

INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY
INTERNATIONAL DIVISION
FEEDABCK FROM OVERSEAS COUNSELLORS

1. Preamble

The Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system is recognized with features like geographical separation of learner from the teacher, flexible and lifelong learning, and self-paced learning at the convenience of learner. These features of the ODL encourage adults to pursue their goals without any isolation from their social, personal and public life. Learner centric approach in ODL makes it distinct from conventional system; therefore special stress is made on obtaining feedback and opinion of target group. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) document titled 'Guidelines for Assessment and Accreditation' also stresses on obtaining feedback from learners on teaching, learning and support services.

International Division was established on 16th October 1997 as a Cell and was upgraded to the status of a full-fledged Division in 2002. To meet its objectives, this Division has adopted a four-fold approach viz; collaboration, coordination, cooperation, and competition for expanding IGNOU's reach in the International arena. The International Division is the nodal agency to cater to the needs of Overseas Students as well as Foreign Students Residing in India (FSRI). The University offers approx 60 academic programmes to its Overseas learners and approx 200 academic programmes to the Foreign Students Residing in India (FSRI).

2.0 About Academic Counsellors

The role of academic counselors is most crucial in educational attainment of students in their programme of study. Academic counselors are the subject experts empanelled for this purpose from the study centre or neighbouring institutions. They are oriented/trained by the university to impart knowledge and skills to distance learners at the learner support centre in accordance with the provisions of teaching-learning methodology of open and distance learning system. In ODL system academic counselors only interact with the learners to fill-up the gap between the learners and institution. They counsel students and also provide feedback through assignments submitted by the learner. The feedback provided by the academic counselors in the form of tutor comments help in improving their learning.

3.0: Methodology

The objective of obtaining feedback from the academic counsellors is to know their views about the quality of self instructional material to improve on important aspects of teaching-learning process in open and distance learning system practised by the University among international students of Indira Gandhi National Open University.

The feedback questionnaire comprises 15 close ended questions, these questions are in the form of statements and academic counsellors have to express the extent of agreement on these statements on a five point scale. There is one open-ended question seeking opinions/suggestions of Academic Counsellors for improvement in

the teaching-learning process. . A questionnaire for this purpose has been provided by Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA) for obtaining feedback from the academic counsellors of Overseas Study Centres (OSC). This analysis is based on the responses of 51 academic counsellors, who have filled up the questionnaire.

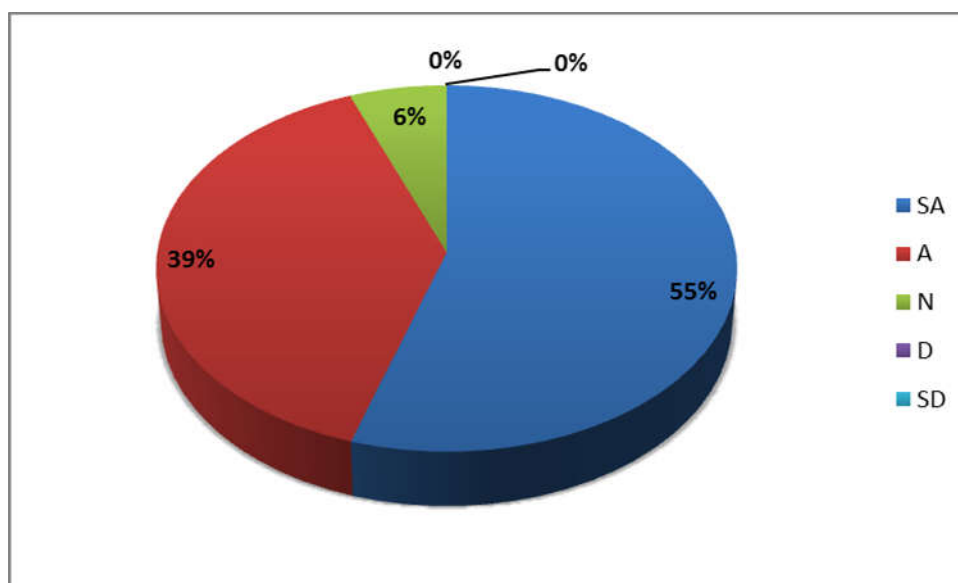
4.0: Feedback of Academic Counsellors

1. Content Coverage in the Self learning Material (Blocks and Units) is adequate

Table 1

SA	A	N	D	SD
28	20	3	0	0
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

94% academic counsellors feel that content coverage in the Self learning Material (Blocks and Units) in the courses/programme counseled by them is adequate. This response from the academic counsellors about the courses/programme is a compliment to faculty and course writers involved in design and development of self learning material of various programmes offered by Indira Gandhi National Open University.



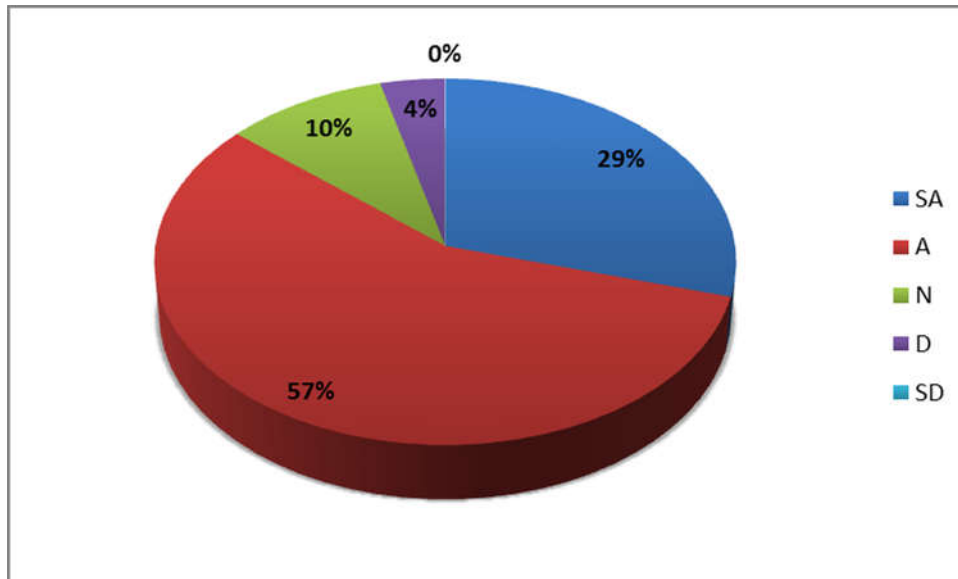
2. The content is well illustrated with examples, figures, and diagrams/charts

Table 2

SA	A	N	D	SD
15	29	5	2	0
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

Once again academic counsellors by a huge majority of 86% are of the view that the content is well illustrated with examples, figures, and diagrams/charts in the

courses/programme for which they undertake counseling at the OSC. This response speaks volumes about the quality of self-instructional material provided by the University to its learners.

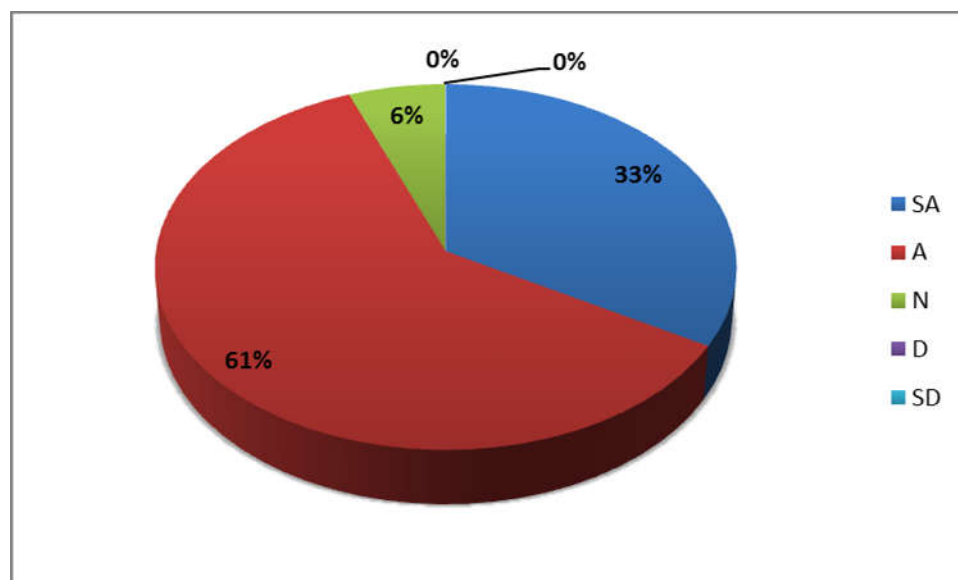


3. There is conceptual clarity in the content of the course

Table 3

SA	A	N	D	DA
17	31	3	0	0
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

Academic Counsellors in great numbers i.e. 94% have opined that there is conceptual clarity in the content of the course(s) for which they undertake counseling at the OSC.

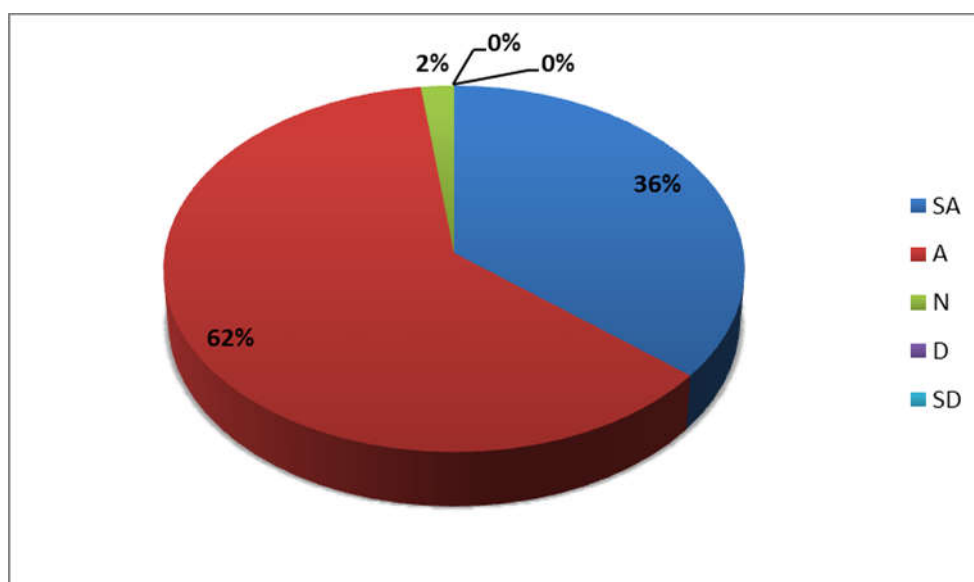


4. The language used in the course units is easily comprehensible

Table 4

SA	A	N	D	SD
18	31	1	0	0
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

On the issue of language of the course(s)/unit(s) being easily comprehensible, 98% academic counsellors have opined in favor of the statement, one counsellor did not attempt this question.

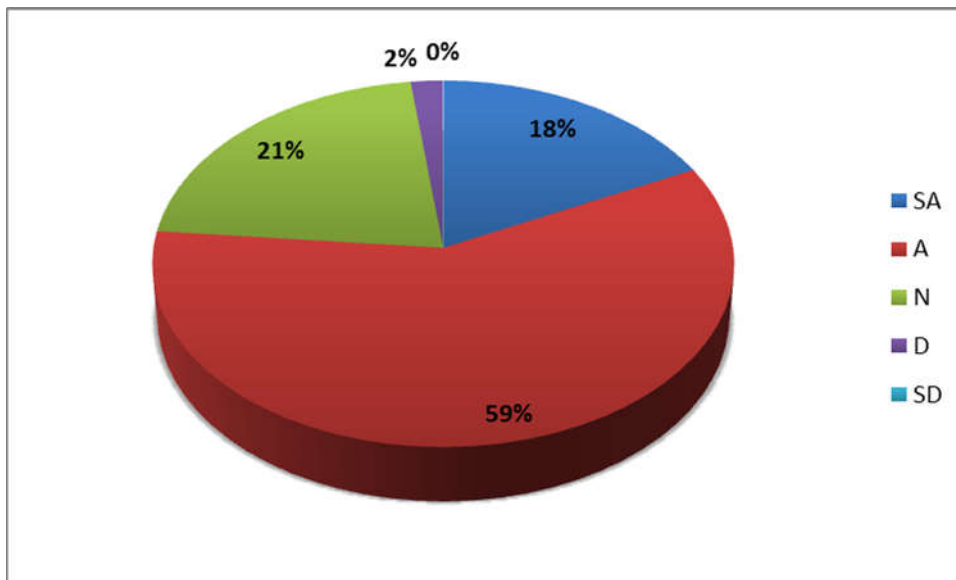


5. The difficulty level of the course is as per programme level

Table 5

SA	A	N	D	SD
9	30	11	1	0
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

77% academic counsellors agree with the statement that the difficulty level of the course is as per programme level. This shows that policy on design and development of course(s)/programmes maintained by the faculty and course writers across the board has widespread acceptance in the teaching-learning community.

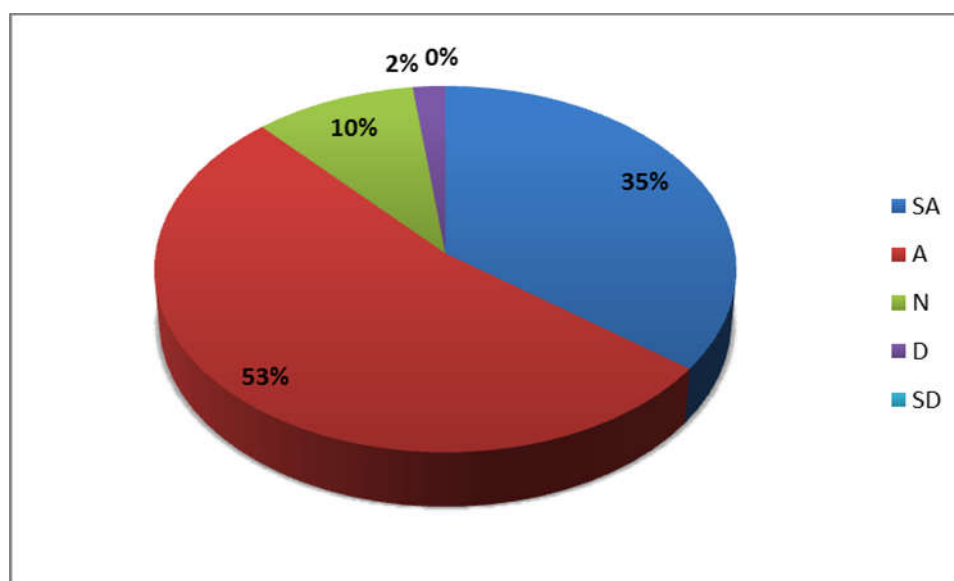


6. The self-check exercises provided in the unit facilitate learning

Table 6

SA	A	N	D	SD
18	27	5	1	0
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

Whether the self-check exercises provided in the unit facilitate learning, 88% academic counsellors are in agreement with the statement in respect of course(s) taught by them at the Overseas Study Centre (OSC). This is a fact that self check exercises enhance the process of learning leading to better learning takeaways.

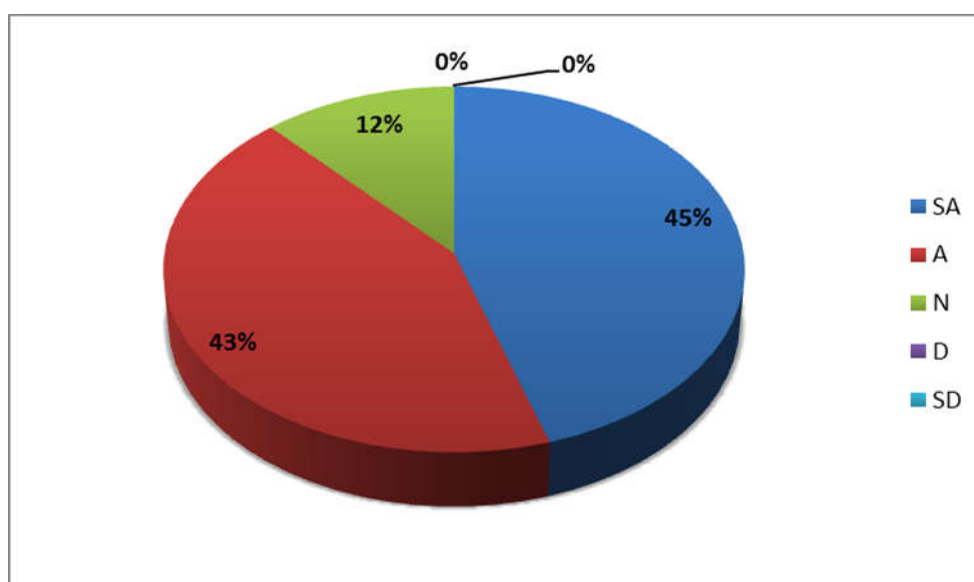


7. The assignments in the course effectively serve the twin purpose of teaching-learning and continuous assessment

Table 7

SA	A	N	D	SD
23	22	6	0	0
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

Once again 88% academic counsellors are of the view that the assignments in the course effectively serve the twin purpose of revising and reinforcing learning outcome through continuous assessment. Assignment is an integral component of teaching learning methodology of open and distance learning system, it facilitates retention of knowledge. The more number of assignments are always advisable.

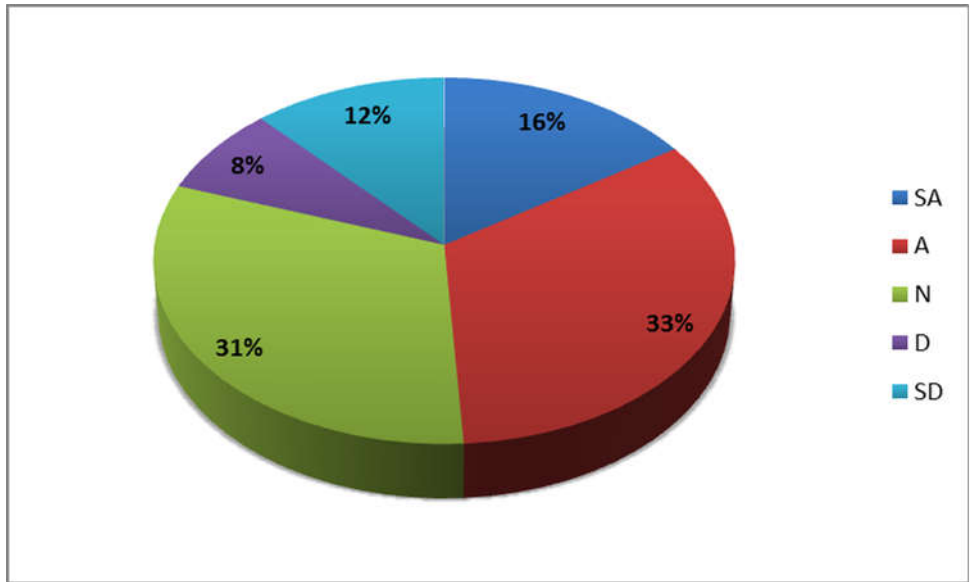


8. The non-print e-media components in the course are available to you for counseling

Table 8

SA	A	N	D	SD
8	17	16	4	6
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

On the issue of availability of non-print e-media components in the course for counseling, 49% academic counsellors have stated that non-print e-media component course(s) have been provided to them whereas 51% academic counsellors disagree with the statement.



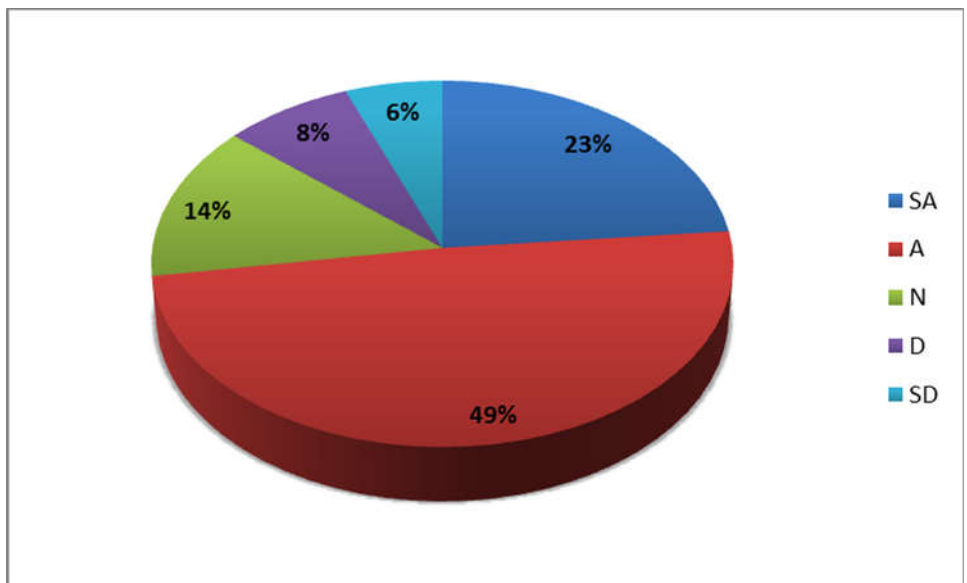
9. The prescribed number of theory counselling sessions are adequate

Table 9

SA	A	N	D	SD
12	25	7	4	3

SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

Academic counsellors by majority of 72% have opined that the prescribed number of theory counselling sessions are adequate. The university has devised the mechanism for number of counseling session for no. of credits and the response of academic counsellors validate the same.

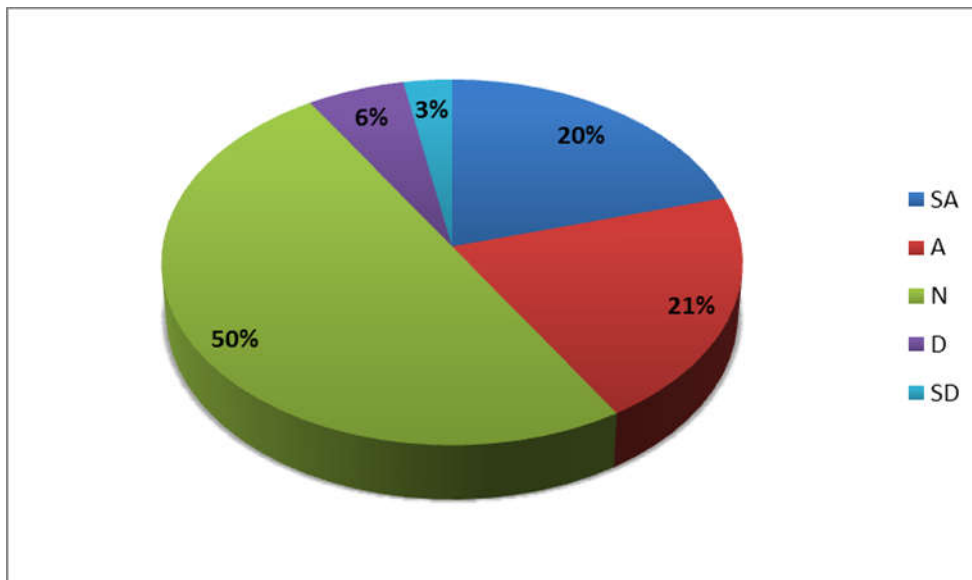


10. The prescribed number of practical counselling sessions (if applicable) are adequate

Table 10

SA	A	N	D	SD
7	7	17	2	1
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

Academic counsellors by majority of 41% have opined that the prescribed number of practical counselling sessions are adequate. It is pertinent to mention that only BCA and MCA programmes having practical components are on offer at Overseas Study Centres (OSCs). As per policy lab based programme are not on offer for overseas students.

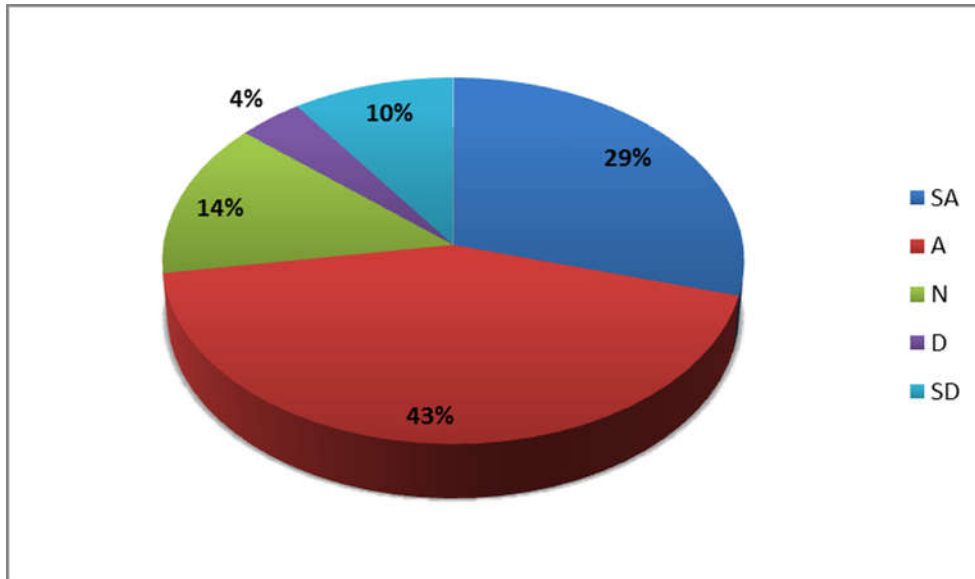


11. The learners are keen to use the e-self learning material for studying the course

Table 11

SA	A	N	D	SD
15	22	7	2	5
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

72% academic counsellors are of the view that the learners are keen to use the e-self learning material for studying the course. The response of academic counsellors on this issue is little surprising because on what basis such a large number they have supported the statement.



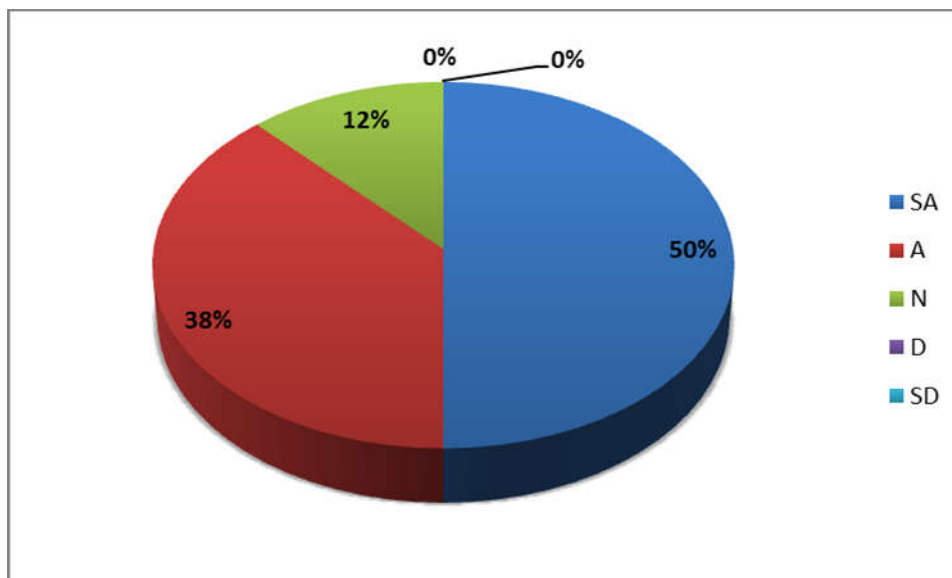
12. The counselling sessions are generally conducted as per schedule

Table 12

SA	A	N	D	SD
25	19	6	0	0

SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

On the issue of conducting counselling as per schedule, 88% academic counsellors have opined that the counselling session are conducted as per schedule. The response shows that counseling is held as per schedule at the Overseas Study Centres (OSCs) which is suitable to learner and academic counsellors both. One counsellor did not attempt this question.

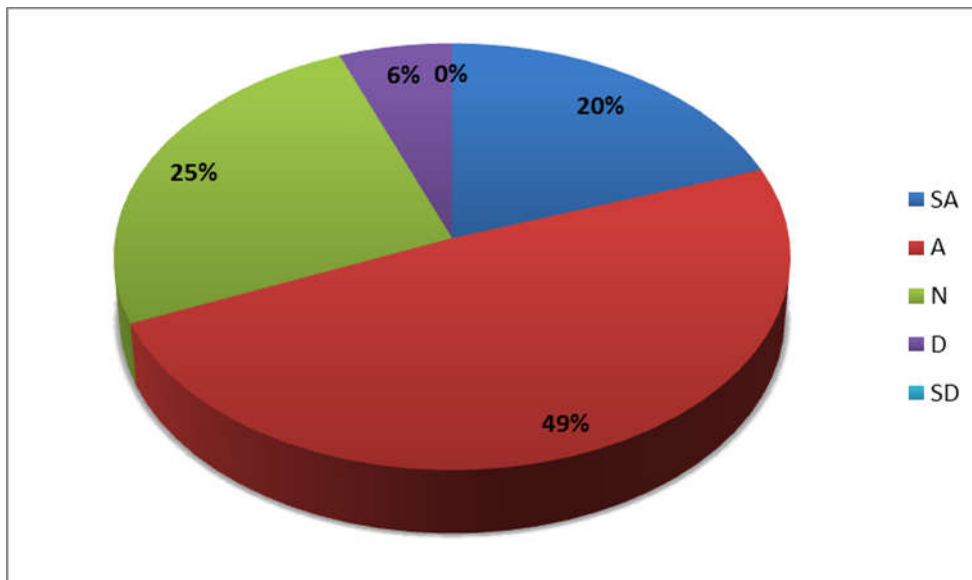


13. The attendance of students is generally good in the counselling sessions

Table 13

SA	A	N	D	SD
10	25	13	3	0
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

69% academic counsellors have informed that good number of students attend the counselling session. Counselling plays an important role as per teaching learning methodology of open and distance learning system. The response indicates the quality of counsellors and counselling taking place at OSCs.

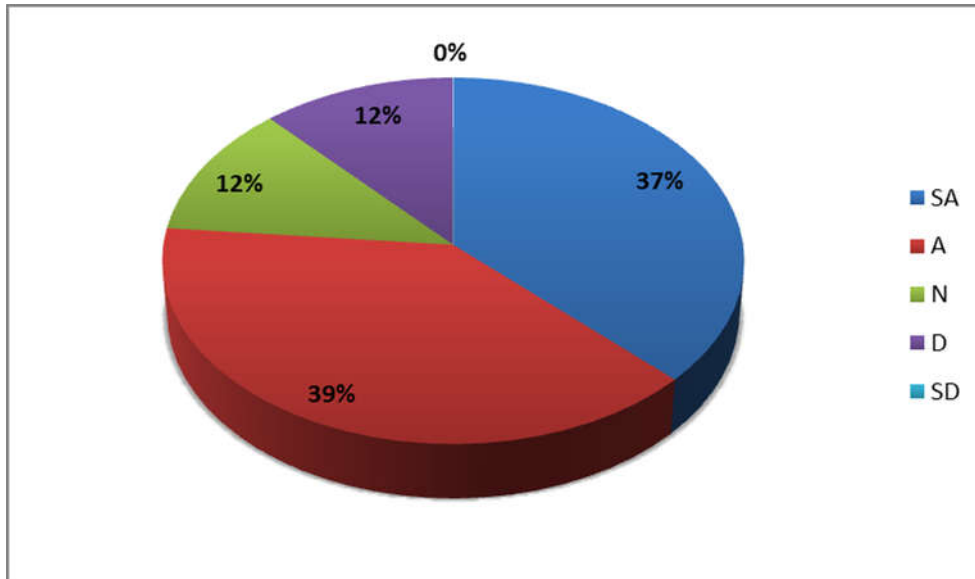


14. The learners expect lecture method instead of counseling

Table 14

SA	A	N	D	SD
19	20	6	6	0
SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree				

76% academic counsellors have stated that the learners expect lecture method instead of counseling. This may be because the majority of learners come from conventional system and tuned to lecturing instead of counseling. The study material is prepared on the teaching learning methodology of open and distance learning system which also facilitates learning in a better way.



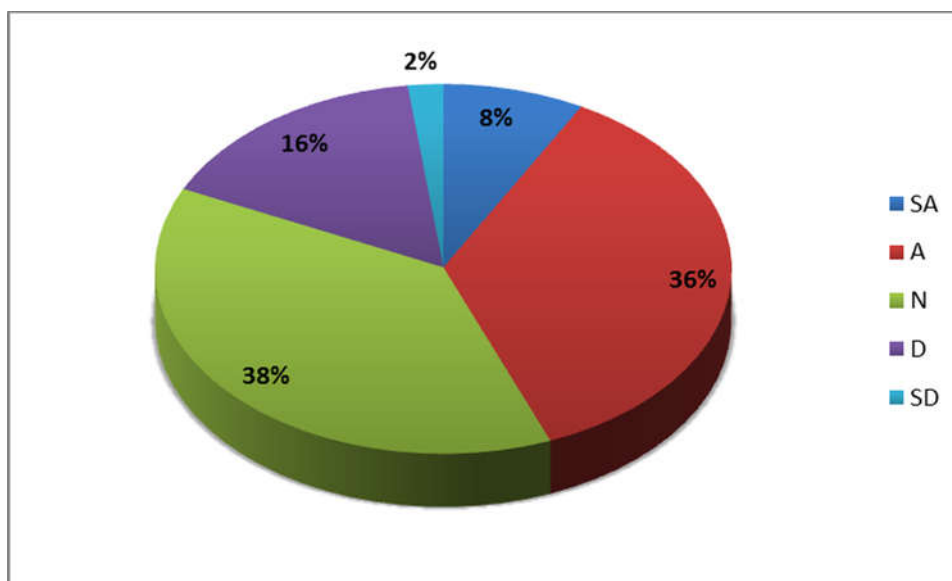
15. The learners express difficulties related to course content (conceptual clarity, self-check questions, language of content).

Table 15

SA	A	N	D	SD
4	18	19	8	1

SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

The learners express difficulties related to course content (conceptual clarity, self-check questions, language of content) have been agreed by 48% academic counsellors whereas 38% have remained silent on this aspect. It is very difficult to draw any inference from this opinion still.



5. List the areas that need attention to bring desired improvement in the system.

1. The learners express difficulties related to course content (conceptual clarity, self-check questions, language of content).
2. Tutor marked Assignments (TMAs) submissions should be increased to two or three assignments per course in order to fully engage the students.
3. International Division should develop specific training programmes for OSC Academic Counselors through virtual meeting (zoom).
4. The technologies used in course need to be reviewed for both BCA and MCA.