is no need to increase the numbers of choices in order to always have four items per MC question. In multiple choice alternatives or distracters should be chosen to give the instructor and the student feedback about possible misunderstandings. This can be accomplished by creating alternatives by applying typical mistakes student might make when doing the problem (Omari, 2007).

There are various effects from examinations' results queries according to different scholars. Roy-Campbell &Qorro, (2008) argue that one of the effects is stress. This stress is just due to students' perception and dislike for exams and sometimes it affects students' performance. If a student is put under the optimal amount of stress, then they will perform to their best. However, if an exam is too stressful and difficult then a student's performance will suffer. Extreme stresses can also be the cause of stress induced disorders. (Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 2008) and Nyangarika et al (2020).

Bloom, (2012), think examinations' results queries can cause stress and anxiety but if a student did not feel anxious about an examination would they care about their performance and put the same amount of effort in to preparation? Also a certain amount of stress and anxiety can push us onto make an extra effort and lead us to perform at our best. There are also ways to help reduce this stress and make the whole process of exams a little bit easier. I feel as if even though exams can be tough and do not always represent a student's full abilities but I do feel they have their place in our education system. (Bloom, 2012). The optimum amount of testing for a class also became a matter of controversy. Testing advocates argued that more frequent testing would increase instructional effectiveness and would encourage students to study and review more often. The advocates also contended that additional testing would provide opportunities for facilitators to correct student errors, to reward good performance, and to give students a good indication of what they were expected to learn. Frequent testing could take time away from instruction. With a greater teacher emphasis on tests, some educators maintained that students might start directing their efforts toward performing well on tests rather than toward learning.

Those educators also said that too frequent testing might inhibit integration of larger units of instructional materials and become tedious for students and, consequently, reduce their enthusiasm about learning. (Griesel and Parker, 2009). The early researchers believed that tests stimulated rehearsal of newly learned material and thus inhibited the normal decay of memory. Their inquiries set the stage, however, for a long history of speculation about the educational potency of testing. Jones (2013) suggested that testing operates as active practice, strengthening the associations between stimuli and responses. Bloom, (2012), suspected that the ability of tests to provide knowledge of results explained their instructional potency. They showed that even when they did not provide feedback, tests could stimulate processing that would facilitate retrieval of learned information. Students who faced daily tests studied more consistently than did students who were tested less frequently (Bloom, 2012).

An examination (informally, exam or evaluation) is an assessment intended to measure an examination-takers knowledge, skill, aptitude, physical fitness, or classification in many other topics (e.g., beliefs). An examination may be administered verbally, on paper, on a computer, or in a predetermined area that requires a test taker to demonstrate or perform a set of skills. (Tobias, 1995). An examination may be administered formally or informally. An example of an informal test would be a reading test administered by a parent to a child. A formal examination might be a final examination administered by a teacher in a classroom or an I.Q. test administered by a psychologist in a clinic. Formal exams often results in a grade or a test score. An exams score may be interpreted with regards to a norm or criterion, or occasionally both. The norm may be established independently, or by statistical analysis of a large number of participants. An exam is meant to test a child's knowledge or willingness to give time to manipulate that subject (David, 2002).

A class instructor may for example, administer a test on a weekly basis or just twice a semester. Depending on the policy of the instructor or institution, the duration of each exam itself may last for only 30 minutes to an entire class period. (William, 1996) Standardized examination is widely used, fixed in terms of scope, difficulty and format, and are usually significant in consequences. Standardized examinations are usually held on fixed dates as determined by the test developer, educational institution, or governing body, which may or may not be

administered by the instructor, held within the classroom, or constrained by the classroom period. (Walker, 2003).

There are various types of examination such as Open-Note Tests, though not as popular as the closed-note test, open-note tests are slowly raising in popularity. An open-note test allows the test taker to bring in all of their notes and use them while taking the test. The questions asked on open-note exams are typically more thought provoking and intellectual than questions on a closed-note exam. Rather than testing what facts you know, open-note exams force you to apply the facts to a broader question. The main benefit that is seen from open-note tests is that they are a better preparation for the real world where you don't have to memorize and have anything you need at your disposal (Tobias, 1995).

A quiz is a brief assessment which may cover a small amount of material that was given in a class. Some of them cover two to three lectures that were given in a period of times as a reading section or a given exercise in were the most important part of the class was summarize. However, a simple quiz usually does not count very much, and instructors usually provide this type of test as a formative assessment to help determine whether the student is learning the material. In addition, doing this at the time the instructor collected all can make a significant part of the final course grade (David, 2002).

Alternative response like True/False questions present candidates with a binary choice a statement is either true or false. This method presents problems, as depending on the number of questions, a significant number of candidates could get 100% just by guesswork, and should on average get 50%. (Tobias, 1995). Matching type. A matching item is an item that provides a defined term and requires a test taker to match identifying characteristics to the correct term (Walker, 2003).

Completion type. A fill-in-the-blank item provides a test taker with identifying characteristics and requires the test taker to recall the correct term. There are two types of fill-in-the-blank tests. The easier version provides a word bank of possible words that will fill in the blanks. For some exams all words in the World Bank are used exactly once. If a teacher wanted to create a test of medium difficulty, they would provide a test with a word bank, but some words may be used more than once and others not at all. The hardest variety of such a test is a fill-in-the-blank test in which no word bank is provided at all. This generally requires a higher level of understanding and memory than a multiple choice test. Because of this, fill-in-the-blank tests [with no word bank] are often feared by students. (William, 1996). Essay items such as short answer or essay typically require a test taker to write a response to fulfil the requirements of the item. In administrative terms, essay items take less time to construct. As an assessment tool, essay items can test complex learning objectives as well as processes used to answer the question. The items can also provide a more realistic and generalizable task for test. Finally, these items make it difficult for test takers to guess the correct answers and require test takers to demonstrate their writing skills as well as correct spelling and grammar (William, 1996).

There are various factors influencing the hardness and queries of examinations to open and distance education. David, (2002) Said that difficulties with essay items are primarily administrative: for example, test takers require adequate time to be able to compose their answers. When these questions are answered, the answers themselves are usually poorly written because test takers may not have time to organize and proofread their answers. In turn, it takes more time to score or grade these items. When these items are being scored or graded, the grading process itself becomes subjective as non-test related information may influence the process. Thus, considerable effort is required to minimize the subjectivity of the grading process (David, 2002).

Narrows curricular format and encourages. Sometimes the examination formulated based on one area of the curriculum. This limits the performance of the students who didn't understand that part well. (David, 2002). Poor predictive quality. The quality of the exam must be seen from the measuring all the domains of learning like cognitive domain, affective and psychomotor domains. The examination must consider all the type of learners a slow one and fast learners. (Walker, 2003). Grade inflation of test scores or grades. The results of the test putted on the grades may discourage the learners. If the grade were not placed in the conducive ratio it will discourage learners. (Walker, 2003). Therefore, this study was based on Impact of Examinations' results queries to Open and Distance Learning Students in Higher Learning Institutions.

Queries are among of the challenges that affect students studying through open and distance learning at the Institute of Adult Education. Queries to the students are caused by lack of motivation from the lectures, poor technology used for those who study by distance, insufficient skills and knowledge on the uses of SARIS which hinder many students in acquiring their examination results and even delaying of the results through SARIS, poor preparation of students in examination, students cheating in examination rooms and lack of good supervision to the facilitators or lecturers. Although the Institute of Adult Education used various efforts in

addressing queries among the students. Among of these efforts are employing more facilitators who can facilitating adult learners, encourage ODL students in attending face to face when needed and establishing examination rule and regulations that strictly students in examination cheatings but there are still existences of queries in examinations at the Institute of Adult Education. Therefore, this study was conducted in order to examine the influential factors for examination results queries to students in open and distance learning at the Institute of Adult Education.

Examinations draw knowledge outside of prerequisites. Sometimes exam questions can be difficult because they require students to draw on knowledge from courses they have not taken or everyday experiences they have not had. For example, a statistics instructor may assume that all students in his or her course have a working knowledge of calculus even though it is not officially a prerequisite. In this case, an exam question that requires calculus would be difficult – and arguably, unfair – for students without the corresponding calculus skills. Similarly, suppose an instructor writes a contextualized exam question that deals with bowling scores, briefly reviewing the scoring rules of the game. Although some students may be familiar with bowling, others may not be, making this question rather impenetrable. These examples show how easy it is for instructors to inadvertently overestimate what students know – either explicitly or implicitly – and create an exam question that is overly difficult (Ertmer, 2009).

Students lacked prerequisite knowledge and skills. An exam can be particularly difficult for students if it requires them to draw on prior knowledge and skills from prerequisite courses. Even when students have completed these courses, there is no guarantee that they will have the knowledge and skills you expect or that they will be able to use the knowledge and skills in a different context. This reflects the different ways a prerequisite course can be taught over various semesters as well as how students come out of a given course with different levels of knowledge and skills (McCarty, 2009).

Address discrepancies between instructional activities and assessment. Analyze your exam to make sure there is a clear correspondence with the topics covered in class and on the homework and the questions on the test. If you do find a mismatch, you need to address it. In future iterations of the course, you could emphasize the topic more throughout the course or remove the item from the exam (or at the very least deemphasize its weight). In the current iteration of the course, your choices are more limited, and you might want to simply deemphasize the topic or type of problem (Jones, 2004).

Give students more opportunities for appropriate practice. Sometimes you did cover the topic in class, but the students didn't practice it adequately. For instance, students may be able to define and explain a method, but not execute it. Similarly, students might be proficient in specific procedures, but not in the skill of selecting the procedure appropriate for a particular situation (or the "trick" to use on a problem), or they might have all the pieces but have not practiced synthesizing them. In these situations, you might want to provide stepping stones toward the level of complexity you expect by having students practice the components of a process or the integration of these components (Smerdon, 2011).

Emphasize the ways in which students have control over their performance. Talk to students about how they prepared for the exam, how many hours they put in, and under what conditions they prepared. Were they multitasking? Did they study in a quiet or noisy place? Did they procrastinate until the last minute? Did they seek help when they were confused? You can also reinforce this message with the language you use, such as talking about the grade students earned rather than the grade you gave them (Pelgrum, 2001).

Discuss class performance with students. Some students might assume everybody else shares their experience, but this is not often the case. You can dispel these perceptions by providing data. For instance, you can share the distribution of test scores to show students that the exam was fair because many students performed well. Likewise, you can share if appropriate some model tests from the best students to demonstrate that good performance is indeed achievable (Taylor, 1980).

Debrief the exam. Use the class after the test as a learning opportunity. Go over the most challenging questions, explaining what specific knowledge and skills they required. You can also have the students discuss their performance in groups, comparing their own approach with those of other students. Used in this way, the test even one that went poorly becomes a learning opportunity for the next one. You can even ask students to reflect on how they will prepare differently for the next exam. (Green, 2007). Refer students to Academic Development. Academic Development works with students, individually or in workshops, to help them develop

their study skills and test-taking skills and to implicitly reinforce the idea that they are in charge of their academic performance (Schoepp, 2005).

3.   Methods

This study used qualitative approach which uses words in data collection, data gathering, interpreting, organizing and presenting data. Therefore, the study involved qualitative methods of collecting data whereby both primary and secondary data were needed. The primary data was collected direct from the field through questionnaire and interview. And secondary data was obtained from the documents and literature which were already organized by other individuals. . The data were collected through the qualitative approach so as to reveal the causes of examinations' results queries to the students in Open and Distance Learning and to find out if there is any lasting solution.

4.   Results

The minor objective of the researcher aimed to examine the existing sources of examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions. The questionnaire and interview tools were used to collect information from respondents. Through the use of interview and questionnaire, students and facilitators provided the following responses as shown in the Table 1 as follows;

Table 1.1 Sources of Examinations' results queries in ODL

Source of Examinations' results queries in Higher Learning Institutions	Frequency
Language barrier	35 (64%)
Insufficient time	26 (47%)
Insufficient knowledge on formulation of assessment tools	41 (75%)
Negative perception facilitators have on examinations	25 (45%)

Source: Field Data 2019

The (Table 1) above, it was indicated that 35 (64%) respondents agreed that one of the sources of examinations' results queries in higher learning institution is language barrier. Many facilitators composed examinations with complicated vocabularies which were hard to students to understand. This limited student to understand the examinations questions and led them to face queries in examinations. The others 26(47%) respondents agreed that students faced a challenge of shortage of time. Subjects or module units required a lot of time for provision of explanation or experiments. The shortage of time made students to fail to complete their examinations and leave other questions without being filled even if they were aware with the answers needed. Others 41(75%) respondents also commented that the insufficient knowledge on formulation of assessment tools to facilitators led to occurrence of examinations' results queries to students. They commented that there are rules and principles of preparing examinations and how to formulate various questions such as multiple questions, true and false questions, matching items, essay questions and compulsory questions. In order for a teacher to formulate effective questions for examinations he or she is supposed to have knowledge on how to formulate them. Therefore, many higher learning institutions lecturers or assistance lecturers failed to consider these principles of formulating questions and its impact led to the eruption of examinations queries. Moreover 25(45%) respondents mentioned that the negative perceptions of facilitators have on the preparations of examinations led to examinations' results queries to students in higher learning institutions. Many facilitators do not realize that the conduction of the examinations is for summative assessment so as to get the picture of the achievement of the objectives settled before beginning of the course. They create examinations on the perceptions of making hard for the students to perform better by formulating difficult questions which are hardly to be answered. This affected many students in higher learning institutions. Through the interviews with respondents, it was evident that the causes of examinations result queries to students studying in open and distance learning were; wrong written registration numbers, skipped student's examination booklet, query due pending results due to registration issues, and irregularity issues. These are results of both facilitators and students themselves. Moreover, some pointed out that centres coordinators were irresponsible on solving

students queries which led to student's chaos in Higher learning institutions. Through the interviews with respondents to various Open and Distance Learning (ODL) study centres it was noticed that sources of examinations' results queries were caused by various reasons as evidenced below: -

Lack of seriousness of some makers during marking process. The markers recorded wrong marks to wrong candidate, skipped students' booklets and hence the marks were not recorded at all. Moreover, they failed to add marks scored by the students; this led some students to appeal and drop out of the programme. On the other hand, some students lacked seriousness during the examinations period. They wrote wrong registration numbers and made difficult to recognise their number and solve their examinations results queries on time. Some did not write their registration/examination number(s) at all. ODL students committed examinations' offences compared to conventional students at the Institute of Adult Education (IAE). Respondents pointed out that the examinations' offences to ODL students are indications that there is a very little support service to them. Some respondents agreed that many ODL students' study only where there is examination and hence decide to outer with supported documents in the examination rooms.

Poor management of ODL study centres were seen also as the source of examinations result queries for ODL at IAE most of coordinators and resident facilitators were after individual interests instead of students' interests. This affected negatively the examinations results for ODL students in most of the ODL study centres in Tanzania. The main objective of the researcher aimed to find out the effects of examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions. The questionnaire and interview tools were used to collect information from respondents. The results presented in the (Figure 1) as follows;
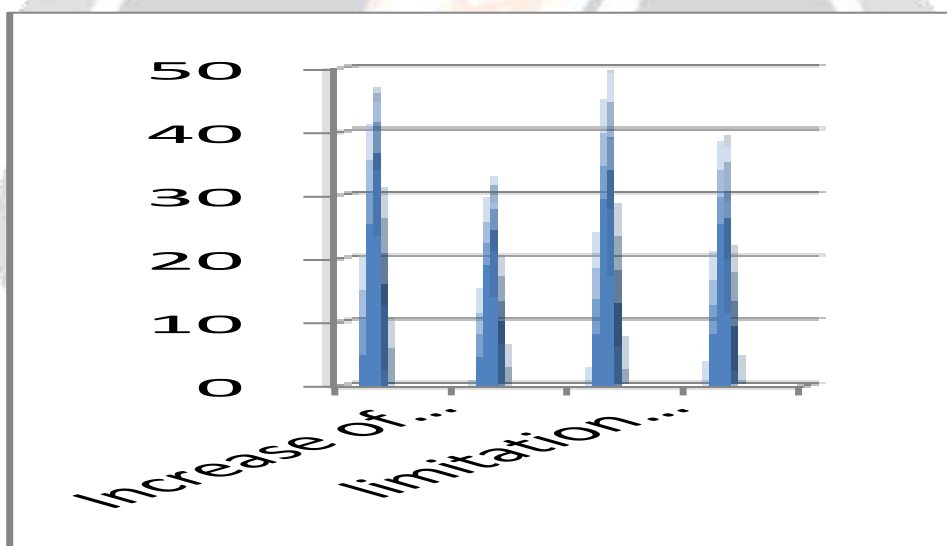

Figure: 1 Effects of Examinations' results queries from ODL study center A.

Source: Field Data 2019

As findings shown in (Figure 1), it was indicated that 50 respondents who were equal to 91% of the sampled population agreed that the examinations result queries led to the increase of failure of students in higher learning institutions. This is because many students who failed to score the planned marks he or she will have to attend supplementary examinations and when failed again he or she will have to carry the module to next year. The queries in examinations made many students to repeat the examinations such as supplementary examinations which give some hard time lecturers to repeat prepare examinations for them.

Thirty (35) respondents who were equal to sixty percent (64%) of the sampled population commented that the examinations result queries in higher learning institutions led many students to drop out of the courses. This is because through examinations' results queries many students failed to score the required marks and lost the qualification for continuing to study in higher education. This led many students to discontinues with studies and cut off their dreams in pursuing higher education.

Also the findings indicated that the examinations result queries become a huge limitation for many people to acquire higher education in the country. This was strongly agreed by fifty-five (55) respondents equal to 100% of the sampled population. They complained that many students in higher learning institutions could not be able to acquire certificates and diplomas for higher education degrees due to examinations' results queries in various higher education institutions. One respondent complained that "*at the starting of the course the number of students were 200 and above but the day when they graduated their number was 157.*"

The study findings showed that, the examinations result queries led to the decline of production of skilled labour in the country. This was supported by 47 respondents who were equal to 85% of sampled population who commented that the examinations result queries led many students to fail to accomplish their studies which resulted to decline of the production of great number of the skilled people to fill various vacancies in the provision of social services in the country such as doctors, facilitators and civil servants. Also technicians such as engineers, researchers and even leaders couldn't be produced which led to the country to face shortage of trained personnel to cover various tasks in the community.

By observing the findings, the major effect of examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions is the limitation for many students to acquire higher education. This is because many fail to pass the examinations and are disqualified to continue with the learning in higher learning institutions.
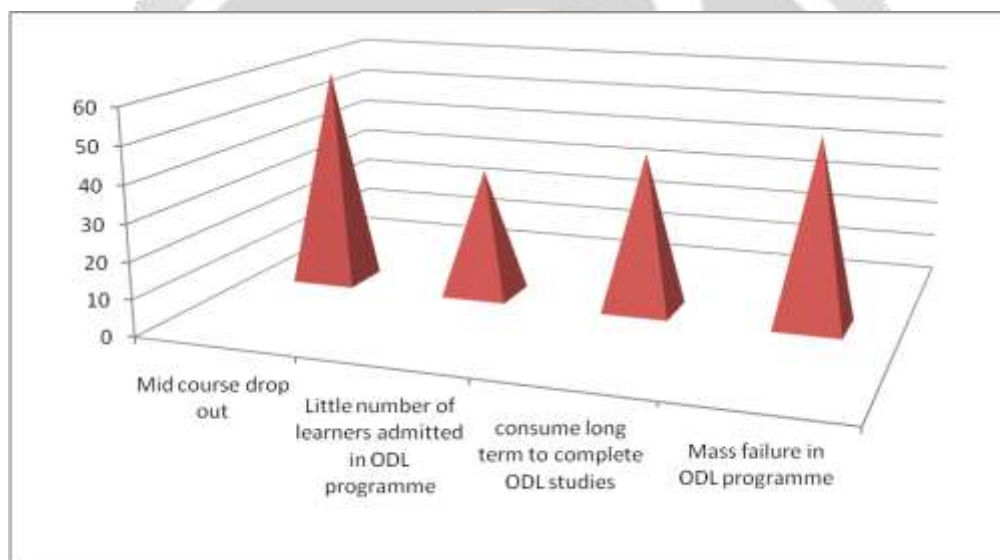

Figure 2. Effects of Examinations' results queries from ODL study center B.
Source: Field Data (2019)

Mid-course drops out: About 52 respondents among 60 who were 87% of all respondents replied that the major effect of examinations' results queries in ODL programmes is mid course drop out of students. Many students after faced hardship in examinations and the poor results they got, made them to give up the course and quit to continue with studies. This is because they lose hope to continue by seeing the course is difficult for them to complete. Most of them after seeing their first semester examinations results they gave up and decided to drop out of the course due to the examinations' results queries they faced.

Based on the finding and the (Figure 2) the mid-course drops out is the great effect caused by the examinations' results queries in ODL programmes. The preparations of examinations should be effectively so as to hinder the increase of drop out of distance learners in ODL programmes. Little number of learners admitted in ODL programme: Also the little number of ODL learners to be admitted in ODL programmes is among the effects of the examinations' results queries in ODL programme. This was supported by 30 respondents who were equal to 50% of the all respondents included in the study. The presence of examinations' results queries led many to have the perceptions of failure to finish their studies which led them to give up on registering themselves into various ODL courses which resulted to little number of the ODL learners admitted in those programmes.

Long term to complete ODL studies: About 40 respondents among 60 who were 67% of all respondents agreed that examinations' results queries led many distance learners to consume long period of time to complete their ODL programmes. When they failed they have to repeat the module until they pass which took them a lot of time. This resulted to wastage of time in conducting few examinations which were contained queries and led ODL learners to take long time to accomplish their studies almost three (3) years.

Mass failure in ODL programme: about 48 respondents among 60 who were 78% of the all respondents agreed that the examinations' results queries led to mass failure of distance learners in their studies. This is because many of them are learning while are far from the facilitator and do not get a chance for being familiar with the examinations rules, to miss confidences of conducting examination and also inability to master well their notes they got from the facilitators. This objective forced the researcher to examine ways to overcome the effects of examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions. The questionnaire and interview tools were used to collect information from respondents.

From the (Table 2), the study findings indicated that forty-five (45) respondents who were equal to 82% of the sampled population agreed that in order to solve the examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions these institutions must have excellent students' learner support services for ODL students. This will help to reduce the examinations' results queries students faced in the examinations.

Table 2 Ways to Overcome the Effects of Examinations' results queries in Higher Learning Institutions

Ways to Overcome the Effects of Examinations' results queries in Higher Learning Institutions	Frequency
Having excellent students' learner support services for ODL students	45 (82%)
Facilitators to consider principles and rules of formulating examinations questions	38 (69%)
Planning for sufficient time for examinations based on the nature of the subject	27 (49%)
Uses of understandable language in examinations	42 (76%)

Source: Field Data 2019

Thirty-eight (38) respondents who were equal to 69% of the sampled population agreed that the facilitators needed to consider principles and rules of formulating examinations questions during preparation of examinations for students in higher learning institutions. By following those principles, they will be able to create effective examinations which could assess well students and measure the effectiveness of the course. Those principles will ensure the questions formulated resemble the assessment criteria and facilitated quality evaluation of the course in higher learning institutions. Twenty-seven (27) respondents who were equal to 49% of the sampled population agreed that the examinations must plan for sufficient time for examinations based on the nature of the subject. This means the time provided must reflect the nature of the subject and the demand of the assessment tools. This will provide enough time for the subjects which have experiments in their examinations such as science subjects. The plan for enough time will help students to get freedom of doing well in the examinations.

Lastly about 42 respondents who were equal to 76% of the sampled population agreed that there must be uses of understandable language in examinations. Through the uses of understandable vocabularies will help to provide clear picture to students on what the question wants and how to answer it. This will help to evaluate effectively what students have got from the course. By observing the findings on the ways to overcome the effects of examinations' results queries in higher learning institutions the major way agreed was having excellent students' learner support services for ODL students. This will help to reduce the examinans' results queries and stabilize the process of assessment and evaluation of students in the higher learning institutions.

The first research question was aimed to discover the examinations' results queries and its causes to the students in open and distance learning. It had the research question asked that, what are the examinations' results queries and its causes to the students in open and distance learning? Data collected through questionnaire from ODL learners. The findings of this question were presented through the following Table 3;

(Table 3) shows that, 88% of the respondents strongly agreed that, the shortage of time are one of the examinations' results queries in ODL programmes. Also 96% of the respondents strongly agreed that the presence of many vocabularies in the examinations questions is among of the examinations' results queries they faced during conducting their examinations in open and distance learning.

It was seen that 74% of respondents believe that the unclear instructions in examinations is among the examinations' results queries they faced during examination time. However, 80% of respondents agreed and indicated that one of the causes of examinations' results queries in ODL is the poor preparations for conducting examinations for both distance learners and facilitators.

Table 3 Showing sources of examination queries to the students in open and distance learning

Statement	Strong Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strong Disagree	Decision
Is shortage of time among of the examinations' results queries in ODL programme?	44(88%)	1(2%)	3(6%)	2(4%)	Strong Agree
Do many vocabularies in examinations result to examinations' results queries to ODL learners?	48(96%)	0	2(4%)	0	Strong Agree
Are unclear instructions in examinations is among the examinations' results queries in ODL?	4(8%)	37(74%)	6(12%)	3(6%)	Agree
Do the poor preparations of examinations led to examinations' results queries in ODL?	3(6%)	40(80%)	1(2%)	6(12%)	Agree
Is the distance between learners and facilitators led to unaware of how to conduct examinations and led to examinations' results queries in ODL programmes?	32(64%)	6(12%)	12(24%)	0	Strong Agree
Is language barrier among the causes of examinations' results queries in ODL porgammes?	47(94%)	0	2(4%)	1(2%)	Strong Agree

Source: Field Data (2019)

In (Figure 3) shows that 64% of the respondents strongly agreed that the other causes of examination query in ODL was the distance between learner and facilitators which hinder learner to gain experiences on various things like examination rules and regulations. Lastly the 94% of the respondents strongly agreed that the language barrier was the major causes of the examination queries to ODL learners due to inability to master well English language which used in answering examinations in ODL programmes. Through interviews most of the respondents mentioned many sources of examinations' results queries in ODL; missing marks (continuous assessment and semester examinations), results withheld, and irregularity issues.

The possible measures to overcome the examinations' results queries to students in open and distance learning at the Institute of Adult Education. Data were collected from all 60 respondents which were 100% of the sampled population. Respondents were interviewed and others questioned. The study findings presented by the following figure; About 52 respondents among 60 which were 87% of the sampled population commented that the institutions provided ODL programmes must set strategies which will enable them to provide training to their distance learners on how to conduct examinations before they seat for their examinations. This will help to make ODL learners aware of the techniques of avoiding examinations' results queries in their examinations.
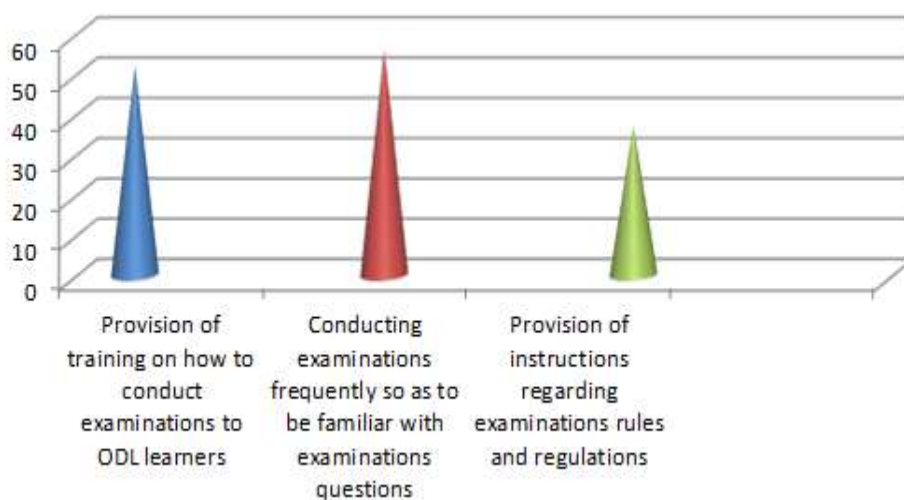

Figure 3 Measures to overcome the examination queries to students in open and distance learning
Source: Field Data (2019)

About 56 respondents among 60 which were 93% of the sampled population commented that the institutions which provide ODL programme should create the way of making ODL learners to conduct examinations frequently either at the institution venues or at home by providing them with take home test or assignments which could give them experiences on how to overcome examinations' results queries and being able to conduct their examinations without any hindrance. Basing on this finding the organization providing education through ODL mode supposed to ensure that ODL learners are practising examinations frequently because by doing that it could make the decrease of the examinations' results queries in Open and Distance Learning programmes. This is because it supported by high percentage of the respondents. Lastly about 37 respondents among 60 which were 62% of the sampled population suggested that, facilitators and facilitators should provide instructions frequently regarding examinations rules and regulations when ODL students are seat for examinations. This will enable to keep them aware of what they supposed to do and what they are not supposed to do so as to help them avoid examinations' results queries in their learning process.

Based on these findings, facilitators should know that the process of assessment is for measuring the achievement of the objectives of the course to students and not to make students suffer. They should know that the formulation of difficult examinations hinders the summative assessment which could help the institutions in improvement of the course. Therefore, they must develop examinations which are effective in assessing students without creating queries in conducting examinations. The higher learning institutions should put more emphasize on assessment and evaluation by having excellent students' learner support services for ODL students. The students in higher learning institutions should know that the better preparation for conducting examinations led to better performance. If they will not prepare themselves well they will face many examinations' results queries which will hinder them from performing well in their examinations. They must also practice well the language used in examinations so as to be familiar with the language and the vocabulary provided in the examinations.

5.   Conclusion

Basing on the above analysis the study found that shortage of time, many vocabularies in examinations and unclear instructions on examinations are the examinations' results queries in ODL programme which caused by poor preparations for examinations, distance between the learner and facilitator and language barrier. These examinations result queries have the following effects to ODL programme such as; mid-course drop out of students, little number of ODL learners to be admitted in ODL programmes, consume long period of time to complete ODL programmes and mass failure of distance learners in their studies. The study findings suggest that the following measure can be used to overcome the examinations' results queries to students in open and distance learning at the Institute of Adult Education by, set strategies which will enable to provide training to distance learners on how to conduct examinations before they seat for examinations, create the way of making ODL learners to conduct examinations frequently either at the institution venues or at home by providing them with take home test or assignments and facilitators and facilitators to provide instructions frequently regarding examinations rules and regulations when ODL students are seat for examinations.

This study recommends as following;

- The ODL learners should know that sitting for examinations is a crucial activity which needs full preparations and seriousness in performing because it is what gives the evaluation of what they have achieved for the programme they studied. Therefore, they are supposed to prepare themselves well before sitting for continuous assessment and semester examinations.

- The facilitators should know that the provision of examinations to ODL learner is to measure how they were able to master the distance learning materials they have been given. Therefore, they are supposed to provide examinations which resemble the nature of distance learners so as to be able to assess them well and make improvement of the programme.

- The institutions providing distance education should employ facilitators who are qualified in distance education and who are well trained on how to assess learners especially those who learn through distance. This will help the institutions to have qualified personnel who can supervise even examinations in the institutions and help students to avoid examinations queries.

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