



Socio-Psychological School Services and Improvement of Intellectual Functioning of Secondary School Students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT A school is a social institution for all learners irrespective of intellectual abilities. It is expected that schools provides services and support that lowers barriers to learning and social adjustment. However, it is uncertain whether schools actually provide services for the improvement of students. This is the central concern of the study which focused on identifying the socio-psychological school services available in secondary (public and private) schools in Enugu state, Nigeria, and the extent of utilization of these services in improvement of intellectual functioning of students. Three research questions and three null hypotheses tested of 0.05 probability level guided the study. Data were gathered from 657 randomly selected senior secondary two (SSII) students randomly selected 18 public and 12 private school using Multi-Stage sampling approach. Data were collected using a 30 – item researchers' designed Socio-Psychological School Services. Questionnaire (SPSSQ) which was face validated by test experts in University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test statistics were used in data analysis. Results show that both public and private schools provided socio-psychological services although these services are moderately utilized in improvement of students' intellectual functioning. The null hypotheses results show no significant difference between public and private secondary schools with respect to availability and utilizations of the socio-psychological services. Based on these, some recommendations were made. Among these was that: more professional guidance counselor and psychologist be posted to schools, equip school with ICT facilities, provide regular orientation and psychological testing in enhance students' intellectual functioning.

Introduction

Every human being is born with a certain level of intellectual ability and potentials which the individual utilizes in learning, socializing and carrying out daily functional roles. This intellectual endowment accounts for the varying learning capabilities observed among students. Hence, in schools some students are referred to by their teachers as 'intelligent' and some others "less intelligent" because, while the intelligent ones are able to learn new instructions at good speed and with less emphasis, the less intelligent or dull students learn at low speed with much watching and repetition of instructions, demonstrations as well as individual guidance and counselling to help bring about fruitful results in their intellectual functioning and academic achievement, (Dillenbourg, 2009).

Intellectual functioning is a reflection of an individual's intelligence level or mental capacity to learn, reason, make decisions and tackle life's challenges as they arise. Intelligence, as a construct, has been variously defined by psychologists. Early psychologist like Wechsler as cited in Oladele (2004) defined intelligence as the aggregate or global capacity of an individual to act purposefully, think rationally and effectively deal with his environment. According to Feldman (1996:292) intelligence is the capacity to understand the world, think rationally and use resources effectively when faced with challenges? More recently, Mangal (2010) defined intelligence as a form of mental energy, an aggregate of global mental capacity which enables an individual in coping with his environment and effectively adapting when faced with new situations.

From the foregoing, the researchers contextually define intelligence as the innate, functional mental capacity which students utilize in carrying out varieties of mental processes such as learning, thinking, reasoning, perceiving and making of daily decisions as they arise. Implicitly, a students' intellectual functioning is a reflection of the individuals' mental capacity for learning, reasoning and tackling of life's challenges. However, it is worth noting that intellectual functioning is not just a function of only the innate intelligence level but rather, a function of the interacting effects of nature and nurture.

The degree to which an individual is able to learn, reason and tackle life's challenges is greatly influenced by the coating influences of heredity and environment (Baumrind, 1980; Berndth, 1992; Mangal, 2010). Thus, a student's intellectual functioning could be improved or deterred depending on the environmental factors impinging on the students' innate endowments. Mangal (2010) study indicates that when children are provided with favourable environmental conditions which includes physical and human resources, learning enhances is socio-psychological disposition of the children seem to come to equilibration.. The children are at equilibration and learning becomes easier.

School is a social system for learning. All children in the school irrespective of intellectual abilities deserve a high quality genuinely accessible education that promotes high academic achievement and healthy social development. In pursuit of these, schools are expected to provide learners with services hoped to bring about improvement in students' intellectual functioning. The word service entails an activity or provision made by government, organization or private individuals with the aim of making the environment friendly. School services are expected to provide learner friendly environment which would enhance the learning capabilities of both the intelligent and less intelligent students interacting in the environment. A central issue of concern to the researchers is: How far are the public and private schools in Enugu state, Nigeria responsive towards provision and utilization of socio-psychological services in helping students Improve their intellectual functioning?

Socio-psychological school services in this study refer to those sociological and psychological provisions and activities in schools which help students to improve their learning potentials, self-concept and capabilities to achieve. These school services focus on inner processes which aim at helping students to improve their socialization pattern and psychological dispositions with peers and school teachers (Baumelster & Bushmen, 2008). Sociological services specifically involve the use of oral communication and communication aids like pictures, films, and models in improving students' mindsets and behaviours towards life's situations Bandura

and Walters (1963) rectifying deviants' learning deficiencies (Macuonis 2009) Macuonis, notes that sociological school services not only promotes peer solidarity and stability but also helps in shaping social behaviours of deviant students. Studies further reveal that sociological school services such as the provision of conducive teaching-learning environment characterized by existence warm socio-emotional climate between teacher-student and student-student; availability of appropriate instructional materials; libraries and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities greatly improve students' intellectual functioning (Herpert & Sass 2000; Mangal 2010).

Psychological school services on the other hand are services aimed at impacting positively on students' psychology and knowledge of self. Ramalingam (2006) posit that psychological school services involve practical application of psychology of Science in solving complex tasks which require psychological expertise examination, diagnosis and consultations such as are obtainable in industries, educational and health care institutions. Humans as social beings, generally exhibit emotions which are both sociological and psychological in nature. Studies reveal that bad emotion are linked with events that threaten relationship (Twenge, Catanese & Baumeister, 2003; Leary & Springer, 2000) while good emotions such as happiness, cheerfulness reflect healthy relationship among peers (Gable & Reis, 2001).

Emotions are influenced by hormonal situations. Dabs (2000) study reveals that the criminal tendencies often observed in young people in late adolescent stage are due to hormonal secretions. For instance, secretions of testosterone in males make them to prone to exhibition of aggression and violent behaviours depending on the hormonal level secreted. The higher the testosterone the more aggressive and violent while the lower the testosterone the less aggressive and violent the male would become (Baumeister, Catanese & Vohs 2001). The exhibition of inappropriate and maladjusted behaviors among Nigerian Secondary School Students in the late 1970s necessitated the inclusion by the Federal Republic of Nigeria in her National Policy of Education (FRN, 2004) the posting of guidance and counselors to schools. These professionals were to provide students with educational, vocational and personal-social services necessary for equipping them in better understanding of themselves so as to be able to solve their problems and live as responsible citizens in this global economy of the 21st century. Some examples of activities rendered by these professionals include orientation of students, information provision, appraisal, placement and referral services (Nwachukwu, 2007; Counseling Association of Nigeria (CASSON), 2008)

Literature review show that students' socio-psychological behaviours can be improved by school services. Bargh (2000) study show that introverted students who oftentimes are withdrawn can easily have social connections without much risk and anxiety with provision of internet facilities. Such social facilities also help in minimizing other socio-psychological problems such as inactivity and loss of attention in class. In fact, Baumeister and Leary (1995) note that when student have social connectivity they tend to have more stable framework for better functioning and adjustment in school. However, Buku and Akinade (2012) study on internet use among senior high school boys in Tema metropolis, Ghana show that although internet use helps in improving socio-psychological disposition of students, the more compulsive internet users were more socially distant from their colleagues as well as less educationally focused than the optional internet users. This implies therefore, that students access to internet use should be controlled to avoid internet –use abuse with its result at negative ills

Statement of problem

The imperatives of socio-psychological school services in improvement of intellectual functioning of secondary school

students cannot be over-emphasized. Functionally, school, as a social institution is expected to provide learners with educational services which are hoped to improve students' intellectual and behavioural skills. It is however disturbing that despite these expected roles from school some students still exhibit socio-psychological problems which reflect their poor level of intellectual functioning and inability in operating as full functioning individuals. This poses concern to the researchers to ask: Do schools provide and actually utilize socio-psychological services in helping students improve their intellectual functioning? Available literature to the researchers seems to show there exists dearth empirical local studies in this area generally in Nigeria and specifically in Enugu Education zone of Enugu state, Nigeria. It is in view of this gap that this study was therefore carried out.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to identify the socio-psychological school services for improvement of intellectual functioning of secondary school students in Enugu state, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study:

1. Identified sociological school services available for improving intellectual functioning of students in public and private secondary schools.
2. Identified psychological school services available for improving intellectual functioning of students in public and private secondary schools.
3. Ascertain the extent to which socio-psychological school services are utilized in improving intellectual functioning of students in public and private secondary schools.

Research questions

Based on the foregoing specific purposes these research questions were asked to guide the study.

1. What are sociological school services available for improvement of intellectual functioning of students in public and private secondary school?
2. What are psychological school services available for improvement of intellectual functioning of students in public and private secondary schools?
3. To what extent are socio-psychological school services utilized in improvement of intellectual functioning of students in public and private secondary schools?

Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were postulated and tested at 0.05 probability level for further investigation into the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of students in public and private secondary schools on availability of sociological school services for improvement of intellectual functioning.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores on availability of psychological school services for improvement of intellectual functioning of students in public and private secondary schools.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean scores on extent of utilization of socio-psychological school services for improvement of intellectual functioning of students in public and private secondary schools.

Research Method

Survey research design was adopted in this study. According to Nworgu (2006) this design involves gathering and analyzing data from a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire population. This research design is considered appropriate for this study because it offered the researchers the opportunity of gathering and describing data collected from a sample of secondary school students considered to be significant representative of students in public and private schools in Enugu Education Zone.

Areas of the study

This study was carried out in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu

state, Nigeria. Enugu education zone is located within Enugu state municipality which houses the second campus of the renowned University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The zone has three local government areas namely Enugu north, Enugu East and Enugu West. There are a total of 25 public and 74 private secondary schools. (Source: Post Primary Schools' Management Board (PPSMB) Planning, Research and Statistics Units Enugu State 2013). This zone was chosen for this study due to its large students', population (56614) and relative poor academic performances in West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) which are reflected in West African Examination Council (WAEC) chief examiners reports 2010- 2012.

Population of the study

This comprised all the senior secondary school students in public and private schools in Enugu state which totals 56614. The choice of this level of students hinges on the fact that the students have all spent not less than four years in their schools. As such, they are well informed and disposed to provide needed information as to the availability and extent of utilization of socio-psychological services in their various schools.

Sample and sampling technique

A sample of 657 SSII was used in the study. These were randomly selected using Multi-Stage sampling approach. Firstly, the three local government areas of the education zone were all taken to ensure an unbiased representation of schools in the eastern, northern and central parts of the education zone. Next, stratified random sampling technique was adopted in sampling 18 public and 12 private secondary schools from the three local government areas of the zone. Finally, 22 SSII students were randomly selected from each of the 18 randomly selected public and 12 randomly selected private secondary schools respectively.

Instrument for data collection

A 28-item questionnaire designed by the researchers and titled Socio-Psychological School Services Questionnaire (SPSSQ) was used for the study. This instrument was structured into two sections. Section A elicited demographic information of the respondents. Section B had two clusters of items. Cluster one elicited information on availability of socio-psychological services in schools while cluster two sought information on the extent to which these available socio-psychological school services were utilized in the schools. The items in cluster one were placed on a four-point rating scale of: Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D); and Strongly Disagree (SD) while cluster two items were placed on a four-point rating scale High Extent (HE); Moderate Extent (ME), Small Extent (SE) and Very Small Extent (VSE). The two rating scales were weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 accordingly.

Validation and reliability of the instrument

The research instrument (SPSSQ), was face validated by three test experts with specialties in Guidance and Counselling, Educational Psychology and Measurement and Evaluate respectively. These test experts are all in Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. After their face validations, the instrument was trial tested on 25 SSII students in Anambra state which is outside the state of study. Data obtained were subjected to Cronbach Alpha statistical analysis to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. Result of the data analysis gave Alpha coefficient values of 0.82 and 0.80 for clusters one and two of section two and an overall Alpha value of 0.81 for the instrument. This high overall value indicated the reliability of the instrument to be used for the study.

Data collection and analysis

660 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the randomly selected subject's and collection made with the help of two research assistants to facilitate the data collection. Out of the 660 copies distributed, 567 were completed and returned. This gave a 99.5% return rate. Means and Standard Devia-

tion statistics were used in answering the research question one and criterion mean value of 2.50 set as decision level for agreement or disagreement of an item. Decisions on items used in answering research question two were based on the following Limits of Real Numbers (LRN): 0.05 – 1.49 = Very Low Extent (VLE); 1.50. 2.49 = Low Extent (LE); 2.50.3.49 = Moderate Extent (ME); 3.50 – 4.00 High Extent (HE). The null hypotheses were analyzed by t-test statistics tested at 0.05 probability level.

Results

The following Tables present results of the data analysis for the research questions asked and null hypotheses postulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Table 1 is used in answering research questions one and two which are focused on availability of socio-psychological school services in public and private secondary schools.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of availability of socio-psychological services in public and private schools

S/ N	School Sociological School Services	Public = 396			Private = 261		
		X	SD	RM	X	SD	Re-marks
1.	School clubs for socialization of students.	2.67	1.16	A	3.05	1.11	A
2.	Individualized guidance and counselling of students for better understanding of self	3.29	1.04	A	3.22	1.03	A
3.	Orientation programmes to help students in proper adjustment in schools	3.28	0.96	A	3.32	1.01	A
4.	Enhancing students' knowledge through talks by guest speakers	3.140	0.97	A	3.28	0.95	A
5.	Excursion trips for enhancement of students' occupational knowledge.	2.76	1.09	A	3.00	1.13	A
6.	Provision of information technology equipment for teaching and enhance social development	2.42	1.16	D	2.63	1.17	A
7.	Consultation with Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for social health talks with students.	2.74	1.10	A	2.70	1.15	A
	Cluster	2.90	0.65	A	3.02	0.67	A
	Psychological School Services						
8.	Enhancing of students' capabilities through psychological needs assessment	2.68	1.14	A	2.62	1.40	A
9.	Helping students to acquire acceptable behaviours through use of role models.	3.11	0.93	A	3.06	1.06	A
10.	Assessing students' performance through use of tests	3.11	1.05	A	2.99	1.33	A
11.	Peer tutoring as an indirect intervention strategy for helping slow learner to achieve	2.99	0.95	A	3.00	1.05	A
12.	Supervision of students continuous assessment by school counselors to ensure accurate record keeping	2.95	1.10	A	3.14	1.08	A
13.	Utilization of inclusion education to improve emotional dispositions of the physically challenged						
14.	Giving of prizes for good achievement in order to enhance better performance	3.24	1.03	A	3.15	1.03	A
	Cluster	3.02	0.61	A	2.98	0.68	A

Criterion mean = 2.50; A 2657 A = Agree; D = Disagree, n = 567

Data analysis result shown in Table 1 reveals that students agree that item numbers 1 to 14 are socio-psychological school services are available in public and private secondary schools. This is because their mean values are above the set criterion mean score of 2.50. However, students in public schools disagree to the availability of item number 6. The cluster mean values of 2.90 and 3.02 for public schools and 3.02 and 2.98 for private schools show that socio-psychological school services, are available for improvement of students for intellectual functioning. The high cluster standard deviation values on sociological school services (public SD – 0.65; private SD= 0.67) and psychological school services (public SD = 0.61 and private, SD = 0.67) indicate less variability among students’ responses on the availability of socio-psychological school services in government and private secondary schools.

Research question three data analysis result on extent of utilization of socio-psychological school services for improvement of intellectual functioning of students in public and private secondary schools is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation analysis on extent of socio-psychological school services utilization

S/N	Extent of utilization of socio-psychological school services	Public = 396			Private = 261			Remarks
		X	SD	RM	X	SD		
1.	School clubs for socialization of students.	2.71	1.18	ME	2.95	1.15		ME
2.	Individualized guidance and counselling of students for better understanding of self	3.14	1.03	ME	3.08	1.06		ME
3.	Orientation programmes to help students in proper adjustment in schools	2.98	1.15	ME	3.29	0.96		ME
4.	Enhancing students’ knowledge through talks by guest speakers	2.81	1.27	ME	2.67	1.13		ME
5.	Excursion trips for enhancement of students’ occupational knowledge.	2.48	1.16	LE	2.71	1.13		ME
6.	Provision of information technology equipment for teaching and enhance social development	2.39	1.26	LE	2.64	1.14		ME
7.	Consultaion with Non governmental organizations (NGOs) for Social health talks with students.	2.48	1.16	LE	2.67	1.07		LE
8.	Enhancing of students’ capabilities through psychological needs assessment	2.48	1.32	LE	2.47	1.31		LE
9.	Helping students to acquire acceptable behaviours through use of role models.	2.69	1.22	ME	2.89	1.23		ME
10.	Assessing students’ performance through use of tests.	2.39	1.25	LE	2.43	1.33		LE
11.	Peer tutoring as an indirect intervention strategy for helping slow learner to achieve.	2.84	1.20	ME	2.79	1.30		ME

12.	Supervision of students continuous assessment by school counselors to ensure accurate record keeping	2.56	1.17	ME	2.89	1.09		ME
13.	Utilization of inclusion education to improve emotional dispositions of the physically challenged	2.55	1.23	ME	2.77	1.15		ME
14.	Giving of prizes for good achievement in order to enhance better performance	2.97	1.10	ME	3.05	1.12		ME
	Cluster	2.68	0.74	ME	2.81	0.63		ME

ME = Moderate Extent. LE = Low Extent

Result of data analysis shown in Table 2 reveals Cluster mean score values: Public x = 2.68 and Private x = 2.81. These show that socio-psychological school services for improvement of students’ intellectual functioning are utilized to a moderate extent in both government and private secondary schools with private secondary schools utilizing more socio-psychological school services than public secondary schools. Also shown is that items numbers 7,8 and 10 are utilized at a Low Extent in both public and private schools.

Null hypotheses testing: Null hypotheses one and two data analysis results on test of significant difference between public and private secondary schools on availability of socio-psychological school services are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: T-test analysis of socio-psychological school services’ availability in public and private secondary school.

Variable	School type	n	X	SD	t-cal	(sig,2 tailed)	Decision
Sociological	Public	396	2.90	0.65			
	Private	261	3.02	0.67			
Ho ₂ Sch services					-1.32	-0.19	Accept Ho ₂
Psychological	Public	396	3.02	0.61			
	Private	261	2.98	0.67			
Ho ₂ Sch services					0.46	0.65	Accept Ho ₂

P = 0.05; n = 657, df 655

Data analysis presented in Table 3 reveal a calculated t-value = -1.32 with associated probability value of = -0.19 on sociological school services and a calculated t-value 0.46 with associated probability value = 0.65 for psychological school services. Since the associated probability values -0.19 and 0.65 respectively are higher than the set probability level value of 0.05 the null hypotheses one and two are accepted. Thus, there is no significant difference between the mean score values of students in public and private school on availabilities of sociological and psychological school services for improvement of intellectual functioning. The result further shows that private secondary schools utilize more sociological school services than public schools (private x = 3.02; public x = 2.90) and vice versa with psychological schools services (public x = 3.02; private x = 2.98).

Null hypothesis three of data analysis result on test of significant difference between public and private schools on extent of utilization of socio-psychological school services is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: t-test analysis on extent of utilization of socio-psychological school services in public and private secondary schools.

Variable	School type	n	X	SD	t-cal	sig.2 tailed	Decision
Socio-psychological School services	private	396	2.68	0.74			
	Private	261	2.81	0.63	-1.27	0.21	Accept Ho ₃

P = 0.05; n = 657; df 655

Result of data analysis presented in Table 4 shows a calculated t-test value = 1.27 with associated probability value = 0.21. Since the associated probability value is higher than the set probability value of 0.05 the result is not significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted consequently, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of students in public and private schools extent of utilization of socio-psychological school services for improvement of intellectual functioning of students in public and private secondary schools is accepted.

Discussion

School as an agent of socialization and development needs to provide stimulating learning environment that is capable of improving the intellectual functioning of learners. Result of this study as shown in tables 1 and 3 reveal that both public and private secondary schools in Enugu education zone of Enugu state have socio-psychological services improving intellectual functioning of students and that the availability of these services in the two classes of schools did not differ significantly. Among sociological school services provided for improvement of students' intellectual functioning are socialization activities through school clubs; individual and group guidance and counselling services, orientation, talks and seminars by guest speakers and Non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Also, provided are psychological services such as psychological testing to ascertain students' scholastic abilities, needs assessment, peer tutoring, Continuous Assessment record keeping and prize giving ceremonies motivator for encouraging of good performances among students. This finding is encouraging as it reflects government and private institutions' awareness and responsiveness to the fact that school as an agent of socialization should provide services that would impact all categories of learners intellectually and behaviourally for high academic adjustment in schools. This finding corroborates with earlier studies of Dabbs (2010), Baumerster, Catanese and Vohs (2001) and Mangal (2010) respectively which show that socio-psychological services are necessary services as they not only help in socializing students but also help in restructuring students' mindset towards development of positive self-concept and adaptive behaviours which are necessary attributes needed in overcoming learning deficiencies. With guidance and counselling services students' are be helped to understand themselves and their environment better and able to solve their daily life's problems.

It is however, discouraging to observe from this study that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a service for improvement of students' intellectual functioning was lacking in public schools contrary to the private schools. This finding is reflective of poor availability of facilities in public schools which probably influenced the poor ICT knowledge and skills possessed by teachers and students in public schools (Okeke & Edika, 2011). The implication of this finding is that academic achievement in public schools might be lower than those in public schools while their in performance achievement and behavioural problems of students in the public schools might be lower than those in private schools.

The findings of this study further reveals that although both public and private secondary schools provide socio-psychological

logical school services for improvement of student's intellectual functioning these services are only moderately utilized with no significant difference existing between the extent of their utilization in the two classes of schools. Closer analysis of the result shows that some of the socio-psychological services are even utilized only to a small extent in the schools. Such services include psychological of testing of students' needs and scholastic achievements; ICT service opportunities field trips, educative talks and seminars by guest speakers and NGOs. The educational implication of this the low extent of utilization of these services could account for the observed array of problems such as underachievement, violence, aggression and youth restiveness to list but some which are common among Nigeria students in general and Enugu state in specific. This finding agrees with Ramalingam (2006) that emphasized the need for practical utilization of socio-psychological services as they help to improve intellectual functioning of students for better academic performances and social adjustment. With school services healthy socialization, school adjustment and peer relationship are achieved by students Bargh (2000) and improved academic performance (Buku & Akande, 2012).

Recommendations

In light of the findings of this study, these recommendations are made

1. Information and communication technology (ICT) facilities such as computers, television internet connectivity should be, provided in schools for students' utilization in self-improvement of their cognitive functioning.
2. Schools should provide regular orientation services for students
3. Professional guidance counselors should continue to be posted in schools to ensure appropriate utilization of psychological and non-psychological test instruments in early diagnosis of intellectual functioning challenges of students so as to proffer adequate interventions for improvement.
4. School counselors should create more opportunities for direct and indirect group and individual counseling programmes for both students and parents.
5. schools should create more opportunities for students to have regular talks with guest speakers and NGOs.

Conclusion.

All children, irrespective of intellectual abilities are expected to be impacted by socio-psychological services provided in the schools. This study has revealed that secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria are provided with socio-psychological services which are moderately utilized in improving their academic performance and social adjustment. It is hoped that with enhanced utilization of socio-psychological school services, students would be helped to be well adjusted and self-reliant individuals who will be able to contribute meaningfully to the global economy of 21st century.

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