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INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY
REGIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

FEEDBACK ANALYSIS REPORT OF ACADEMIC COUNSELLORS ON THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

(2020-2021)

This Report has been approved in the 54th Academic Council Standing Committee (ACSC) meeting.

1.0: Preamble

Feedback is an important and constructive tool. It creates a healthy environment, boosting productivity and engagement, and further achieving better results. It positively influences communication, team members' interaction and teamwork results in different fields. It plays the crucial role **in education and learning** by helping adopt new knowledge sooner and avoid repetitive mistakes. The Effective feedback (both positive and negative) is very helpful. The process of obtaining **continued** feedback is important across the entire organization in order to remain aligned to goals, create strategies, develop products and services improvements, improve relationships, and much more.

The feedback from the Academic Counsellors about the academic support services being offered by the University has covered all the aspects of learners support services like receipt of Self Learning Materials, the richness of the content and its scope, engagement of counseling sessions, its effectiveness and ease in reaching the Learners in the time of pandemic, evaluation of assignments etc.

The term 'Academic Counsellor' is used for the person, who has a combined function of tutoring as well as counselling in the Open and Distance Learning system. In general, counselling is person specific, and also related to personal and individual needs. The learners receive the crucial human interface and support towards resolving their queries, doubts, and any other academic support in attaining the objectives of the instructional design. The activity that takes place during the counselling sessions (face-to face contact programme) also includes the judicious mix of other supplementary support like audio/video and similar such support including other electronic and social media and follows the multiple media approach of extending counselling support.

During the lockdown imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the University adopted various online/digital and social media platforms to ensure continuance of the study of the learners. Academic counselling was organized using the online platforms such as Google meet, Zoom, Webex, YouTube, Facebook live, Twitter, Instagram of IGNOU. Hence the University has obtained the valuable feedback of

Academic counsellors in view of the transition from face-to-face to online/digital mode of academic counselling.

Further, the assignments in all the programmes of IGNOU perform a very important pedagogical role; it is a tool for the continuous evaluation in the form of feedback from the academic counsellors to sustain motivation and joyful learning.

Role of Academic Counsellor in ODL System

The academic counsellors in the distance education system bridge the gap between the learner and the teaching institution. They play a key role in enabling the students to become an active and effective learner. They set the context, help students pose questions to explore, stimulate problem solving, and give the students tools and resources to use so that they can construct knowledge.

2.0: About the Academic Counselling

Academic Counselling is an important activity in distance education and is entirely different from the usual classroom teaching. Counsellors answer to the learners' questions in counselling sessions, besides clarifying their doubts and helping them to overcome difficulties they may face while going through the self-learning materials. These counselling sessions also offer the students an opportunity to interact with their peers. The counsellors perform various roles, such as facilitating learners about the subject matter content, assessing assignments, providing motivation and encouragement and supervising research/term papers/project work. Since counselling is such an important component of distance education, it is necessary to understand the concept. The activities of academic counselling are broadly divided into the three parts: i) Informing ii) Advising &, iii) Counselling.

The counselling sessions (theory) are usually not compulsory for the learners to attend, but these sessions are considered highly useful by the learners in order to facilitate, guide and motivate the learners during their course of study.

3.0: Methodology

The feedback questionnaire was created by CIQA. The Questionnaire was divided into three parts. In the first part, the basic information of the academic counsellor was obtained and the second part was related to the feedback of academic counselors on **Likert's five point rating scale** (Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly disagree). The tool comprised of a total 25 items related to academic counselling, SLMs, student support services, evaluation etc. In this part two open ended questions have been taken for the suggestions of Academic Counsellors on the following points: -

- Alternative mode of evaluation for distance learners who do not have their own electronic device.

- What are the tools you suggest for internal assessment of learners in case the Term end examination are MCQ based?

The questionnaire was shared with all 56 Regional Centres of IGNOU. The Regional Centres further shared it with their Academic Counsellors through emails. In the present study the descriptive survey method has been used to find out the result as per the objective of study through questionnaires. Total **1031 Academic Counsell**ors have submitted their feedback.

Table: Demography of Academic Counsellors (Gender/Categories wise) and orientation programme

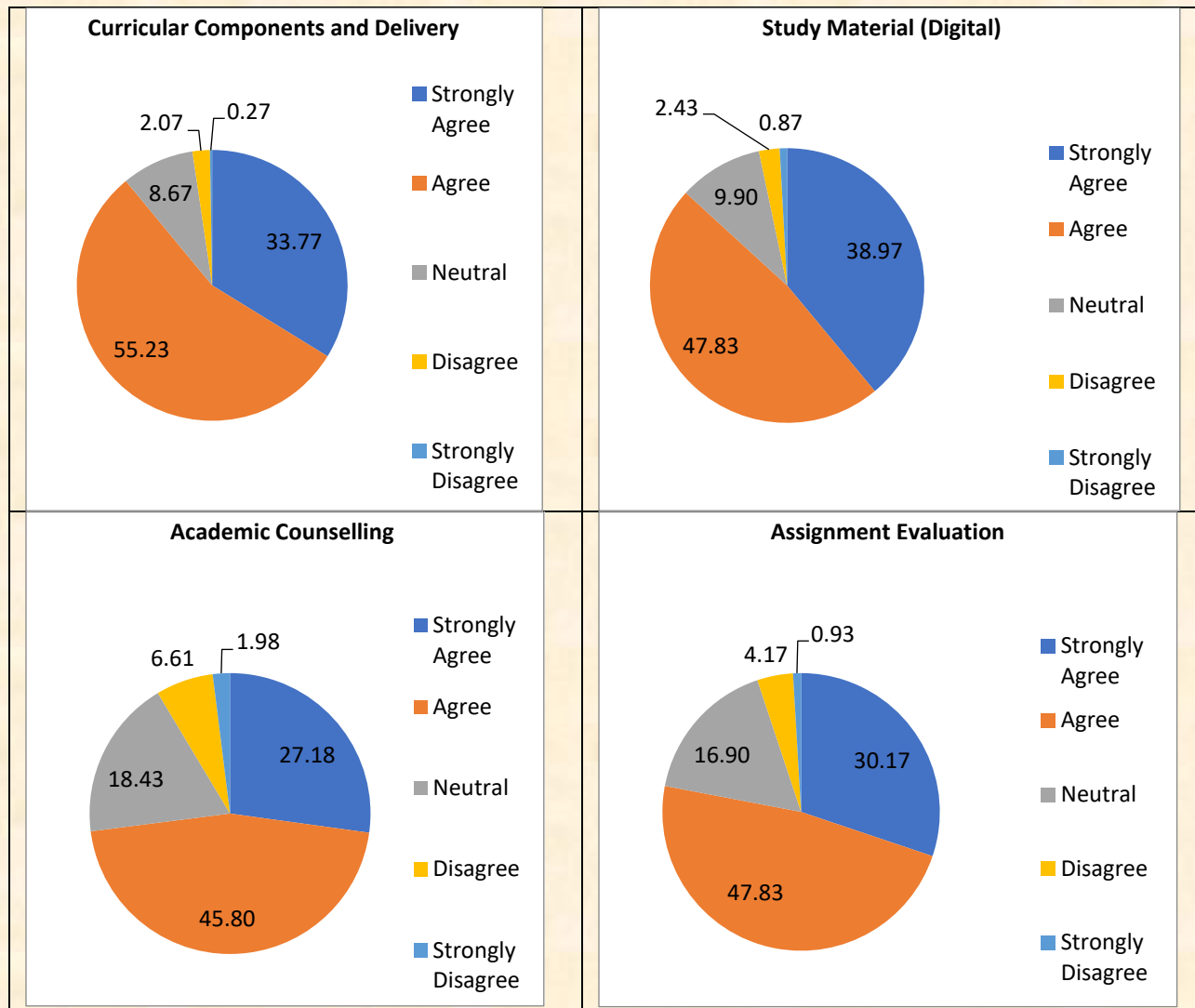| Sl. No.	Demographic/other item	Percentage
1	Gender	Male: 63.6% Female: 36.4%
2	Age Group	25 to 35: 24.40% 36 to 45: 34.70% 46 to 55: 23.90% 56 and above: 17.00%
3	Category	SC: 7.20% ST: 3.80% OBC: 25.30% GEN: 63.70%
4	Attended Orientation Programmes conducted by IGNOU: Systemic (ODL): Yes/No?	Yes: 49.70% No: 50.30%
5	Attended Orientation Programmes conducted by IGNOU: Discipline specific: Yes/No?	Yes: 38.50% No: 61.50%

4.0: Feedback of Counsellors

(Response received from the counsellors on different items/questions depicted pictorially in the form of pie/bar/line diagram)
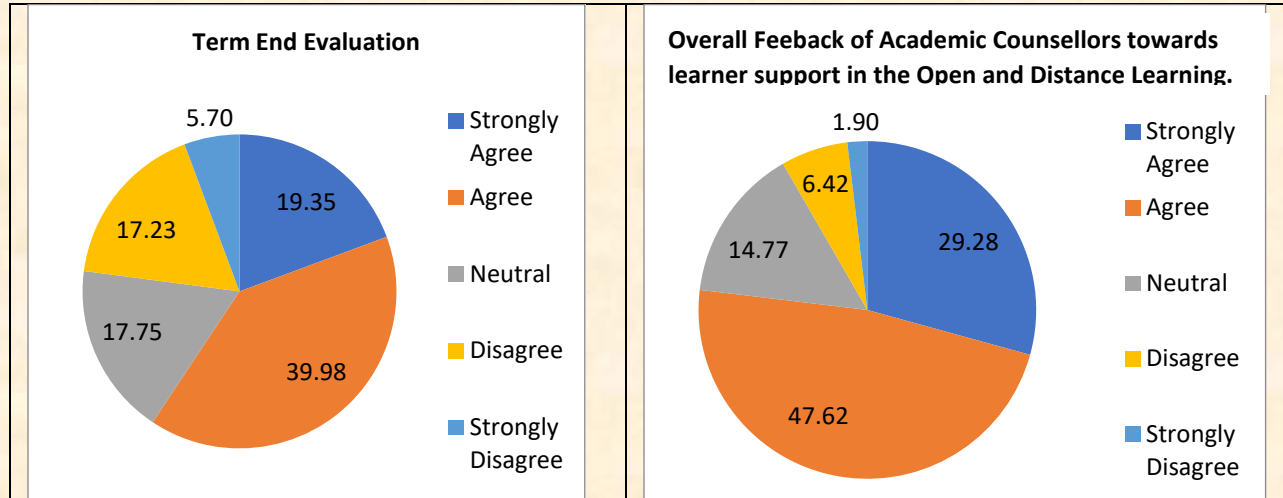
Sl. No.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Curricular Components and Delivery						
01	Content Coverage in the Self Learning Material (Blocks and Units) is adequate.	44.10%	49.40%	4.60%	1.50%	0.40%
02	The content is well illustrated with examples, figures and diagrams/charts.	42.00%	49.00%	6.90%	2.00%	0.10%
03	There is a conceptual clarity in the content of the course.	44.00%	47.70%	6.40%	1.70%	0.20%
04	The language used in the course units is easy to understand.	43.20%	47.20%	7.90%	1.70%	0.00%
05	The difficulty level of the course is as per programme level.	22.90%	55.90%	16.90%	4.00%	0.30%
06	The self-check exercises provided in the Unit	6.4%	82.20%	9.30%	1.5%	0.60%

No.	Statement					
	facilitate learning.					
Study Material (Digital)						
07	IGNOU provides digital content through e-Gyankosh and e-Content app which is useful for achieving learning outcomes.	43.40%	47.30%	7.50%	1.80%	0.00%
08	IGNOU provides supplementary media support through Gyanvani/Gyandhara/Gyandarshan channels and web enabled academic support (WEAS)for reinforcing learning.	37.20%	50.00%	11.30%	1.40%	0.10%
09	Social media platforms used by IGNOU like Face book, Twitter, YouTube, Insatgram, Zoom, WebEx, GoogleMeet etc. for teaching-learning and student support, enhance outreach of the programme.	36.30%	46.20%	10.90%	4.10%	2.50%
Academic Counselling						
10	The counselling schedule was made available to you well in time.	18.50%	42.80%	25.80%	10.60%	2.30%
11	The counselling schedule links were easily accessible on the website of the Regional Centre.	32.30%	47.80%	14.20%	3.70%	2.00%
12	The counselling sessions were held as per schedule.	38.60%	46.10%	11.30%	2.50%	1.50%
13	You were familiar with online platform and found it easy to use	43.90%	44.50%	8.50%	2.30%	0.80%
14	The learners were motivated to participate in the online counselling sessions.	31.80%	49.00%	14.60%	3.30%	1.30%
15	The attendance of learners during the online sessions was satisfactory.	18.20%	48.10%	23.10%	8.90%	1.70%
16	The online counselling sessions were interactive.	24.70%	51.10%	18.50%	4.40%	1.30%
17	You sometimes faced misdemeanour of learners during online counselling session.	7.00%	31.20%	35.60%	20.70%	5.50%
18	During the pandemic time the University promptly provided counselling support using various digital and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Insatgram, Zoom, WebEx, GoogleMeet, etc.	29.60%	51.60%	14.30%	3.10%	1.40%
Assignment Evaluation						
19	You were comfortable in using the digital platform for evaluation of assignments.	32.70%	45.40%	16.80%	3.90%	1.20%
20	There is need for training of academic counsellors in digital evaluation strategies.	30.30%	45.00%	17.40%	6.50%	0.80%
21	You found it convenient to transmit the assignment awards online to the University.	27.50%	53.10%	16.50%	2.10%	0.80%
Term End Evaluation						
22	Online and on-demand term-end should replace pen and paper-based examinations.	21.50%	41.50%	20.40%	12.20%	4.40%

23	The weightage of internal assessment be increased to more than 50% from the current 25-30%.	15.00%	36.80%	19.80%	20.90%	7.50%
24	Questions for term-end examination should be completely MCQ based.	12.00%	27.30%	20.70%	30.80%	9.20%
25	Questions for term-end examination should be a mix of MCQ and subjective type questions.	28.90%	54.30%	10.10%	5.00%	1.70%

Based on above data, the overall observations can be presented in pie-chart as given below:

Curricular Components and Delivery

- Strongly Agree: 33.77
- Agree: 55.23
- Neutral: 8.67
- Disagree: 2.07
- Strongly Disagree: 0.27

Study Material (Digital)

- Strongly Agree: 38.97
- Agree: 47.83
- Neutral: 9.90
- Disagree: 2.43
- Strongly Disagree: 0.87

Academic Counselling

- Strongly Agree: 27.18
- Agree: 45.80
- Neutral: 18.43
- Disagree: 6.61
- Strongly Disagree: 1.98

Assignment Evaluation

- Strongly Agree: 30.17
- Agree: 47.83
- Neutral: 16.90
- Disagree: 4.17
- Strongly Disagree: 0.93

Term End Evaluation

- ■ Strongly Agree
- ■ Agree
- ■ Neutral
- ■ Disagree
- ■ Strongly Disagree

5.70
19.35
17.23
17.75
39.98

Overall Feeback of Academic Counsellors towards learner support in the Open and Distance Learning.

- ■ Strongly Agree
- ■ Agree
- ■ Neutral
- ■ Disagree
- ■ Strongly Disagree

1.90
6.42
14.77
29.28
47.62

5.0: Analysis of the Feedback received

Based on above analysis the feedback of Academic Counselors, **the item-wise/question-wise feedback may be** concluded in the following points:

Curricular Components and Delivery
1. Content Coverage in the Self Learning Material (Blocks and Units) is adequate. – The feedback received from the respondents reflect, 93.50% (Strongly Agreed - 44.10 + Agreed - 49.40) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 04.60% were neutral and only 1.90% Academic Counsellors of IGNOU had disagreed that Content Coverage in the Self Learning Material (Blocks and Units) is adequate.
2. The content is well illustrated with examples, figures and diagrams/charts. - The feedback indicates, 91.00 % (Strongly Agreed - 42.00 + Agreed - 49.00) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 6.90% were neutral and only 2.10% Academic Counsellors had disagreed on the response.
3.   There is a conceptual clarity in the content of the course.- It is clearly shows 91.70% (Strongly Agreed - 44.00 + Agreed - 47.70) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 6.40% were neutral and only 1.90% Academic Counsellors had disagreed on this response.
4.   The language used in the course units is easy to understand. - It is clearly shows 90.40% (Strongly Agreed - 43.20 + Agreed - 47.20) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 7.90% were neutral and only 1.70% Academic Counsellors had disagreed on this response.
5.   The difficulty level of the course is as per programme level. - The feedback indicates that about 78.80% (Strongly Agreed - 22.90 + Agreed – 55.90) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 16.90% were neutral and only 4.30% Academic Counsellors disagree to the response.

6. The self-check exercises provided in the Unit facilitate learning.- The feedback clearly indicates that about 88.60% (Strongly Agreed – 06.40 + Agreed – 82.20) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 9.30% were neutral and only 2.10% Academic Counsellors disagree with the response.

Study Material (Digital)

7. IGNOU provides digital content through e-Gyankosh and e-Content app which is useful for achieving learning outcomes.- It is clearly shows 90.70% % (Strongly Agreed – 43.40 + Agreed – 47.30) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 7.50% were neutral and only 01.80% Academic Counsellors express their disagreement on this response..

8. IGNOU provides supplementary media support through Gyanvani/Gyandhara/Gyandarshan channels and web enabled academic support (WEAS)for reinforcing learning. - The feedback clearly indicates that about 87.20% (Strongly Agreed – 37.20 + Agreed – 50.00) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 11.30% were neutral and only 01.50% Academic Counsellors disagree with the response

9. Social media platforms used by IGNOU like Face book, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Zoom, WebEx, Google Meet etc. for teaching-learning and student support, enhance outreach of the programme.- The feedback clearly indicates that about 82.50% (Strongly Agreed – 36.30 + Agreed – 46.20) Academic Counsellors has recorded their agreement, 10.90% were neutral and only 06.60% had disagreed with the response.

Academic Counselling

10. The counselling schedule was made available to you well in time.- It is clearly shows 61.30% (Strongly Agreed – 18.50 + Agreed – 42.80) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 25.80% were neutral and only 12.90% Academic Counsellors had recorded their disagreement to this response.

11. The counselling schedule links were easily accessible on the website of the Regional Centre.- The feedback clearly indicates that about 80.10% (Strongly Agreed – 32.30 + Agreed – 47.80) Academic Counsellors endorsed their agreement,14.20% were neutral and only 05.70% Academic Counsellors disagreed with the response.

12 The counselling sessions were held as per schedule.- The response clearly shows that about 84.70% (Strongly Agreed – 45.20 + Agreed – 46.80) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 11.30% were neutral and only 04.00% Academic Counsellors recorded their disagreement on this query.

13. You were familiar with online platform and found it easy to use - The feedback collected clearly shows about 88.40% (Strongly Agreed – 43.90 + Agreed – 44.50) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 08.50% were neutral and only 03.10% had recorded their disagreement to this response.

14. The learners were motivated to participate in the online counselling sessions.- The feedback clearly shows about 80.80% (Strongly Agreed – 31.80 + Agreed – 49.00) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 14.60% were neutral and only 04.60% Academic Counsellors had recorded their disagreement.

15 The attendance of learners during the online sessions was satisfactory - It is clearly shows about 66.30% (Strongly Agreed – 18.20 + Agreed – 48.10) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 23.10% were neutral and only 10.60% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.

16. The online counselling sessions were interactive. - It is clearly shows about 75.80% (Strongly Agreed – 24.70 + Agreed – 51.10) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 18.50% were neutral and only 05.70% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.

17. You sometimes faced misdemeanour of learners during online counselling session. - It is clearly shows about 38.20% (Strongly Agreed – 07.00 + Agreed – 31.20) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 35.60% were neutral and only 26.20% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.

18. During the pandemic time the University promptly provided counselling support using various digital and social media platforms such as Face book, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Zoom, WebEx, Google Meet, etc.- It is clearly shows about 81.20% (Strongly Agreed – 29.60 + Agreed – 51.60) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 14.30% were neutral and only 04.50% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.

Assignment Evaluation

19. You were comfortable in using the digital platform for evaluation of assignments. - It is clearly shows about 78.10% (Strongly Agreed – 32.70 + Agreed – 45.40) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 16.80% were neutral and only 05.10% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.

20. There is need for training of academic counsellors in digital evaluation strategies - It is clearly shows about 75.30% (Strongly Agreed – 30.30 + Agreed – 45.00) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 17.40% were neutral and only 07.30% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.

21. You found it convenient to transmit the assignment awards online to the University. - It is clearly shows about 80.60% (Strongly Agreed – 27.50 + Agreed – 53.10) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 16.50% were neutral and only 02.90% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.

Term End Evaluation

22. Online and on-demand term-end should replace pen and paper-based examinations. - It is clearly shows about 63.00% (Strongly Agreed – 21.50 + Agreed – 41.50) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 20.40% were neutral and only 16.60% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.

23. The weightage of internal assessment be increased to more than 50% from the current 25-30%. - It

is clearly shows about 51.80% (Strongly Agreed – 15.00 + Agreed – 36.80) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 19.80% were neutral and only 28.40% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.
24. Questions for term-end examination should be completely MCQ based. - It is clearly shows about 39.30% (Strongly Agreed – 12.00 + Agreed – 27.30) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 20.70% were neutral and only 40.00% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.
25. Questions for term-end examination should be a mix of MCQ and subjective type questions. - It is clearly shows about 83.20% (Strongly Agreed – 28.90 + Agreed – 54.30) Academic Counsellors had agreed, 10.10% were neutral and only 06.70% Academic Counsellors had disagreed to this response.

The feedback of Academic Counsellors on two open ended questions has been analyzed and following are the gist of suggestions/recommendations:-

1. Alternative mode of evaluation for distance learners who do not have their own electronic device.

1. Using mode of General discussion with learners and motivate them to complete the exercises given in the study material.

2. Very few ACs having recommended the offline mode as many of learners belongs to remote areas and internet facility is very poor in rural areas.

3. Many of ACs recommended that students having electronic gadgets to utilize the various platforms like Zoom app in electronic media, mobile phone ,computer.

4. Self Help Group (SHG) model for online education will improve cooperation and fair competition among learners.

5. (I) Assignment through email, (ii) viva-voce through telephone call (iii) open book test for term end exam like in Delhi University.

6. To solve this problem, IGNOU should launch or open little Virtual Study Centres like present study centres.

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2. What are the tools you suggest for internal assessment of learners in case the Term end examinations are MCQ based?

1. IGNOU can hold proctored exams through its LMS. Or sites such as kahoot, quizlet, google classroom, quizizz, canvas, Blog format, co- learning , debates, making short video etc may be used.

2. The number of assignments and also the number of questions can be increased. Project work can be enriched. Practical courses can be introduced wherever possible. Field visits can be incorporated in the curriculum.

3. Since this is open learning, one thing should be noted here, the students is of diverse background with huge age gap and responsibilities. The assessment therefore should be on the basis of conceptual understanding through description writing. As it can be assessed much better. MCQ will invite more failure then the current passed out percentage. The simple reason, you can't assess the subject, just memorized the facts.

4. User Friendly App Specially designed for MCQ based test. Just like (Gradeup, Examvedas & many more app), Smart phone, Laptop and E- portfolio.

5. Each subject MCQ's has to send to learners through google class room form link they have to submit to google drive evaluator has to open his drive and evaluate and give Internal marks

6. Viva shall be best option or tool for internal assessment of learners.

7. On screen Marking ,Cloud software system suitable to the platform which is provided for assessment.

8. I holding an online student seminar conference, under which students will be asked to present their field work experiences and simultaneously learn the skills of paper presentation.

6.0: Conclusion and recommendations

The above findings are the testimony of the fact that the Academic Counsellors in the distance education system always bridge the gap between the learner and IGNOU in different capacities i.e., as guide, counsellor, as an evaluator and through global comments on their assignments. More than 76.91% academic counsellors have displayed a positive response towards different activities related to counselling, study material, evaluation and other student support services. Thus, it can be concluded that it is highly satisfactory that there is significant and positive response from the Academic Counsellors in respect of different parameters of Open and Distance Education. It can be concluded that the Academic Counsellors have the positive attitude up to the excellent level wide range of attitude from 38.20% to 93.50%.

The positive attitude of the Academic Counsellors towards Open and Distance Learning, reflects their readiness to engage with distance learning methodologies. The favorable approach of academic counsellors may further be utilised by the University for development of new programmes, collaboration for need based programmes and collective approach for teaching learning process of both conventional

and ODL systems. Further, majority of the ACs recommended that using of online tools for all kind of Student Support Services. Few suggested creation of Self Help Group among learners and creation of Virtual Study Centrs. Furthermore, suggestion was made to use online assessment of Assignment and viva-voce through telephone call.

Use of proctored exams through LMS or sites such as kahoot, quizlet, Google classroom, quizzes, canvas, Blog format, co- learning , debates, making short video etc and on screen Marking ,Cloud software system suitable to the platform which is provided for assessment. Holding an online student seminar conference, under which students will be asked to present their field work experiences and simultaneously learn the skills of paper presentation.