INFLUENCE OF LECTURER-STUDENTS' RELATIONSHIP ON ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA, NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study explored the current status of lecturer-student relationship and influences on their academic and social integration. The design adopted for this study is a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consists of 21,176 registered students of the University of Abuja as at 2017/2018 academic session. A sample of 394 respondents was selected for this study. Proportionate random sampling procedure was used in selecting the students from the different faculties so as to cut across relatively the population. The instrument for data collection titled: Lecturer-Student Interaction, Academic and Social Integration Questionnaire (LSIASIQ). The LSIASIQ is a 33-item instrument designed along a modified four-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was validated by two experts in the Faculty of Education, University of Abuja. In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted using the split-half method of reliability, which yielded the reliability (r) value of 0.73. The data collected was analyzed using mean and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The study found that there is poor relationship between lecturers and students in the University of Abuja. The study established also that students are fairly well integrated academically and socially into the University environment. Significant positive relationship between lecturer-students relationship and students' integration exist (academic/social). It was recommended among others that effort should be made to build better and stronger lecturer-student relationships; university administrators should show present students and lecturers with opportunities for informal interaction beyond the walls of the classroom.
Keywords: Academic Integration, Social Integration, Lecturer-Students Relationship

Introduction

Education in the 21st century is undergoing significant changes at all levels. In contemporary university setting, there is a great diversity in terms of socio-cultural, political, religious and racial backgrounds among students and lecturers. This diversity necessitates an appropriate lecturer-student relationship in order to create a campus environment that prepares students and lecturers to live and work amicably in a socio-culturally diverse society.

Lecturer-student relationship is viewed as a helping hand in which the student perceives that the lecturer has his or her best interest at heart. This usually averts students' negative feelings towards the university. Research on student persistence or attrition has postulated that a student's decision to withdraw or persist in a university is more a function of what occurs after entry into that institution than what precedes it (Peterson, Patricia & Schwarz in Severiens & Schmidt (2008). Newton (2002) has opined that lecturers' contact with students in and out of the classroom is very important in student motivation and may help to prepare students to respond to an increasing complex global environment. A healthy relationship between the lecturers and students might therefore influence students' academic, personal and social integration into higher education.

Central to many retention studies according to Peterson et al in Severiens & Schmidt (2008), have been the concepts of academic and social integration. Academic integration to them means the students' perception about the academic system, which include classroom interactions with lecturers. On the other hand, social integration is defined as the students' perception of the social system, which includes interactions with peers and informal contacts with lecturers and other personnel within a learning institution.

The impact the university is expected to bestow on students may be achieved due to appropriate lecturer-student relationship which can facilitate both formal and informal interactions. In such an environment, the student is assisted to develop those qualities that go with good learning skills and leadership. This is perhaps due to the students' identification with lecturers as role models, which has been acknowledged as vital to the acquisitions of good learning skills and functional behaviour (Ronning, 1997).

The University of Abuja as a tertiary institution in the Nigerian capital Abuja began academic work in 1990 with the matriculation of its pioneer students. The university runs regular degree, diploma, and postgraduate programmes. The university also has a Centre for Distance Learning School which provides university education to those who cannot acquire such education through the regular university system. The university runs a consultancy services sub-degree program and an Institute of education to cater for the professional needs of teachers and specialized needs of government education bodies.

In a University setting like the University of Abuja, there is a great diversity in terms of socio-cultural, political, religious and racial background among students and lecturers. This diversity with the presence of an appropriate lecturer-student relationship creates a campus that prepares students and lecturers to live and work amicably in a socio-culturally diverse society. It is against this backdrop that this researcher intends to investigate the influence of lecturer-student relationship on the academic and social integration of students in University of Abuja, Nigeria. The study established the current status of lecturer-student

relationship and further explore to see possible influence on their academic and social integration.

Statement of the Problem

A major concern in the University of Abuja today is the inability of students to make good grades at the time of their graduation. At the 15th to 20th combined convocation of the University of Abuja held in February 2016, only eight made first class out of over twenty five thousand grandaunts. This is evidence of poor academic integration. Socially, students are also known to engage unapproved behaviours including cultism, wild partying and other such social vices.

For learning skills and functional behaviour to be acquired, the students ought to perceive their relationship with lecturers as confident, meaningful and relevant to them. This implies that if students perceive lecturer-student relationship or interaction as irrelevant to them, they may develop a negative attitude towards the campus environment. This may translate into poor students' physical behaviour as well as inadequate cognitive filtering of what they are experiencing in the learning environment.

Since there is a general belief that human behaviour and actions are influenced by attitudes, there is need for a systematic empirical study to establish the influence of students' perception of their relationships with their lecturers on their attitudes toward learning in University of Abuja, Nigeria. The researcher therefore intends to explore the current status of lecturer-student relationship and to see possible influence on their academic and social integration.

The following questions are raised to guide the research:

1. What is the nature of lecturer-student relationship in University of Abuja?
2. What is the level of students' academic and social integration in University of Abuja?
3. What is the influence of lecturer-student relationship on students' academic and social integration in University of Abuja?

The study hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between lecturer-student relationships and students' academic and social integration in University of Abuja.

Method

The design adopted for this study is a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consists of 21,176 registered students of the University of Abuja as at 2017/2018 academic session. A sample of 394 respondents was selected for this study. This sample was considered appropriate for an approximate population of 21,176 using Glenn (2012) who provided a table for determining sample size from a given population. Proportionate Random sampling procedure was used in selecting the students from the different faculties so as to cut across relatively the population.

The instrument for data collection was constructed by the researchers and titled: Lecturer-Student Interaction, Academic and Social Integration Questionnaire (LSIASIQ). The LSIASIQ is a 33-item instrument designed along a modified four-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation in the Faculty of Education, University of Abuja. During this process, items that were considered to be vague, ambiguous or irrelevant were removed to ensure that the questionnaire serve the purpose for which it was designed. In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted. Using the split-half method of reliability, the two set of scores obtained from the pilot test were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The reliability (r) value of 0.73 was obtained for the scores which implied a high reliability of the instrument. The questionnaire was administered directly on the respondents by the researchers. The tools that were used in analyzing the collected data include mean, t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

Results

Table 1: Nature of Lecturer-Student Relationship in University of Abuja

N=394

S/N	Items	Mean	Decision
1	My lecturers are more concerned with the welfare of students.	1.53	Disagree
2	I find it difficult not to depend on my lecturers.	1.93	Disagree
3	I have no worries about my interactions with my lecturers.	2.20	Disagree
4	My lecturers make me doubt myself.	2.66	Agree
5	I am not nervous around my lecturers.	2.41	Disagree
6	I find that my lecturers connect well with students.	2.19	Disagree
7	The lecturers seem to all appreciate students.	2.10	Disagree
8	My lecturer's mood can be predictable.	1.78	Disagree
9	My lecturers do not show favouritism to some students.	2.34	Disagree
10	My lecturers seem uncomfortable interacting with students.	2.72	Agree
11	I prefer to show my lecturers how I truly think or feel.	2.13	Disagree
12	I am worried about losing my lecturer's respect.	2.32	Disagree
13	My lecturers pay attention to the needs of his or her students.	2.26	Disagree
14	I'm free to show my thoughts around my lecturers; I think they will think more of me.	2.31	Disagree
15	I feel comfortable opening up to my lecturers.	2.14	Disagree
16	If I were to get into trouble in my class, I think my lecturers would be very motivated to help me.	2.33	Disagree
17	One can hardly measure up to my lecturer's standards.	2.48	Disagree
18	My lecturers do really care for his or her students.	2.41	Disagree
19	My lecturers do not really like me.	2.71	Agree
	Sectional Mean	**2.26**	**Disagree**

Table 1 presents data with respect to the nature of lecturer-student relationship among students of University of Abuja. The analysis shows agreement with the

negative items and disagreement with the positive items. The sectional mean of 2.26 indicates that the poor relationship exist between lecturers and students in the study area.

Table 2: Students' Academic and Social Integration in University of Abuja N=394

S/No	Items	Mean	Decision
20	Since coming to this university I have developed close personal relationships with other students	3.33	Agree
21	My non-classroom interactions with lecturers have had a positive influence on my personal growth, values and	2.61	Agree
22	attitudes	2.71	Agree
23	The lecturers I have had contact with are generally interested in students	2.77	Agree
24	I am satisfied with the extent of my intellectual development since enrolling in this university	2.95	Agree
25	I am confident that I made the right decision in choosing to attend this university	2.41	Disagree
26		2.64	Agree
27	The friendships I have developed at this university with my lecturers have been personally satisfying	2.91	Agree
28	My non-classroom interactions with faculty have had a positive influence on my intellectual growth and interest in ideas	3.22	Agree
29	The lecturers I have had contact with are generally outstanding or superior teachers	2.75	Agree
30	My academic experience has had a positive influence on my intellectual growth and interest in ideas	2.48	Disagree
31	My non-classroom interactions with faculty have had a positive influence on my career goals and aspirations	2.39	Disagree
32	The lecturers I have had contact with are willing to spend time outside of class to discuss issues of interest and importance to students	2.89	Agree
33	Since coming to this university I have developed a close, personal relationship with some of my lecturers	2.68	Agree
	Many of my courses this year have been intellectually stimulating		
	I am satisfied with the opportunities to meet and interact informally with lecturers		
	Sectional Mean	**2.77**	**Agree**

Table 2 presents data with respect to the academic and social integration of students of University of Abuja. The analysis shows agreement with the items that unrelated

to lecturers and disagreement with those items that are related to lecturers. The sectional mean of 2.77 indicates overall agreement showing that students are integrated socially and academically. However, the mean of 2.77 indicates relatively low level of integration. The fact that factors other than the role of lecturers promote this integration sends very bad signals.

Table 3: Correlation Test between Lecturer-Student Relationship and Students' Integration in University of Abuja

Variables	N	r-cal	r^2	P-value	Decision
Lecturer-Student Relationship and Students' Integration	394	.274	.0751	.000	Rejected

The computed correlation coefficient on Table 3 shows the significance of the relationship between the variables. With the probability value (p-values) less than .05, it is concluded that there is significant relationship between lecturer-students relationship and students' integration (academic/social) in University of Abuja. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The positive value of 'r' points to the direction of relationship. It indicates direct relationship showing that increase in one variable corresponds to increase in the other. It is thus established that with improved lecturer-students relationship comes increase in level of academic and social integration among students. The r^2 called the coefficient of determination shows the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. The r^2 value of .0751 indicates that 7.51% of the variability of dependent variable (academic and social integration) can be explained on the basis of the independent variable (lecturer-student relationship).

Discussion of Findings

The first finding indicates that relatively poor relationship exists between lecturers and students in the University of Abuja, and it was found to be as a result of some factors on the part of the lecturers and the students. It was found that Lecturers are less concerned with the welfare of the students in general, and on the part of the student they find it difficult to relate issues with their lecturers, some having worries about their relationship with their lecturer. Some students even feel their lecturer make them doubt themselves and make them nervous because their lecturer do not connect well with them or give them the platform to. This relationship appears to have deteriorated over time and effort has not really been put in to establish this relationship between the lecturers and the students. Chepchieng, Mbugua and Kariuki (2006) revealed that, students in private universities seem to positively perceive lecturer-student' relationship more than

those in public universities and attributed the difference to the factor of class size with students of private universities having better advantage.

On students' academic and social integration in University of Abuja, this study found that students appeared to integrate fairly well, socially and academically. A good number of students since coming to the university have develop a close personal relationship with other students on campus; believed their academic experience has had a positive influence on their intellectual growth and interest; felt confident that they made the right decision in choosing to attend this university and stated that many of my courses have been intellectually stimulating. It was also observed that students' non-classroom interaction have had positive influence on them, even though it was observed that some students have not really developed a close personal relationship with some of their lecturer and that some lecturers they have had contact with are willing while some are not to help. The finding agrees with Chepchieng, Mbugua and Kariuki (2006) who found that, in a university setting, there is a great diversity in terms of socio-cultural, political, religious and racial backgrounds among students and lecturers. This diversity, with the presence of an appropriate lecturer-student relationship creates a campus environment that prepares students and lecturers to live and work amicably in a socio-culturally diverse society. Taylor (2009) also found that on academic integration and social integration scales students had average mean scores slightly above 4 on the Likert scale of 5-

This study also found that there is significant relationship between lecturer-students relationship and students' integration (academic/social) in University of Abuja. This points to the utmost importance of encouraging positive relationships between lecturers and students as it is bound to encourage greater levels of academic integration of students into the academic environment thus improving their academic outcomes. Emeka (2015) found out that there is a significant relationship between lecturers and student relationship and improving student's academic performance. Severiens and Schmidt (2008) established that formal social integration positively affected study progress, but informal academic integration was negatively related to study progress.

Conclusion

The study concludes that there is poor relationship between lecturers and students in the University of Abuja. The study established also that students are fairly well integrated academically and socially into the University environment. Significant positive relationship between lecturer-students relationship and students' integration exist (academic/social).

Recommendations

In view of the above findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

1. Effort should be made to build a better and stronger lecturer-student relationship in University of Abuja.
2. Programmes should be introduced that will enable students integrate more academically and socially in University of Abuja.
3. In view of significant positive relationship between the two variables, it is important to promote positive relationship between students and lecturers in order to improve their social and academic integration.
4. Finally, University administrators should show interest in students' academic and social integration be presenting them with opportunities for informal interaction with lecturers beyond the walls of the classroom

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