

Probing the Validity of Misconceptions about Open and Distance Learning in Nigeria: A Three- Phase Empirical Approach

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Abstract

This study identifies a set of misconceptions about distance education among university lecturers at University of Ibadan, Nigeria. It employed a Three-Phased Empirical Approach. In Phase I, a list of misconceptions arising from a detailed interview with nine lecturers was developed. In Phase II, these misconceptions were reviewed, elaborated and categorized into semi-structured interviews. From which a list of 11 misconceptions was developed. In Phase III, these misconceptions were verified quantitatively with 60 purposively selected lecturers participating in the distance learning programme of the University. Data were collected through 'ODL facilitators' common misconceptions scale' with a reliability coefficient of 0.87. Data collected were analysed using simple percentages and content analysis. The findings showed that the misconceptions which had higher ranking values among the respondents were: ODL is an opportunistic form of learning for average or less intelligent students (60 or 100%); ODL as a mode of learning with low quality assurance (58 or 96.7%); ODL as inferior form of learning since it is technology-mediated (56 or 93.3%) and less vigorous in comparison with the conventional mode of learning (56 or 93.3%). The study recommended, among others, that training programmes should be organised for distance learning tutors and research grants as well as fellowships should be instituted for university teachers who are interested in conducting researches on open and distance learning.

Keywords: Validity, Misconceptions, Distance education, University Lecturers, and Three-Phased Empirical Approach