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MINNA, NIGER STATE, NIGERIA
SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

8TH SSTE
INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE

THEME
Emerging
Trends
in STEM and TVET
in the
21ST
Century



6TH - 8TH OCTOBER, 2021
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE



VENUE: Google Meet

8th International Conference of School of Science and Technology Education (SSTE)

FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, MINNA

8th

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Perceptions of Undergraduate Students' on Academic Advisors Roles Towards Academic Success in Federal University of Technology, Minna

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Abstract

This study investigated Undergraduate Students' Perceptions of Academic Advisors Roles Towards Academic Success at The Federal University of Technology, Minna, Nigeria. Three research questions were raised. The study adopted a survey research design. The study population consisted of one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine (1,899) undergraduate students. A total of one hundred and ninety (190) were drawn from the science and technology education school that participated in the study. A twenty-five (25) items Perception of Academic Advisors Role Questionnaire (PAARQ) was used for data collection. Specialists in science education validated the instrument, and its reliability was established using Cronbach Alpha Method and yielded an index of 0.85. The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics (Mean & Standard Deviation). The findings of the study undergraduate students possess a positive perception of the role of academic advisors towards academic success in the University. The role of academic advisors influences students' perception of their school learning environment, and academic advisors' gender affects the role of academic advisors in the University. Based on these findings, the study recommended that institutions should improve their current advising systems to provide students with the advising they need and deserve to be satisfied with their campus experience; school management should organize workshops, seminars and conferences on the issues related to the academic advising at a tertiary institution and both male and female academic advisors should be allocated to each academic level.

Keywords: Undergraduate Students, Perception, Academic Adviser and Academic Success

Background to the Study

In most developed countries, academic advisors are trained professionals who get their tertiary education in fields or courses related to a specific discipline or professional programmes associated with the prospective student in a university system. However, in Nigerian Universities, unlike in advanced countries of the world, academic advising is considered an additional task of the academic staff in the University. Therefore, in this type of academic advising, the lecturers of each department are engaged with the responsibility of academic advising (academic advisers). This academic adviser provides educational and career information services which play an active role in assisting students of all ages in responding to rapid changes and effectively participate in learning processes (Najwa, 2014). According to National Academic Advising (2006), academic advising synthesizes and contextualize students' educational experiences within the framework of their aspirations, abilities and lives to extend learning beyond campus boundaries and timeframe.

Academic advising traces its origin from the earliest American colleges (Brian, 2003). A variety of approaches exist to the educational advising system. They depend on the goals of the advisor-students-interaction, the principle model of academic advising include developmental advising which emphasized helping students explore, define academic career & life goal, developed

problem-solving and decision making skills through collaborative advising thereby improving the relationship between the Advisor and the students, and it is primarily on adult development theory and students development theory (Crookston, 2009). On the other hand, the prescriptive or traditional model focuses mainly on providing students with information directly related to their academic program and progress, like academic policies, program requirements, graduation requirements, and course selection (Jeschke, Johnson & Williams, 2001). The last one is intrusive (involvement or proactive) advising, which was first introduced by Glennon in 1975 and had a defining feature that contacts are initiated by the Advisor rather than the students (Schwebel, Walburn, Jacobson, Jerrolds, & Klyce 2008).

Academic advising is more successful when advisors hold face-to-face appointments with the advisees, particularly with the topics like futures classes and careers. In addition, participation in academic advising shows increases in students' satisfaction and mitigate students' feelings of isolation and expulsion from the institutions (Fowler & Boylon, 2010). Therefore, the academic Advisor should serve as a facilitator of communication and coordinator of learning experiences through the selection of courses, planning of career and review of academic progress of the students. He also serves as a referral agent to other necessary campus agencies.

Lynam and Cachia (2017) viewed academic success as accomplishing the learning process, gaining subject knowledge and developing employability skills. It's also the achievement of summative assessment by learning output, achievement of knowledge through remarkable results, and graduate ability to execute professional roles related to their degree. Naude, Nel, Tadi & Van der Watt (2016) stressed the need for tertiary institutions to promote a growth mindset in students and encourage motivation. Hence, responsibility is placed on educators to instruct and instil the development of abilities in learners through purposely included aspects of the curriculum. Also, a learning environment that will help achieve these goals should be put in place by the school management. As a result of the above benefit of academic advising, some universities have set goals on educational advising programs for the development and success of students. However, research has revealed that minimal studies have been carried out to determine the student's perceptions of the role of academic advisors.

There is a belief that there is a correlation between academic success in the school and the quality of guidance received or provided by the lecturer or instructor in the University. This reason has compelled universities to introduce academic advisors who are usually academic staff to guide students on matters of Academic work or exercises in the University. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine students' perceptions of the Academic Advisor's role as a predictor of academic success in the Minna'sederal University of Technology,

Aims and Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are set to:

8. Determine whether there is a relationship between students' perception of academic adviser's role and their academic success in the University.
9. Determine whether students' perception of Academic Advisers role influence their relationship with other students.
10. Determine whether students' perception of Academic Advisors role influence their relationship with the school learning environment

Research Questions

In line with the objectives of this study, the following research question is raised to guide the study:

1. What is the perception of undergraduate students on the role of Academic Advisors in the University?
2. What type of perception do students possess on the role of academic advisors on academic success base on their different departments in the University?
3. Does the role of Academic Advisors influence students' perception of their school learning environment?

Research Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. It is quantitative research in which the researcher administers a survey to a sample or the entire population to describe the people's attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics. In this procedure, quantitative data are collected by the researcher using a questionnaire and the data is statistically analyzed to describe trends about responses to the questions to test the research questions. The total population of the students in the Federal University of Technology Minna is 21 617. Therefore, the study's target population is all the students in the School of Science and Technology Education (SSTE) in the University in the 2019/2020 academic session, which has 1,899 students. simple random sampling technique was used to select one hundred and ninety (190) undergraduate students from the School of Science and Technology Education, comprised of students from Industrial Technology Education (ITE), Educational Technology. The students were selected using balloting.

Perception of Academic Advisors Role Questionnaire (PAARQ) was used as an instrument for data collection in this study. The researcher developed it; it contains two sections (Biographical information of the students and views on the academic advising activities). The first section consists of 4 item questions regarding biographical details of the participants. The second section consists of 25 items to evaluate multiple aspects of an advising-based relationship and students' communication with the Advisor on a 5-point Likert Scale. The maximum score is 100, the minimum score is 25, and the average score is 60. A score above 60 signified positive perception and thus acceptance region. A score below 60 indicated no perception and therefore rejection region. The instrument's reliability was established using internal consistency reliability and calculated using Cronbach's Alpha method, and the reliability index was 0.85. The survey data from students were firstly summarized through descriptive statistics. Then, means (Σ) and standard deviation (*SD*) were used to answer the research questions.

Research Question 1: What is the perception of undergraduate students of the role of Academic Advisory in the University?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Perception Scores of Undergraduate Students on the Academic Advisors in the University

S/N	ITEM	N	Mean	S.D	Remark
1.	Academic Advisors should be a good listener and patient with students to be able to advise them adequately	190	3.47	1.81	Positive
2.	Academic Advisor should assist student's in the selection of courses related to their area of specialization at the beginning of every session	190	3.64	1.74	Positive
3.	Academic Advisors can help/assist you towards achieving academic success/excellence in the University	190	3.16	1.74	Positive
4.	Advising gives you accurate information about the degree program you're prospecting	190	3.70	1.87	Positive
5.	Academic Advisor can help increase your work rate and ensure development towards academic success	190	3.58	1.86	Positive
Grand Mean			3.51	1.80	

The result presented in Table 1 above revealed that the entire respondents (Science Education, Education Technology and Industrial Technology Education Students) possess a positive perception of the role of Academic Advisory in the University. More so, the grand mean equals 3.51 indicates the general perception of the entire students to be positive, while the grand SD (1.80) $\leq \pm 2.0$ shows no significant difference in the students' response. Hence, the academic advisory has a substantial role in students' academic success in the University.

Research Question 2: What type of perception do students possess on the role of Academic Advisory on students' academic success based on their different departments in the University?

Table 1: Mean of Perception Scores of Undergraduate Students on the Academic Advisors in the University Base on Departments

S/N	ITEM	\bar{X}_1	\bar{X}_2	\bar{X}_3	\bar{X}_T	Remark
1.	Suggestions from my Academic Advisor influenced my thoughts and relationship with other students in the department and University	4.02	3.71	2.80	3.51	Positive
2.	Academic Advisors are ideally supposed to be enthusiastic, experienced, knowledgeable and highly accommodating	4.13	3.82	2.91	3.62	Positive
3.	Academic advising guides me on the types of friends to keep and how to relate appropriately with them on campus	3.92	3.61	2.77	3.43	Positive
4.	My Academic Advisor sees advising as a cooperative effort	3.86	3.55	2.80	3.40	Positive
5.	Academic advising has helped me to be open-minded among other students at the University	4.02	3.71	2.63	3.45	Positive
Grand Mean		3.99	3.68	2.78	3.48	

The result presented in Table 2 above revealed that the respondents (Science Education and Education Technology) had a positive perception. In contrast, the entire Industrial Technology Education has a negative perception. More so, their respective grand mean $\bar{X}_1 = 3.99$ shows that Science Education possess a robust positive Perception, $\bar{X}_2 = 3.68$ shows that the Education

Technology Students possess a strong positive perception and $\bar{X}_3 = 2.78$ indicate a negative perception of the Industrial Technology Education students type of perception on the role of Academic Advisory on students' academic success based on their different departments in the University. Hence, the academic advisory has significant on students' academic success in the University.

Research Question 3: Does the role of Academic Advisors influence students' perception of their school learning environment?

Table 3: Mean Perception Scores of Undergraduate Students in the Role of Academic Advisors on their School Learning Environment

S/N	ITEM	\bar{X}_1	\bar{X}_2	\bar{X}_3	\bar{X}_T	Remark
1.	Academic Advisors should expose students to the basic infrastructures in the university (Library, school clinic)	4.02	3.71	2.54	3.42	Agreed
2.	My academic Advisor refers me to the appropriate personnel office when necessary	3.77	3.46	2.69	3.31	Agreed
3.	Academic advising has helped you to utilize the school facilities appropriately	3.57	3.26	2.57	3.13	Agreed
4.	Academic Advising gives you a referral to campus resources that address the academic problem	3.86	3.55	2.54	3.32	Agreed
5.	Academic advising has helped me to see the school environment as suitable for learning	3.81	3.50	2.89	3.40	Agreed

The result presented in Table 3 above revealed that the respondents (Science Education, Education Technology and Industrial Technology Education Students) agreed with all the items. This implies that the role of Academic Advisors influences students' perception of their school environment.

Research Question 4: Does gender influence the role of academic Advisors in the University?

Table4: Mean Perception Score of Undergraduate Students on the Influence of Gender on Academic Advisors' Role in The University Base on Departments

S/N	ITEM	\bar{X}_1	\bar{X}_2	\bar{X}_3	\bar{X}_T	Remark
1.	Male Academic Advisors are comparatively better than their female counterparts in the University	3.62	3.31	2.00	2.98	Agreed
2.	Female Academic Advisors are even better than their male counterparts in the University	4.18	3.87	2.51	3.52	Agreed
3.	Male Academic Advisors are easily accessible and respond to students request on time	3.53	3.22	2.34	3.03	Agreed
4.	Female Academic Advisors are even more easily accessible than their male counterparts	3.47	3.16	2.46	3.03	Agreed
5.	You easily interact and relate personal issues to the Academic Advisor irrespective of the gender	4.12	3.81	2.77	3.57	Agreed

The result presented in Table 4 above revealed that the respondents (Science Education, Education Technology and Industrial Technology Education Students) agreed with all the items. This implies that academic advisors' gender influences the role of academic Advisors in the University.

Summary of Findings

1. Undergraduate students possess a positive perception of the role of academic advisors towards academic success in the University
2. In all three departments, undergraduate students have a positive perception of the role of academic advisors on the students' academic success in the University
3. The role of academic advisors' influences students' perception of their school learning environment.
4. Academic advisors' gender influences the role of academic advisors in the University.

Discussion of the Findings

The finding shows that the respondents agreed with all the items. This implies that undergraduate students possess a positive perception of the role of academic advisors towards academic success in the University. The perceptions include; academic Advisor should assist students in selecting courses related to their area of specialization at the beginning of every session; Academic Advisor can help increase your work rate and ensure development towards academic success. These affirm that understanding the life themes that students are coping with at various stages of development, 'such as searching for identity and purpose may help advisors to focus their interventions with students on what should be taught during each encounter with students' rather than merely on what students' present as questions.'

The finding of this study revealed that, in all three departments, undergraduate students have a positive perception of the role of academic advisors on the students' academic success in the University. The perception includes; academic advisors are ideally supposed to be enthusiastic, experienced, knowledgeable and highly accommodating; academic advising guides me on the types of friends to keep and how to relate appropriately with them on campus. These are all in conjunction with the late 1950s and 1960s depicting that students expressed an interest in academic advising moving beyond a prescriptive scope; students' wanted advisors who took a greater interest in their needs and abilities along with advisors who were able to develop interpersonal relationships with them (Crookston, 2009).

It was also observed that the role of academic advisors' influences students' perception of their school learning environment. From the finding, the perceptions include; academic advisors should expose students to the basic infrastructures in the University (Library, school clinic), academic advising has helped you to utilize the school facilities appropriately, advising gives you a referral to campus resources that address the academic problem; Academic advising has enabled me to see the school environment as suitable for learning. This is in line with Lynam&Cachia, (2017) findings that, in developmental advising, the Advisor develops a stronger relationship with the advisee so that the Advisor and student together make decisions about their roles throughout the advising process.

It was also observed that academic advisors' gender influences the role of academic advisors in the University. Therefore, gender affects the function of academic advisors in the University. The perceptions include; male academic advisors are easily accessible and respond to students request on time; female academic advisors are even more easily accessible than their male counterparts; You easily interact and relate personal issues to the Academic Advisor irrespective of gender. This is following research carried out by Krist (2013), who examined multiple factors that determined

at-risk students specifically, race, gender, high school GPA, standardized test score, semesters living on campus, enrollment status, and socioeconomic status.

Conclusions

1. An excellent Academic Advisor gives students all the necessary assistance they may require, helps students increase their work rate, and gives them accurate information, thereby achieving academic success.
2. Academic Advisors are ideally supposed to be enthusiastic, experienced, knowledgeable and highly accommodating so that they influence students' thoughts, advise on the types of friends to keep and how to relate appropriately with them on campus
3. Academic Advisors expose students to the basic infrastructures in the University (Library and school clinic), referring them to the appropriate personnel and guides them on how to appropriately utilize school facilities which will make the school environment suitable for learning.
4. Both male and female academic advisors are easily accessible and allow students to easily interact and relate personal issues to them.

Recommendations

1. With the support of past research and the results from this study, institutions should improve their current advising systems to provide students with the advising they need and deserve to be satisfied with their campus experience.
2. Academic advisors should be encouraged by the school management through allowances, giving an award and appreciation letter to the best academic adviser of the year.
3. School management should organize workshops, seminars and conferences on the issues related to the academic advisers at the tertiary institutions.
4. Academic Advisors should be good listeners, patient with students, and give students all necessary assistance they may require. They must help students increase their work rate and give them accurate information, thereby achieving academic success. In addition, academic advisors should expose students to the basic infrastructures in the university (Library, school clinic), referring them to the appropriate personnel and guides on how to appropriately utilize school facilities which will make the school environment suitable for learning.
5. Both male and female academic advisors should be allocated to each academic level

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