

## PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS ON SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED BY IGNOU STUDY CENTRES

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### **Abstract**

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), the largest Open University in the world, is believed to be imparting quality education through various certificate, diploma and degree programmes. Being an Open University, IGNOU offers its programmes with the help of its Regional Centres and Study Centres across India and abroad. A study was conducted to understand the functioning of IGNOU Study Centres. One of the objectives was to find out perception of students on the support services provided by IGNOU Study Centres. The paper is based on the findings derived from the perception of students on the support services provided by IGNOU Study Centres. For the purpose of the study, four Study Centres based in Aizawl, the capital city of Mizoram State, India were identified. In most cases, the respondents expressed their perceptions in terms of 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' to the positive statements on student support services which is an indication that the overall perception of the students on the IGNOU Study Centres is good.

**Keywords:** IGNOU, Open University, Students Support Services, Students' Perception

### **Introduction**

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) established by an Act of Parliament in 1985 has today emerged as largest Open University in the world. The university has introduced a wide range of academic programmes (credit as well as non-credit) ranging from short term awareness courses to Certificate, Diploma, Post-graduate Diploma, Bachelor Degree, Master Degree and Research Degree Programmes. In order to offer student support services, the university has established a wide network of Regional Centres (RCs) and Study Centres (SCs) in India and Partner Institutions (PIs) abroad ([www.ignourcdelhi1.in/Downloads/STNC\\_Prospectus.pdf](http://www.ignourcdelhi1.in/Downloads/STNC_Prospectus.pdf)).

The mandate of the University is to:

- Democratize higher education by taking it to the doorstep of learners;
- Provide access to high quality education to all those who seek for it, irrespective of age, region or formal educational qualifications;
- Offer need-based academic programmes by giving professional and vocational orientation to the courses;
- Promote and develop distance education in India; and
- Set and maintain standards in distance education in the country as an apex body.

IGNOU has certain unique features such as:

- National and International reach,
- Flexible admission rules & individualized study,
- Flexible in terms of place, pace and duration of study,
- Systematic course development mechanism to ensure quality,
- Use of latest information and communication technologies,
- Modular programmes based on credit system,
- Nationwide student support services network
- Cost-effective programmes,
- Offering courses in collaboration with a number of formal institutions of higher learning under Convergence Scheme, and
- Resource sharing, collaboration and networking with conventional universities, open universities and other institutes/ organizations.

IGNOU being the largest Open University today serves the educational aspirations of over 4 million students in India and 36 other countries through 21 Schools of Studies and a network of 67 Regional Centres, around 3,000 learner support centres and 67 overseas centres. The University offers about 490 certificate, diploma, degree and doctoral programmes, with a strength of nearly 420 faculty members and academic staff

at the headquarters and regional centres and about 36,000 academic counselors from conventional institutions of higher learning, professional organizations, and industry among others ([www.ignou.ac.in](http://www.ignou.ac.in)).

The achievements of IGNOU highlighted above may be attributed to the management of student support services as this poses perhaps the most challenging problems to an Open University. Much of the success of the university would depend on how carefully the series are planned and how sincerely and efficiently they are managed and implemented. The Basic issues that have enormous significance for the success of the support services are the sincerity of the institution towards its students and its correct assessment of their needs. Management of Study Centres which are the immediate contact points for Open University students is crucial to their successful completion of courses.

IGNOU Study Centres are expected to perform the following functions ([www.ignou.ac.in](http://www.ignou.ac.in)) :

- a) Organise Counselling and Audio-visual sessions.
- b) Arrange practical sessions, demonstrations, field work etc. as per programme requirements.
- c) Receive assignments from students, get them evaluated by approved counselors and send feed back to students and grade sheets to SR & E Division and the Regional Centre.
- d) Maintain records of activities and accounts.
- e) Send regular feedback reports to the Regional Centre.
- f) Provide Information about IGNOU and its programmes.
- g) Generate bio-data of academic counsellors and forward them to the Regional Director for their part-time appointment as Academic Counsellors.
- h) To supervise and coordinate the activities of attached work centres, if any.

While it was believed that IGNOU Study Centres are playing very important roles in imparting quality education, the need for a study was felt to look into the functioning of these IGNOU Study Centres. A study was then taken up to have a better understanding on the functioning of IGNOU Study Centres and see if there were venues

for improvement in the process of delivering student support services. One of the objectives of said study was to find out the perceptions of students on the services provided by IGNOU Study Centres. This paper discusses the findings, particularly on perception of students on the services provided by IGNOU Study Centres.

### Methodology

#### Area and Sample of the Study

There were a total of ten (10) IGNOU Study Centres and one (1) Tele Learning Centre at Regional Centre in Aizawl, the capital city of Mizoram State, India. For the purpose of the study four (4) Study Centres which have highest number of enrolments at the time of study were selected. From the selected Centres, a total of 62 students which accounted for about 20% of the total enrolment were taken as sample of the study (Table 1).

**Table 1: Sample of the study**

Sl. No.	Centre	Population (Enrolment)	Sample
1	Government Aizawl College	80	16
2	Government Hrangbana College	72	14
3	Government Aizawl West College	41	8
4	Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE)	122	24
<b>Total</b>		<b>315</b>	<b>62</b>

*Source: IGNOU Study Centres (As per enrolment in January 2012 session)*

#### Data Collection

The required data for the study were collected from primary and secondary sources. The Primary data were collected with the help of questionnaires formulated for the purpose of the study. In addition to the primary data, secondary data were also collected from office records of Regional Centre and respective Study Centres.

### Results and Discussion

#### Profile of IGNOU Study Centres

Profile of the IGNOU Study Centres are presented in terms of management staff, years of experience, facilities available, courses offered and support services provided.

#### Management staff

In most cases, the IGNOU Study Centres were managed by Coordinators assisted by Assistant Coordinators and other supporting Staff. The Centre Coordinators and Assistants

Coordinators were appointed by the authority of concerned host institutions (Study Centres). Mostly the existing Faculties were appointed as Centre Coordinators while the Supporting Staff were outsourced. The staff strength of the Study Centres is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Management staff**

Sl. No.	Centre	Number of Staff		
		Coordinator	Asst. Coordinator	Supporting Staff
1	Gov't. Aizawl College	1	3	8
2	Gov't. Hrangbana College	1	2	6
3	Gov't. Aizawl West College	1	1	6
4	Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE)	1	1	4

*Source: IGNOU Study Centres (as in 2013)*

#### **Years of experience**

Years of experience of the Study Centres were counted on the basis of the number of years they had been running various IGNOU programmes since establishment. Among the four Study Centres, the Gov't. Aizawl College Centre started in 1988 was found to have the longest experience with 25 years, followed by Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre started in 2000 with 13 years of experience. The Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre was the third to start the IGNOU Study Centre in 2003 with 10 years of experience. The Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE) Centre started in 2004 was the least with 9 years of experience in running the IGNOU programmes (Table 3).

**Table 3: Years of experience**

Sl. No.	Centre	Year of Establishment	Year of Experience
1	Government Aizawl College	1988	25
2	Government Hrangbana College	2000	13
3	Government Aizawl West College	2003	10
4	Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE)	2004	9

*Source: IGNOU Study Centres (as in 2013)*

### Facilities available

With regards to information on facilities available in the Study Centres, all the Centres reported of having separate office spaces provided by the College authority. However, they all reported that the present office spaces were not sufficient to accommodate the staff and equipments.

It was also reported that office furniture and equipments were provided by the IGNOU Regional Centre, Aizawl for smooth functioning of the Study Centres,. Details of office furniture and equipments available in the Study Centres are given in Table 4.

**Table 4: Facilities available**

Sl. No.	Centre	Number							
		Tables	Chairs	Telephone	Television	Computer Set	Almirah	Book Shelf	Edusat
1	Gov't. Aizawl College	8	20	1	1	4	1	17	-
2	Gov't. Hrangbana College	5	20	1	1	3	8	7	-
3	Gov't. Aizawl West College	8	15	1	1	4	4	5	1
4	Istitute of Advance Studies in Education (IASE)	3	20	1	1	2	1	-	-

*Source: IGNOU Study Centres(as in 2013)*

Further, the Coordinators of 2 Study Centres namely Gov't. Aizawl College and Gov't. Aizawl West College reported to have internet facilities in the Study Centres. The The Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre had the internet facilities for both office use and use of students while Gov't. Aizawl College Centre had the internet only for office use. The other 2 Study Centres namely Gov't. Hrangbana College and IASE were yet to have internet facilities.

With regards to classrooms, all the Study Centres reported of having enough class rooms as they could use the existing class rooms of the their respective Colleges. On the library facilities - though all the Centres reported to have libraries, the students could not make much use of the library facilities as there were only few books available.

**Courses offered**

Most of the IGNOU Study Centres were offering various programmes of study such as Certificates, Diploma and degree courses at Graduate (Bachelors) and Post Graduate (Masters) levels except IASE Centre that offered only Post Graduate Courses. Among the Centres under study, Gov't. Aizawl College had the highest number of programmes with 9 Post Graduate Courses, 5 Under-Graduate Courses and 9 Certificate and Diploma Courses. Details of Courses offered by the sample Study Centres may be seen in Table 5.

Table 5: Course offered

Sl. No.	Centre	Course Offered		
		Post-Graduate Courses	Under-Graduate Courses	Others
1	Government Aizawl College	1) History 2) Political Science 3) Rural Development 4) Public Administration 5) Sociology 6) Library and Information Science 7) English 8) Social Work 9) Economics	1) Bachelor of Arts (General) 2) Bachelor of Arts (Tourism Studies) 3) Bachelor of Commerce 4) Bachelor of Library and Information Science 5) Bachelor of Social Work	1) Diploma in HIV and Family Education 2) PG Diploma in Rural Development 3) Certificate in HIV and Family Education 4) PG Diploma in Distance Education 5) PG Diploma in Higher Education 6) PG Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communication 7) PG Diploma in Audio Programme Production 8) PG Diploma in Distance Education 9) Diploma in Distance Education
2	Government Hrangbana College	1) English 2) Political Science 3) History 4) Master of Commerce	1) Bachelor of Arts 2) Bachelor of Commerce	1) Certificate in Human Rights 2) Certificate in Consumer Protection 3) Certificate in Teaching of Primary School Mathematics
3	Government Aizawl West College	1) English 2) History 3) Political Science 4) Economics 5) Public Administration 6) MAPC	1) Bachelor of Arts 2) Bachelor of Commerce 3) BAPC	1) Post Graduate Diploma in Disaster Management
4	Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE)	1) Master of Arts (Education) 2) M.Ed 3) B.Ed		

Source: IGNOU Study Centres (as in 2013)



### Support Services Provided by the Study Centres

As per information provided by the sample Study Centres, the Support Services provided to the students included: i) support in admission, ii) process for reimbursement of fees, iii) supply of study materials, iv) arrange academic counselling classes, v) assessment of assignments, vi) conduct examinations etc. A part from these, Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre reported that they sometime arranged teleconferencing and Edusat programme and also provide internet facilities to students.

### Perception of Students on Support Services

This section of the paper discusses the results on perception of the students on support services provided by the IGNOU Study Centres.

### Perception on Support in Admission

The students were asked state their 'agreement' or 'disagreement' to the statement '*received adequate and timely support on admission.*' The results are presented in Table 6. The overall results reveal that majority (62.9%) of students stated 'agree' while 30.65% stated 'strongly agree' to the statement which is an indication that the students were contented with the support service they received particularly during admission.

**Table 6: Received adequate and timely support on admission**

Centre	Number						Percent					
	NS	SD	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	SD	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	0	0	0	13	3	16	0.00	0.00	0.00	81.25	18.75	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	2	0	1	8	3	14	14.29	0.00	7.14	57.14	21.43	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	0	0	0	4	4	8	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	0	1	0	14	9	24	0.00	4.17	0.00	58.33	37.50	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>1.61</b>	<b>1.61</b>	<b>62.90</b>	<b>30.65</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, SD = Strongly Disagree, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
Source: Field Data

Majority (81.25%) of the students in Gov't. Aizawl College Centre felt that they received adequate and timely support in admission by stating 'agree' while the rest (18.75%) expressed with even a higher degree by stating 'strongly agree'. Majority (57.14%) of the students in Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre also stated 'agree' to the

statement on *'adequate and timely support on admission'* while there were 21.43% who stated *'strongly agree'* to the same. On the other, it is interested to note that there were 7.14% who stated *'disagree'* to the statement (Table 6).

Among the students in Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre, there were equal number with 50% each who stated *'agree'* and *'strongly agree'* to the statement *'received timely and adequate support on admission.'* Majority (58.33%) of the students in IASE Centre also majority of its students (58.33%) who stated *'agree'* and 37.50% who stated *'strongly agree'* to the statement *'received adequate and timely support during admission'* while 37.50% even stated *'strongly agree'* to the same statement. At the same time, there were 4.17% of the students who stated *'strongly disagree'* to the statement (Table 6).

### Perception on Study Materials

The perception of students on study materials was taken by way of their *'agreement'* or *'disagreement'* to the statement *'received adequate study materials in time.'* The results presented in Table 7 shows that half of the students (50%) stated *'agree'* while 30.64% students stated *'strongly agree'* to the statement meaning that they were happy with the support services particular on study materials as they received adequate study materials in time. It is interesting to note however that there were few students who stated *'disagree'* (4.84%), *'strongly disagree'* (6.45%) and *'not sure'* (8.06%) to the statement which may mean that there were few students who were not so satisfied with the supply of study materials.

The centre-wise data further reveals that majority of the students (56.25%) in Gov't. Aizawl College Centre stressed *'agree'* to the statement while 18.75% of the students stated *'strongly agree'* to the same statement. There were 25% who stated *'not sure'*. The Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre had equal number of students with 35.71% each who stated *'agree'* and *'strongly agree'* while there are 21.43% *'strongly disagree'* and 7.14 *'not sure'* to the statement (Table 7).

**Table 7: Received adequate study materials in time**

Centre	Number						Percent					
	NS	SD	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	SD	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	4	0	0	9	3	16	25.00	0.00	0.00	56.25	18.75	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	1	3	0	5	5	14	7.14	21.43	0.00	35.71	35.71	100

Gov't. Aizawl West College	0	1	2	3	2	8	0.00	12.50	25.00	37.50	25.00	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	0	0	1	14	9	24	0.00	0.00	4.17	58.33	37.50	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>8.06</b>	<b>6.45</b>	<b>4.84</b>	<b>50.00</b>	<b>30.65</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, SD = Strongly Disagree, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
Source: Field Data

The highest number of students in Gov't. Aizawl West College with 37.50% stated 'agree' while 25% stated 'strongly agree' to the statement. There were 25% stated 'disagree' and 12.50% who stated 'strongly disagree' to the statement. Of the students in the IASE Centre, most of them (58%) stated 'agree' and 37.50% stated 'strongly agree' while the rest only 4.17% stated 'disagree' to the same statement (Table 7).

### Perception on Support of Centre Coordinator/Staff

Attempt was also made to find out the students' perception on support of Centre Coordination/Staff by a statement 'the Centre Coordinator/Staff give adequate and timely supports whenever they are approached.' The results presented in Table 8 show that majority (64.52%) of the students stated 'agree' while 33.87% expressed even a higher level of agreement by stating 'strongly agree' to the statement. The rest only 1.61% stated 'disagree' to the same statement. This is another indication that the students were happy with support they received from the Coordinators/Staff of IGNOU Study Centres.

The centre-wise data as presented in Table 8 further reveal that most of the students (81.25%) in Gov't. Aizawl College Centre stated 'agree' while the rest (18.75%) stated 'strongly agree' to the statement. Among the students in Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre, 50% stated 'agree' while 42.86% stated 'strongly agree'. The rest (7.14%) expressed their 'disagreement' to the statement.

Among the students in Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre, most of them (75%) stated 'strongly agree' while the rest (25%) stated 'agree' to the statement. Majority (75%) of students in IASE Centre also stated 'agree' while the rest (25%) stated 'strongly agree' to the statement.

**Table 8: The Centre Coordinator/ Staff give adequate and timely supports whenever they are approached**

Centre	Number				Percent			
	DA	A	SA	Total	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	0	13	3	16	0.00	81.25	18.75	100

Gov't. Hrangbana College	1	7	6	14	7.14	50.00	42.86	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	0	2	6	8	0.00	25.00	75.00	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	0	18	6	24	0.00	75.00	25.00	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>1.61</b>	<b>64.52</b>	<b>33.87</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Source: Field Data

### Perception on information regarding assignments

Another support service on which the students' perception was taken was on the information on assignments. On the statement 'received information regarding assignments in time', majority (66.13%) of the students stated 'agree' while a little over one-fourth (27.42%) stated 'strongly agree'. There were 4.84% who stated 'disagree' and 1.61% who stated 'not sure' to the statement (Table 9). The results are indication that most of the students were happy with the information they usually received regarding assignments.

The centre-wise data on the students' perception regarding the information on assignment as presented in Table 9 further show that most of the students (81.25%) in Gov't. Aizawl College Centre stated 'agree' while the rest (18.75%) stated 'strongly agree' to the statement 'received information regarding assignments in time.' Among the students in Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre, majority of them (71.43%) stated 'agree' while there were equal number of 14.29% each who stated 'strongly agree' and 'disagree' to the statement.

**Table 9: Received information regarding assignments in time**

Centre	Number					Percent				
	NS	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	0	0	13	3	16	0.00	0.00	81.25	18.75	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	0	2	10	2	14	0.00	14.29	71.43	14.29	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	0	1	3	4	8	0.00	12.50	37.50	50.00	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	1	0	15	8	24	4.17	0.00	62.50	33.33	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>1.61</b>	<b>4.84</b>	<b>66.13</b>	<b>27.42</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Source: Field Data

The Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre had its highest number of students with 50% who stated '*strongly agree*' followed by '*agree*' (37.50%) and '*disagree*' (12.50%). IASE Centre also had majority of its students (62.50%) who stated '*agree*' while 33.33% stated '*strongly agree*'. There were 4.17% who stated '*not sure*' to the statement (Table 9).

### Perception on Assignments

The perception of students on assignments was taken on the basis of their 'agreements' or 'disagreements' to the statement '*assignments help students better prepared for examinations.*' The results as presented in Table 10 show that majority of the students (58.06%) stated '*agree*' to the statement while there were 30.65% who stated '*strongly agree*'. There were 4.84% and 6.45% who stated '*disagree*' and '*not sure*' to the statement respectively. The overall results are indication that the students perceived the assignment to be of great help in their preparation for examinations.

The data further disclose that most of the students (81.25%) in Gov't. Aizawl College Centre said '*agree*' while the rest 18.75% said '*strongly agree*' to the statement '*assignments help students better prepared for examinations*'. The Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre had the highest number of its students with 42.86% who stated '*agree*' followed those who were '*not sure*' with 28.57%. There were equal number of students who stated '*strongly agree*' and '*disagree*' with 14.29% each.

Majority of the students (62.50%) in Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre stated '*strongly agree*' while the rest 37.50% stated '*agree*'. The IASE Centre had majority of its students who stated '*agree*' with 58.33% followed '*strongly agree*' with 37.50% while few (4.17%) stated '*disagree*' to the statement.

**Table 10: Assignments help students better prepared for examinations**

Centre	Number					Percent				
	NS	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	0	0	13	3	16	0.00	0.00	81.25	18.75	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	4	2	6	2	14	28.57	14.29	42.86	14.29	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	0	0	3	5	8	0.00	0.00	37.50	62.50	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	0	1	14	9	24	0.00	4.17	58.33	37.50	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>6.45</b>	<b>4.84</b>	<b>58.06</b>	<b>30.65</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
Source: Field Data

### Perception on Information about Counselling Class

The students were also asked to give their 'agreement' or 'disagreement' on the statement '*received information about Academic Counselling Classes in time.*' The results are presented in Table 11. The results show that half (50%) of the students stated 'agree' on the statement while a little over a quarter (25.81%) stated 'strongly agree.' There were 14.52% who stated 'disagree' while few (9.68%) stated 'not sure.' This overall results indicate that the students mostly get information about academic counseling classes in time.

The results further reveal that majority of students (68.75%) in Gov't Aizawl College Centre stated 'agree' while 25% of the students stated 'strongly agree' on the statement. Rest of the students (6.25%) stated 'not sure'. The Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre had highest number of its students who stated 'agree' with 35.71% followed by 'disagree' (28.57%), 'not sure' (21.43%) and 'strongly agree' (14.29%).

**Table 11: Received information about Academic Counselling Classes in time**

Centre	Number					Percent				
	NS	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	1	0	11	4	16	6.25	0.00	68.75	25.00	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	3	4	5	2	14	21.43	28.57	35.71	14.29	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	1	3	1	3	8	12.50	37.50	12.50	37.50	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	1	2	14	7	24	4.17	8.33	58.33	29.17	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>9.68</b>	<b>14.52</b>	<b>50.00</b>	<b>25.81</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
Source: Field Data

Among the students in Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre, there were equal number of students with 37.50% each who stated 'strongly agree' and 'disagree' while the same equal number with 12.50% each stated 'agree' and 'not sure'. The IASE Centre had majority of its students with 58.33% who stated 'agree' followed by 'strongly agree' (29.17%), 'disagree' (8.33%) and 'not sure' (4.17%).

### Perception on Academic Counselling Classes

The students were also asked to give their perceptions on whether the academic counseling classes enhance their understanding. On the statement '*academic Counselling Classes enhance understanding of the study materials/subject matters*' there were 43.55% who stated '*agree*' and 27.42% who stated '*strongly agree*.' There were equal number with 14.52% each who stated '*disagree*' and '*not sure*.' This results may be interpreted in a way that the students found the counseling classes to be enhancing their understanding of the study materials (Table 12).

Table 12 further shows centre-wise data on the perception of students particularly to the statement '*academic Counselling Classes enhance understanding of the study materials/subject matters*.' The Gov't. Aizawl College Centre had half (50%) of its students who stated '*strongly agree*' while there were 43.75% who stated '*agree*.' The rest (6.25%) stated '*disagree*'. It is however interesting to note that as much as half (50%) of the students in Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre stated '*not sure*' on the statement. The students who stated '*agree*' accounted for 28.57% while there were 21.43% who stated '*disagree*.'

**Table 12: Academic Counselling Classes enhance understanding of the study materials/subject matters**

Centre	Number					Percent				
	NS	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	0	1	7	8	16	0.00	6.25	43.75	50.00	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	7	3	4	0	14	50.00	21.43	28.57	0.00	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	2	2	1	3	8	25.00	25.00	12.50	37.50	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	0	3	15	6	24	0.00	12.50	62.50	25.50	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>14.52</b>	<b>14.52</b>	<b>43.55</b>	<b>27.42</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Source: Field Data

The Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre had the highest number of its students with 37.50% who stated '*strongly agree*' while 12.50% stated '*agree*.' There were equal number with 25% each who stated '*not sure*' and '*disagree*.' The IASE Centre had majority of its students with 62.50% who stated '*agree*' followed by '*strongly agree*' (25.50%) and '*disagree*' (12.50%).



Table 13 presents the data on perception of the students with regards to the statement '*academic counselling classes prepared the student better for examinations.*' As shown in the Table, half (50%) of the students stated '*agree*' while 25.81% stated '*strongly agree*' to the statement. The students who stated '*not sure*' accounted for 17.74% while there were 6.45% who stated '*disagree.*' This overall data is an indication that the students found the academic counseling classes to be of great help in their preparation for exams.

The Gov't. Aizawl College Centre had majority of its students (56.25%) who stated '*agree*' on the statement followed by '*agree*' with 37.50% and '*disagree*' with 6.25%. An interesting results could be observed in Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre whereby half (50%) of the student stated '*not sure*' to the statement. There were 42.86% who stated '*agree*' and 7.14% who stated '*disagree.*'

The Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre also had the highest number of its students (37.50%) who stated '*not sure*' while there were equal number with 25% each who stated '*agree*' and '*strongly agree.*' The rest 12.50% stated '*disagree*'. On the other hand, the IASE Centre had majority of its students (70.83%) who stated '*agree*' followed by '*strongly agree*' with 20.83%. There were equal number with 4.17% each who stated '*not sure*' and '*disagree.*'

**Table 13: Academic Counselling Classes prepared the student better for examinations**

Centre	Number					Percent				
	NS	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	0	1	6	9	16	0.00	6.25	37.50	56.25	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	7	1	6	0	14	50.00	7.14	42.86	0.00	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	3	1	2	2	8	37.50	12.50	25.00	25.00	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	1	1	17	5	24	4.17	4.17	70.83	20.83	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>17.74</b>	<b>6.45</b>	<b>50.00</b>	<b>25.81</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Source: Field Data

### Perception on Academic Counselors

The students were also asked to state their 'agreement' or 'disagreement' to the statement '*academic counsellors encourage students to share experience and knowledge*' and the results are presented in Table 14. The overall results show that there were



46.77% who stated 'agree' while those who stated 'strongly agree' accounted for 32.26%. There were 17.74% who stated 'not sure' and 3.23% who state 'disagree' to the statement. The result is an indication that the students as a whole perceived the Academic Counsellors to be encouraging the students to share their experience and knowledge during the counseling sessions.

Table 14 further gives the centre-wise data on the perception of students on the statement 'Academic Counsellors encourage students to share experience and knowledge.' The Gov't. Aizawl College Centre had majority of its students (56.25%) who stated 'strongly agree' while 31.25% of the students stated 'agree.' There were equal number with 6.25% each who stated 'not sure' and 'disagree.'

Another interesting results could be observed in Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre where half (50%) of the students stated 'not sure' to the statement, There were 37.50% students who stated 'strongly agree' and 12.50% who stated 'agree.' With regards to the IASE Centre, majority of the students (66.67%) stated 'agree' while 33.33% stated 'strongly agree' on the statement.

**Table 14: Academic Counsellors encourage students to share experience and knowledge**

Centre	Number					Percent				
	NS	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	1	1	5	9	16	6.25	6.25	31.25	56.25	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	6	1	7	0	14	42.86	7.14	50.00	0.00	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	4	0	1	3	8	50.00	0.00	12.50	37.50	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	0	0	16	8	24	0.00	0.00	66.67	33.33	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>17.74</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>46.77</b>	<b>32.26</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Source: Field Data

On the statement 'Academic Counsellors encourage questions and dialogue with students,' majority of respondents (50.82%) stated 'agree' while those stated 'strongly agree' accounted for 19.67%. There were 22.95% who stated 'not sure' and 6.56% who stated 'disagree' to the statement (Table 15).

The results further show that majority of the students (56.25%) in Gov't. Aizawl College Centre stated 'agree' while 37.50% stated 'strongly agree'. The rest 6.25%

stated '*not sure*' on the statement. The Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre on the other hand had majority of its students ( 64.29%) who stated '*not sure*' while only 28.57% stated '*agree*' and the rest 7.14% stated '*disagree*' (Table 15).

**Table 15: Academic Counsellors encourage questions and dialogue with students**

Centre	Number					Percent				
	NS	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	1	0	9	6	16	6.25	0.00	56.25	37.50	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	9	1	4	0	14	64.29	7.14	28.57	0.00	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	3	1	2	2	8	37.50	12.50	25.00	25.00	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	1	2	16	4	23	4.35	8.70	69.57	17.39	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>22.95</b>	<b>6.56</b>	<b>50.82</b>	<b>19.67</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
Source: Field Data

The Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre also had the highest number of its students (37.50%) who interestingly stated '*not sure*' while there were equal number who stated '*agree*' and '*strongly agree*' with 25% each. The students who stated '*disagree*' accounted for 12.50%. The IASE Centre on the other hand had majority of its students (69.57%) who stated '*agree*' which is followed by '*strongly agree*' (17.30%), '*disagree*' (8.70%) and '*not sure*' (4.35%).

### Perception on other facilities

Table 16 gives the results of the students' perception on their access to other support facilities. Varied responses were observed on the statement '*student can avail library, computer, internet facilities freely at any time.*' The highest number of students (33.87%) stated '*disagree*' while 30.65% stated '*not sure.*' The number of students who stated '*agree*' accounted for 25.81% while those who stated '*strongly agree*' accounted for 6.45%. Only few (3.23%) stated '*strongly disagree.*' Unlike other support services provided by IGNOU Study Centres, the perception of students was rather low particularly on access to the facilities such as library, computers, internet as most of the them did not seem to have access to the facilities.

The results further reveal that there was equal number of students in Gov't. Aizawl College Centre with 31.25% each who stated '*not sure*', '*disagree*' and '*agree*' to

the statement while the rest (6.25%) stated '*strongly disagree*'. Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre had equal number of students who stated '*not sure*' and '*disagree*' with 42.86% while another also equal number students stated '*strongly disagree*' and '*agree*' with 7.14% each (Table 16).

The Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre had half (50%) of its students who stated '*not sure*' to the statement while 37.50% stated '*agree*.' The rest (12.50%) stated '*strongly agree*'. The IASE Centre had highest number of its student (41.67%) who stated '*disagree*' on the statement followed by '*agree*' (29.17%), '*not sure*' (16.67%) and '*strongly agree*' (12.50%).

**Table 16: Students can avail library, computer, internet facilities freely at any time**

Centre	Number						Percent					
	NS	SD	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	SD	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	5	1	5	5	0	16	31.25	6.25	31.25	31.25	0.00	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	6	1	6	1	0	14	42.86	7.14	42.86	7.14	0.00	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	4	0	0	3	1	8	50.00	0.00	0.00	37.50	12.50	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	4	0	10	7	3	24	16.67	0.00	41.67	29.17	12.50	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>30.65</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>33.87</b>	<b>25.81</b>	<b>6.45</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, SD = Strongly Disagree, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
Source: Field Data

### Perception on quality of IGNOU education

The students were also asked to give their perceptions on the education imparted by IGNOU. They were asked to express their 'agreement' or 'disagreement' on the statement '*the quality of education IGNOU is imparting is as good as other Universities.*' The results presented in Table 17 indicate that majority of the students (59.68%) stated 'agree' to the statement while there were 29.03% of students who stated '*strongly agree*.' Equal number with 4.84% each stated '*not sure*' and '*disagree*.' There were few but negligible number (1.61%) who stated '*strongly disagree*.' This overall result is an indication that the students of IGNOU considered the quality of education imparted by IGNOU is at par with that of other Universities.

Looking at the centre-wise data further given in Table 17, it could be observed that all the students in Gov't. Aizawl College Centre stated 'agree' on the quality of

IGOU education as at par with that of other Universities. The Gov't. Hrangbana College Centre had half (50%) of its students who stated '*strongly agree*' while 28.57% of the students stated '*agree*.' There were equal number of students with 7.14% each who stated '*not sure*', '*strongly disagree*' and '*disagree*.'

The Gov't. Aizawl West College Centre also had half (50%) of its students who stated '*strongly agree*' on the statement referring to the quality of IGNOU education. The number is followed by '*not sure*' with 25%, '*agree*' and '*disagree*' with 12.50% each. The IASE Centre had majority of its student (66.67%) who stated '*agree*' followed by '*strongly agree*' with 29.17% and '*disagree*' with 4.17%.

**Table 17: The quality of education IGNOU is imparting is as good as of other Universities**

Centre	Number						Percent					
	NS	SD	DA	A	SA	Total	NS	SD	DA	A	SA	Total
Gov't. Aizawl College	0	0	0	16	0	16	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	100
Gov't. Hrangbana College	1	1	1	4	7	14	7.14	7.14	7.14	28.57	50.00	100
Gov't. Aizawl West College	2	0	1	1	4	8	25.00	0.00	12.50	12.50	50.00	100
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education	0	0	1	16	7	24	0.00	0.00	4.17	66.67	29.17	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>4.84</b>	<b>1.61</b>	<b>4.84</b>	<b>59.68</b>	<b>29.03</b>	<b>100</b>

**Legend:** NS = Not Sure, SD = Strongly Disagree, DA = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Source: Field Data

## Conclusion

The students' supports provided by IGNOU Study Centres from which their perceptions were taken include 1) support in admission, 2) support on study materials, 3) support on assignments, 4) support on academic counseling classes, and 5) other facilities like library, computers and internets etc. The perception of students on most of the services provided by IGNOU Centres under the study was found to be positive except on access to the facilities such as library, computers and internets where most of them expressed their '*disagreement*.' This might be due to the fact that the students could not make much use of the facilities. The overall perception of students on IGNOU education was impressive as all of them considered the education imparted by IGNOU as at par with that of other Universities elsewhere.