

**LECTURERS' MENTORSHIP STRATEGIES: IMPLICATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY GOAL ACHIEVEMENT IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA**

**BY**

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**Abstract**

*Achieving the goals of university education in Nigeria has been given much concern to stakeholders because of the perceived undesirable performance of the university graduates. This study therefore examines lecturers' mentorship strategies and its implication for university goal achievement in Kwara State, Nigeria. One research question was raised and 1 research hypothesis was formulated. Descriptive research design of correlation type was used. Out of the 6 universities in Kwara State 3 were purposively selected and 271 respondents were chosen using stratified random sampling technique. A self-developed questionnaire tagged 'Lecturers' Mentorship Strategies and Goal Achievement of University Education (LMSG AUE)' was used to obtain data. The instrument was validated and coefficient score of 0.74 reliability was obtained using Cronbach's Alpha. Mean score and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient were used to analyse the data obtained. The findings revealed that lecturers' mentorship strategies were rated to be fair with mean score of 1.77 and there was significant relationship between lecturers' mentorship strategies and university goal achievement ( $r = 0.37$ ;  $p\text{-value } 0.00 < 0.05$ ). Based on the findings, the study concludes that mentorship has positive implication for university goal achievement in Kwara State, Nigeria. It is therefore recommended among others that mentorship reports should constitute part of yardsticks for job promotion of the lecturers.*

**Introduction**

University education in Nigeria is the apex level of education. It is the level of education provided to build and produce high level man-power for the overall development of the nation. The university education among other levels of education in anywhere in the world contributes in no small measure to the socio-economic development of the nation. University education remains a sensitive instrument and a means for sustaining the development of a nation (Ottan, 2019). No matter the quantity of natural resources a nation might have; without the potential efforts of university education, the abilities and potentials that are needed to harness the skills and values that are responsible for national development would be lacking and therefore, the structure of such a nation is bound to have defects. And, part of the potentials and abilities to harness skills and value needed for national development is the good instructional delivery by the university teachers (lecturers). For university education to be successful, it requires due commitments to policy implementation, provision and maintenance of infrastructure, capacity

development and adequate provision of funds as well as the application of all these to achieve the desired goals.

Lecturers in the universities are the interpreter and implementer of the university curriculum. The leadership of the universities should be mindful of the service delivery of the lecturers and need to work toward improving the capacity of the lecturers for achieving the goals of university (Ottan, 2019). There are several ways of adding value to the lecturer potentials in the university. Such ways include; attendance in workshop, seminars, conferences and particularly mentorship programmes. There is no doubt in saying that students' performance in the university education is greatly determined and depended on learning opportunity gained from lecturers. It is therefore important for lecturers to be guided to stay focus in their primary assignments in the university through adequate mentoring exercise. These assignments are: teaching, research and community services.

Thus, many university graduates are not employable because skills and abilities to perform and compete favourably in the world economy are not possessed (Ibrahim, 2011). What could be the reason? Efforts made by researchers show that, the quality of university education in Nigeria is gradually fading out (Imbrabekhov & Tonwe, 2001; Bakkabulindi, 2005; Obe, 2009 & Okebukola, 2015). One of the reasons as suggest by Isfol (2005) is lack of mentoring exercise between the senior cadre lecturers and junior cadre lecturers in the university. It was equally reported that Nigeria universities are bottom loaded with junior cadre lecturers (Academic Staff Union of the Universities, 2013). For those categories of lecturers, there is need for coordinated effort for effective mentoring exercise toward the achievement of university goals. It is based on this context, this paper discussed strategies for mentorship and implication for university goal achievement.

The word 'mentorship' is an act of providing help and assistant to the people in an organization to develop more effectively. Mentorship is designed to build confidence and support to the workers so as to take control of their own and be efficient in the delivery of their services. Fye (2012) reported that mentoring idea started in the United State in the 1880's. It was an attempt to prevent further diffusion of the phenomenon of scholastic abandonment, and only later did it become widespread in the adult population and in subjects suffering from educational, social and professional distress. Mentoring according to Fye (2012) is defined as one-on-one relationship between two parties: the mentor and the mentee. The mentor is an experience officer who could provide professional guide and assistant to the needy (mentee) officers in an organization. A mentor is one who is cultured and highly acquainted to the doctrines and ethics of an organization. While, a mentee is one who is less experienced and needed professional guide and assistant to carry-out organization duties more proficiently. This type of process is particularly adapted within a job or educational context and it is also used in social prevention programmes. A predefined mentoring programme does not exist as support, itself, arises out of relationship which was found and based on a voluntary choice made by both subjects.

Mentoring is, therefore a situation based on support and trust in which assistance is offered to one or more individuals who are experiencing a difficult period of transition. The process is based on a relationship in which the mentor aims to assist the mentee by preventing and

overcoming social impairment, by empowering and helping to promote self-confidence and esteem as well as trust in others and thus promoting the individual's general wellbeing with respect to the tutor (Fyn, 2012). The mentor is less bound to any institution and more focused on the relationship and the needs of the mentee.

Mentoring can be used for a wide variety of situations in an organization; for instance the induction of newly employed officer; guide for the existing officers to get promotion; guide for the officers whose roles are changed in an organization and continued learning development programme. As previously observed, mentorship as to do with having an experienced and trusted adviser in an organization. One who can guide and coordinate the activities of the less experienced ones in the school toward achieving the goals of the school.

It is important to note that a mentor will have the opportunity to use his/her experiences and knowledge in a facilitative manner to support the development of the mentee. But, the responsibilities for making things happen and putting plans into action lies on the mentee. It is obvious that learning can only be effective when learners are ready to learn. Universities in Nigeria are established with the intention to produce required human resources for the cultural, political and socio-economic development of a nation. Universities therefore, are established for the realization of human and national development (Odiaka, 2012 & Okebukola, 2015). However, resources that are needed for the realization of these objectives by the Universities in Nigeria are inadequate (Babalola, 2007). There is no doubt in saying that once university education is incapacitated in producing balanced citizens for a country; such a country will continue to have economic stress, socio-political crises and cultural devaluation.

The National Universities Commission (2017) reports that there were 40 Federal, 44 State and 68 Private owned universities totaling 152 universities legally existing in the country. Over the years, there has been an outcry of having an upsurge of university graduates annually in Nigeria (Okebukola, 2015). Yet, the country is still experiencing occurrence of inter-tribal wars and social crime at an alarming rate which shows that national values are rapidly depreciating. It has been revealed that the educational system, especially university education is suffering from inadequacy in the provision of the needed resources that will enable the system to provide solutions to the national problems (Babalola, 2007; World Bank, 2012 & ISDMG, 2013). Universities in Nigeria as reported by Okebukola (2015) characterized by having students population without providing commiserated numbers of classrooms and lecturers among other issues. In a situation where university environment is not conducive to discharge the expected duties; in a situation where funds needed to provided adequately resources needed in the universities is grossly insufficient and in a situation where lecturers' population cannot withstand that of the students' population in the universities; it is expected to have graduates that would not be relevant to human and national needs. Hence, there is serious need to manage the existing limited resources in the universities. Mentorship is one of the ways to optimally make to the available lecturers in the university.

The benefit of mentorship in the university education could be seen as shown in Table 1:

**Table 1: Benefit of Mentorship**

Mentor	Mentee	University as an Organization
1. Job satisfaction for helping others to develop;	1. Increased self confidence and motivation on the job;	Desire productivity for the goal achievement
2. Increased recognition from the colleagues in the job;	2. Understanding of the organizational formal and informal culture and structures;	
3. Learning and developing oneself in the process;	3. An opportunity to develop skills by observing others;	
4. Motivation from self development and responsibility; and	4. A source of knowledge to tap ideas;	
5. University recognition of the mentorship roles	5. An opportunity to think about things in a different way	

**Source: Field Report, 2019**

**Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is set to examine the relationship between lecturers’ mentorship strategies and university goal achievement in the universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

**Research Questions**

This study is guided by 1research question.

1. What are the lecturer mentorship strategies in the universities in Kwara State, Nigeria?

**Research Hypotheses**

1. There is no significance relationship between lecturer mentorship strategies and goal achievement of university education in Kwara State, Nigeria.

**Methodology**

The study used descriptive research design of a correlation type. It was considered appropriate because the study was descriptive in nature and data obtained were analysed to describe the relationship between lecturer mentorship strategies and achievement of goals of the university education in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study was carried out in the universities available in Kwara State, Nigeria. There are six universities legally existing in Kwara State. Namely: University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria; Kwara State University, Malete; Al-Hikmah University Ilorin, Kwara State; Landmark University, Omu-Ara, Kwara State; Summit University Offa, Kwara State; and Crown Hill University Ilorin, Kwara State. These universities cut across Federal, State and Private ownership. Purposive sampling method was used to pick one Federal, State and Private own university in Kwara State. In the chosen universities, two faculties were purposively selected to represent each of the university. This makes 6 Faculties available for the study. In all the 6 Faculties, there were 542 lecturers and proportional sampling method was used to select 271 lecturers as respondents of the research instrument.

A self-developed questionnaire was used obtain data from the respondents tagged ‘Lecturer Mentorship Strategies and Goal Achievement of University Education (LMSGAE)’. The method of response to the instrument was on a 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1) on the 4 items of the instrument. The instrument was validated by giving the draft copies to experts in the area of educational planning and administration and educational test, measurement and evaluation. The coefficient of 0.74 reliability score was obtained through Cronbach’s Alpha. This shows that the instrument is reliable. Mean score is the descriptive statistic used to answer research question and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient is the statistic method used to analyse the research hypothesis. The ratings of mean scores are as follows:

4.00	– 3.6	Very good
3.5	– 2.6	Good
2.5	– 1.6	Fair
1.5	– 1.00	Poor

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the lecturer mentorship strategies in the universities in Kwara State, Nigeria?

**Table 2:** Descriptive Analysis of Lecturer Mentorship Strategies in the Universities

S/No	Items	Mean score			Mean Score	Decision
		A	B	C		
1	Does your University organize mentorship workshop and seminars for the newly recruited academic staff?	3.43	2.53	1.22	<b>2.39</b>	<b>Fair</b>
2	Does your University provide allowance for senior staff that provides mentor services to the junior staff?	2.34	1.32	1.00	<b>1.55</b>	<b>Poor</b>
3	Does your University ensure that all graduate assistant, assistant lecturers and lecturer II staff are attached to senior staff for mentoring?	3.22	2.04	1.21	<b>2.15</b>	<b>Fair</b>
4	There is official report of mentorship exercise in the university written	1.00	1.00	1.00	<b>1.00</b>	<b>Very poor</b>

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by the mentor to the university management as parts of the promotion factor.		
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>1.77</b>	<b>Fair</b>

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**Key: a= University of Ilorin, b= Kwara State University, c= Landmark University**  
**Source: Field Report, 2019**

The analysis in Table 2 shows the respondents' reactions on items developed in the research instrument on the lecturers' mentorship strategies in the universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. Item 1 seeks to know whether or not workshops and seminars are normally organized for the newly recruited academic staff in the universities. The mean score was 2.39 and rated to be fair. This means that serious attention is not drawn to the workshop and seminar programmes to mentor the newly recruited academic staff. Item 2 seeks to know whether or not the university provides allowance for mentor services provided by the senior cadre academic staff. The mean score was 1.55 and rated poor. This means that there no serious motivation for mentorship in the universities. Item 3 seeks to know whether or not lower cadre lecturers (the graduate assistants and lecturer II officers) are attached to the senior cadre lecturers for mentorship. The mean score was 2.15 and rated to be fair. This equally shows that junior cadre lecturers carry out their duties with little effort of mentorship. On the item 4, the mean score was 1.00 and rated to be very poor. This is an indication that the universities under consideration in this study failed to understand the power of mentorship as an important instrument for university goal achievement.

On average, the composite mean reveals that mentorship strategies in the chosen universities were rated fair with 1.77 mean score.

**Research Hypothesis 1: *There is no significance relationship between lecturers' mentorship strategies and goal achievement of university education in Kwara State, Nigeria.***

**Table 3: Relationship between Lecturers' Mentorship Strategies and Goal Achievement of University Education**

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated r-value	p-value	Decision
Lecturers' Mentorship Strategies	271	19.23	7.13	0.37	0.00	Ho Rejected
Goal Achievement of University Education	271	15.24	5.17			

**Source:** Field Report, 2019

\* **p-value < 0.05 level of significance**

The correlation analysis of lecturers' mentorship strategies and goal achievement of university education in Kwara State, Nigeria as presented in Table 3 reveals that the calculated r-value is

0.37, while the p-value (0.00) is less than the set 0.05 level of significance ( $r = 0.37$ ,  $p (0.00) < 0.05$ ). This shows that hypothesis that stated that there is no significant relationship between lecturers' mentorship strategies and goal achievement of university education in Kwara State, Nigeria is rejected. It implies that there is significance relationship between lecturers' mentorship strategies and goal achievement of university education in Kwara State, Nigeria.

### **Discussion**

The research question 1 stated that what are the lecturer mentorship strategies in the universities in Kwara State, Nigeria? Findings on research question revealed that universities attached little importance to mentorship exercise for lecturers as the composite mean score was 1.77 and rated to be fair. This describes the organization culture. But, human resource is one of the flow resources in the organization. Meaning that, an organization exit and receive manpower. This is where the starting point of mentoring service begins to sustain the organization culture. Many European universities became interested in the '80's in creating placement services and programmes not limited to merely providing information but also actively engaged in helping to integrate and to educate young people in view of empowering individual and social perspectives (Isfol, 2005). He stressed further to say that mentoring is a means of minimizing wastages in the university system. In another remark, Isfol (2005) describes mentoring as one-on-one relationship between the mentor and the mentee for professional guidance and to aid quality service delivery.

Meanwhile, on the testing of hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between lecturers' mentorship strategies and goal achievement of university education. The hypothesis was rejected as the  $r$  was 0.37 and p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance. This shows that positive significant relationship exists between lecturers' mentorship strategies and goal achievement of university education. Enhancing the efficiency of university education for goal achievement in Nigeria, the roles of mentoring/mentorship cannot be eschewed. University education as an organization, guidance services through mentoring is germane to the realization of quality service delivery. Every organization has its ethics and mode of operation for achieving the set goals. The realization of these goals depend on the level of efficiency and effectiveness such organization can sustain and maintain.

### **Conclusion**

The universities in the developed countries have been acknowledged as leading universities in the world. Those universities take full control of all the factors that bring about goal achievement of the university goals. In those universities students, academic and non-academic mentorship programmes are done and considered as part of the fundamental functions of the university. According to Peter and Sue (2016) mentoring is an act of minimizing error and wastages in an educational setting. This study therefore concludes that mentoring/mentorship goal achievement of university education depends among other things on the quality of mentoring services in the universities.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings in the study; the following recommendations were made:

- The university management should ensure that the newly employed lecturers must be exposed to mentorship workshops and seminars as a way of boosting their morale;
- The university management should ensure that the junior cadre lecturers work under the mentorship of the senior cadre lecturers;
- Also, the universities should consider mentorship reports as parts yardstick for job promotion of the lecturers; and
- University management should clearly define and consider the financial benefits of mentors as important for effective service delivery.

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