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CONTENTS

ASSESSING LEARNERS' SATISFICATION TOWARDS SUPPORT SERVICES DELIVERY IN NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING SERVICES

By

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determining the level of students' satisfaction of learner support services in the study centres of NOUN - National Open University of Nigeria and whether the support services offered at the study centres have significant influence on the level of students' satisfaction. A descriptive survey of ex-post facto research design was adopted for this research. Stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting two thousand, one hundred and sixty (2160) samples from eighteen (18) study centres; made up of three (3) study centres in each of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. Two hypotheses subjected to Percentile statistics, Friedman Rank Test and Post hoc Wilcoxon Rank Tests via SPSS version 20 at the level of .00 and .01 asymptotic significant level respectively were formulated and analysed in the study The results indicated symbolising significant differences among students' in their satisfaction with learner support services provided by their study centres. Significant difference was also observed on the basis of the geopolitical zones, as learner support services were adjudged to be unsatisfactory in five study centres. Suggestions were offered on how to alleviate the identified problems.

Keywords: Study Centre, Dedicated Model, Lodger Model, Satisfaction, Support and Counselling Services

INTRODUCTION

Open and distance learning is considered to be one of the best options in providing mass access; reduce cost of university education, meeting the yearnings of the individual for university admission and rebuilding confidence in those who struggled for places in conventional universities that all is not lost (Ipaye, 2007). In line with this assertion, the Federal Government of Nigeria therefore deemed it necessary to resuscitate the suspended National Open University and re-named it as National Open University of Nigeria in 2002. The existence of the university study centres in various states of Nigeria provides the means of which the University reaches out to the nation and the world at large. As of June, 2011, there were 49 NOUNfunctional study Centres in 33 States of the Federation including the Federal capital territory and these centres form the bedrock for providing the needed support services to the students spreading all over Nigeria and beyond. The concept of learner support is a term used to subsume all interactions that exists between institutional personnel and students (prospective and registered)•with an intention to assist the students' in meeting their objectives from the point of first inquiry made by the students through graduation and often for life time (COL 2002).). In a nutshell, Learner Support is tailored towards meeting the learners' academic and socio-psychological needs and also towards the realization of the institutions' mission.

In Open Distance Learning system of education, the satisfaction of the stakeholders especially the learners' perception of the value and quality of the support services are germane to the students' retention and their continuous patronage. Distance learners expect robust support system that will satisfy their yearning for support and bridging communication gaps between them and their institutions, support personnel and other students whereby reduce distance in whatever form, keeping them on track and help them to be successful in their

CONSTRUCTION AND STANDARDIZATION OF VERBAL LEARNING DISABILITIES CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

For identifying children with four major kinds of verbal learning disabilities viz. reading disability, speech and language comprehension disability, writing disability and mathematics disability, the present task was undertaken to construct and standardize verbal learning disabilities checklist. The checklist was developed by keeping in view the Indian school and social situations where school going children are being nurtured. For that, the data were collected from school teachers, parents, learning disabled and normal school children belonging to 9 to 15 years age group by adopting the procedure of purposive sampling technique at different stages. An item pool was developed initially by consulting various sources and theoretical and empirical literature available in the concerned area and organizing intensive discussions with experienced school teachers, teacher educators, parents of disabled children, teachers serving in special schools, psychologists, psychiatrists, pediatricians and educational counselors. The preliminary draft of verbal learning disabilities checklist was given to 35 field experts (experienced school teachers, teacher educators, teachers serving in special schools, psychologists, psychiatrists, pediatricians and educational counselors) to critically judge and evaluate the content accuracy, relevance, logic, duplication/repetition and coverage of the items. Items of checklist were again put to intensive evaluation so that the checklist only contain those statements/items which are highly capable of discriminating between a learning disabled child from a normal child without any learning disability. This was carried out by judging the consensus between teachers' ratings and parents' ratings in respect of learning disabled children. The reliability of the checklist was ascertained with the help of test-retest reliability (separately for teachers' ratings and parents' ratings) and inter-rater reliability (between teachers and parents' ratings) by computing correlation indices. The validity of checklist was also ascertained and suggestive norms were developed for initial identification of children with verbal learning disabilities. These norms were developed by taking into account the expert advice of experienced school teachers, pediatricians, psychologists and psychiatrists and can be used just for referral to expert assessment and diagnosis of verbal learning disabilities among the school going children.

Keywords: Construction, Standardization, Verbal Learning Disability, Checklist.

INTRODUCTION

For any person who is diagnosed with a learning disability, it can seem scary for him/her at first instance. But, really speaking, a learning disability doesn't have to do with a person's intelligence — after all, successful people such as Walt Disney, Alexander Graham Bell, and Winston Churchill, all had learning disabilities. Mangal (2009) is of the view that "somebody with a learning disability is said also to have 'significant impairment of intellectual functioning' and 'significant impairment of adaptive/social functioning'." This means that the person will have difficulties understanding learning and remembering new things, and in generalizing any learning to new situations. Because of these difficulties with learning, the person may have difficulties with a number of social tasks, for example communication, self-care, awareness of health and safety. A final dimension to the definition is that these impairments are present from childhood, not acquired as a result of accident or following the onset of adult illness. A child with a learning disability cannot try harder, pay closer attention, or improve motivation on their own; they need