Title of Abstract: OPEN-DISTANCE EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM COVENANT UNIVERSITY

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Abstract:

Open and Distance Education (ODE) systems have a lot of potential gains – such as meeting the education needs of the teeming population of students who could not gain admission to tertiary institution and indigent students who could hardly afford formal tertiary education and so need to work and learn simultaneously. Some of these disadvantaged students live in remote areas and could not afford to leave their families, yet they desire to learn. There are also numerous pregnant women/girls, nursing mothers, widows and widowers who yearn to learn but are incapacitated by conditions beyond their control. These are few of the factors justifying the need for ODE. For instance, out of the 823,214 candidates that applied for admission through the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) in 2001, only 78,416 (representing 9.5%) eventually secured admission. With population increase, the situation is becoming aggravated with each passing year. Despite the number of ODE centres operating in Nigeria today, it appears there is still a yawning need for standard ODE centres. Reports had it that a number of the ODE centres barely operate true Open and Distance learning, reverting rather to the traditional physical contact lectures and use of printed textbooks. This is limiting. This study, therefore, focused on empirically ascertaining the state of ODE in Nigeria and strives to evolve a pragmatic solution to the challenge of ODE in Africa. The research designs adopted for the first phase of this study is the case study design. The second phase of the study is devoted to test-running the proposed Information and Computer Technology (ICT) based solution.

Key words: Open and Distance Education, Distance Learning, indigent students, admission, dropouts