

**ACADEMIC MENTORING AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS IN  
FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, AKURE, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*It seems that Academic Staff (AS) of the federal university is not committed to the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) because the usual penchant for core duty appears to be no longer in existence especially where some members of AS have to engage in other non-academic activities in order to meet up their needs. The IE may be jeopardized when AS are not performing their primary assignments as expected. In Nigerian universities, AS appear to pay little attention to teaching effectiveness due to high priority place on research publication for promotion and grants. Therefore, this study examined the influence of academic mentoring on IE in Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), Nigeria. The study employed descriptive survey research design, while population consisted of 800 AS and 4, 533 final year students across FUTA, Nigeria. Accidental sampling technique was used to select 40 lecturers, while two of the students being taught by each lecturer were selected using simple random sampling technique totalling 80 students. Data were collected using Institutional Effectiveness Questionnaire (IEQ) and Academic Mentoring Questionnaire (AMQ). Reliability coefficient of 0.79 and 0.87 were found respectively using Cronbach Alpha method of testing reliability. Descriptive statistics was used in answering research questions while, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was employed to test hypothesis. The study revealed that level of IE was extremely high ( $\bar{x}=3.08$ ) and state of mentoring junior AS was equally relatively high in FUTA ( $\bar{x}=2.93$ ). There was significant positive relationship between mentoring of junior AS and IE in FUTA, Nigeria ( $r = (0.167), 0.025, P<.05$ ). University management should take the issues of mentoring seriously to help in facilitating effective teaching*

*and delivery of knowledge. All hands must likewise be put on deck to ensure that academic mentorship are encouraged and improved among the academic staff for institutional effectiveness.*

**Keywords:** Academic Mentoring, Teaching, Academic Staff, Institutional Effectiveness

### **Introduction**

Institutional effectiveness is the level to which Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is meeting its stated vision and mission. It is the responsibility of each institution to ensure that vision and mission statements are achieved. The effectiveness of HEIs captures effective teaching, quality research being conducted and published in a reputable journal as well as impactful community services. Hence, HEIs especially universities discover how effective they are by evaluating their teaching, research and community service. To achieve institutional effectiveness in Nigerian universities, it is expected from academic leaders (vice chancellors, deans of faculties, heads of departments, directors among others.) to ensure that effective teaching, quality research and impactful community service is attained. However, this paper will use teaching as an indicator for institutional effectiveness.

Teaching is the process of impacting knowledge through direct and indirect contacts with students. This direct contact could be face to face while indirect contact could be on-line platforms. The online platforms include Google classroom, Zoom, Class Dojo, among others. Teaching is the main academic activities and primary responsibility which academic staff of university need to perform in order to produce candidates who will be worthy in character and sound judgment in the society. This task demands university academic staff to be innovative, creative, market driven and thoughtful at all university levels. In order to guarantee institutional effectiveness, highly qualified and competent teachers or lecturers are expected to be employed. However, university management is also expected to provide conducive environment for effective teaching and learning to take place. As a matter of fact, the duties of preserving, propagating, propounding and promoting knowledge fall precisely on the HEIs (Babalola, 2008).

Bright students will fail to achieve their life ambitions without effective teaching in the university system, likewise students who are

poorly taught may not be employable in the labour market. Onuocha and Ewuzie (2012) noted that labour employers usually lament about the poor training and skills exhibited by products of Nigerian universities, which do tarnish the image of their institutions and many at times, call to questioning the quality of certificates issued to such students. Pitan and Adedeji (2014) also affirmed that the products of Nigerian universities have been reported to be poorly prepared for work. The performance of these products seems to be connected to the quality of knowledge imparted on the students by the lecturers who taught them in their various universities.

However, personal observations have shown that academic staff of the Nigerian universities seem not to be committed to effective teaching anymore because the usual penchant for teaching appears to be declining on daily basis. This may be due to poor condition of service of the lecturers among others. When this happens, institutional effectiveness may be jeopardized.

Akinnaso (2011) was of the opinion that, the products of universities are understandably deficient". In Nigerian universities, academic staff appear to pay little attention to effective teaching but place more emphasis on the publications of academic papers which is a major criteria for their promotion rather than impactful teaching in the classroom. That is why their outputs are not only unproductive but also grammatically offensive. The expectation of stakeholders is that, with huge amount of money invested in university education, products of university should be able to communicate effectively and make meaningful impact in the society.

Trower and Chait (2000) conducted study in five universities in United States of America (USA). They found a significant relationship between teaching and learning and university system effectiveness. In another related study, Bolman and Deal (2003) showed that teaching and learning in various universities significantly determined university system effectiveness. Similarly, Stamp (2005) affirmed that many of the South African universities are greatly devoted to quality teaching as an index to guarantee institutional effectiveness. Hence, university effective may not be totally divorced from effective teaching and learning.

However, university may not achieve effectiveness due to lack of proper academic mentoring of young academic staff. Mentoring

describes a form of association between the protégé and the mentor. Academic mentoring defines as connection in which an experienced lecturers in teaching profession willingly teaching, supporting, and encouraging another for maintaining and improving teaching effectiveness in the HEIs. Bankole (2012) stated that academic mentoring is a process of giving support to people for proper management of teaching in order to improve their skills, performance and potentials in the classroom setting. The sole purpose of academic mentoring is to develop and groom the next generation of academic staff for effective teaching in the university system. The ultimate goal of mentoring nowadays has moved to consider on assisting somebody gaining new abilities and insights (Emelo, 2011). Junior academic staff usually tap teaching experience, pedagogical and knowledge from very knowledgeable, competent and experienced senior ones, who have been in university system for so many years. These experienced ones are expected to give adequate mentoring to young ones who are just coming up the ladder for effective teaching. The whole basis of this starts with the real initiation of the new academic staff to academics as graduate assistants, assistant lecturers or even lecturer I and lecturer II. Initiating new academic staff into teaching profession gives them a head start and makes them fit into the university system. In fact, mentees are expected to be well grounded by the senior fellows in the core values of the institution, in the area of teaching and necessary pedagogical skills so that young academic staff can make meaningful teaching in the system (Ogunraku, 2016). Hence, there is a need to mentor individual young lecturer in teaching pedagogy so as to inculcate in them the ability to deliver effectively in the lecture room. Aside this, it could be that senior academic staff would observe the classes of the young academic without breathing down their necks to ascertain that they teach very well.

Hence, there is a need for mentorship in teaching methodology so as to inculcate the ability to carry out effective teaching in the mentees. This would be beneficial to both the academics and the universities at large. Abiodun-Oyebanji (2016) expressed that a mentor is regarded as an elderly experienced university lecturer whose experiences have spanned through different status to the level of an associate professor or a professor. He/she also takes care of new entrants into academic as lecturers, whose experiences have not really

matured from the level of teaching assistant to lecturer one. Academic mentoring will make new lecturers to become more experienced and well-grounded in all areas that would engender and facilitate the quality delivery of teaching which may in turn lead to better students' academic performance. The academic and professional qualifications possessed by these new lecturers seem not to prepare them enough for effective teaching in the lecture room. Hence, the need for proper academic mentoring of these new lecturers cannot therefore be over flogged for institutional effectiveness.

Similarly, Adeogun (2006) explained that any staff who does not exhibit to uninterrupted training and retraining in the current techniques and new findings in his or her area of specialization will soon become obsolete to the university system. There is a growing assumption that many young academic staff is not exposed to new teaching pedagogy, ideas and facts in many Nigerian universities, due to non-mentoring of these young ones and lack of training by senior fellows. This then calls for aggressive academic mentoring of young academic staff if effective teaching in Nigeria universities is to be achieved. The purpose of academic mentoring is to achieve institutional effectiveness and academic career of mentee. When a mentor and mentee is agreeable, then a relationship of trust can be built and institutional effectiveness is surely achievable but when the two are mismatched, the outcomes are usually catastrophic and pointed out as negative mentoring and could lead to institutional ineffectiveness (Uchenna and Nkechi, 2019).

Scholars have extensively discussed the importance of mentoring academic staff in higher institution of learning and business organisations. However, there has been insufficient information on the influence of academic mentoring on institutional effectiveness especially in Federal University of Technology (FUTA). Previous studies (Ofobruku and Nwakoby, 2015; Mundia, and Iravo; 2014; Oladipo, Adebakin and Iranloye,2016) have equally focused on mentoring in relation to employee's performance, administrators' succession, and employee performance without considering institutional effectiveness. Against this background this study investigated the influence of academic mentoring on institutional effectiveness in FUTA, Nigeria.

**Statement of the Problem**

Globally, every university is established to achieve an objective or pre-determined goals and the Federal University of Technology Akure, Nigeria is no exception. In this era of globalization, the university system is expected to be accountable in their services, most especially in terms of the graduates they produced. As such, it becomes pertinent to determine how such predetermined goals of the university system can be achieved. It appears that institutional effectiveness in Nigerian federal universities especially Federal University of Technology Akure is hindered by poor academic mentoring.

Scholars have considered mentoring in isolation and in relating to business performance, employee performance, succession of administrators and the challenge of leadership in Africa, among others. However, none of these studies is able to focus on academic mentoring and institutional effectiveness. It is against this background that a study on the influence of academic mentoring on institutional effectiveness in Federal University of Technology Akure is pertinent.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this paper was to investigate the influence of academic mentoring on institutional effectiveness in FUTA, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to examine the level of institutional effectiveness and state of academic mentoring in FUTA, Nigeria.

**Research Questions**

The paper answered the following research questions:

- i. What is the level of institutional effectiveness in FUTA, Nigeria?
- ii. What is state of mentoring young academic staff in FUTA, Nigeria?

**Hypothesis**

An hypothesis was formulated and tested in this paper

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between academic mentoring and institutional effectiveness in FUTA, Nigeria?

**Literature Review**

In the context of organisation, mentoring is seemed as integral to learning in the workplace, to receive career help and psychosocial support for development of individual and organization as a whole

(Cummings and Worley, 2009). However, in the context of university, academic mentoring is a process of using someone with more experienced and often older in teaching profession to provide academic guidance and support to a mentee, that is junior person with less experience in academic. This will help in enhancing teaching effectiveness of an individual in the university. Mathew (2003) observed that academic mentoring provides an ongoing opportunity for more experienced academics in order to compare with their counterpart in developed countries. Hence, academic mentoring is an important tool in the nurturing of junior scholars in the university system.

Academic mentoring on the other hand, involves ability of the senior academic staff to encourage and guide young ones in their teaching profession. Opportunities for mentoring in teaching can include peer new members of academic staff with senior lecturer or professor in teaching or co-teaching a class. This will help mentees to function effectively in the lecture room when they are alone in the midst of students. It also helps them to familiarize with new methods, techniques and strategies of teaching. Eytayo, Bamidele and Aremu (2015) stated that mentoring is not a new idea among academic staff but it has recently been revived in Nigerian universities. The researchers added that mentoring in Nigerian universities is meant for raising academic standards and competing favourably with their counterparts in the rest of the developed countries. Universities administrator and management are therefore advised to create opportunities for professional guidance and development of their academic staff in order to achieve institutional effectiveness. One way to attain institutional effectiveness is via academic mentoring. Any university that fails to embrace academic mentoring as a means to sustain teaching effectiveness such a university may no longer relevance in the society and world in general.

Mundia and Iravo (2014) maintained that mentorship program is very important in enhancing employee performance through skills enhancement, career development guidance and knowledge transfer. Ofobruku and Nwakoby (2015) maintained that mentoring had positive effects on employees' performance. Oladipo, Adebakin and Iranloye (2016), also affirmed that mentoring had significant contribution to administrators' succession planning. In a study revealed by Ofovwe and

Agbontaen-Eghafona (2011) on mentors and mentoring amongst Nigerian tertiary institutions academic staff; they found that senior fellows were satisfied with the tenets of mentoring. The researchers added that, mentoring young ones are likely to improve institutional effectiveness. Similarly, Uchenna and Nkechi (2019) found out that there is a positive and significant relationship between knowledge transfer mentoring and career growth of junior lecturers. The researchers also indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between psychosocial functions of a mentor and career adjustment of junior lecturers.

Agbionu, Emejulu and Egolum (2015) employed survey design to study mentorship and business performance among Igbo entrepreneurs in Nigeria. The results indicated a moderately negative relationship between mentorship and performance of entrepreneurs in Awka metropolis of Anambra State, Nigeria. The finding of the study also indicated that entrepreneurs are no longer receiving positive mentorship. Anho (2011); Onuocha and Ewuzie (2012); and Francis (2015) affirmed that, there is a loss of trust by the employers of university due to poor teaching of many unmentored academic staff.

Okurame (2008) used qualitative and quantitative to study mentoring in the Nigerian academia with 48 academic staff in faculty of social science. The mission of the study was to use mentoring programmes to develop academic staff skill. The researcher found that few existing mentoring relationships are not formal. This was developed on the basis of closeness of research interests, delegation of work activity by mentor to mentee, delegation of conference and workshop attendance by mentor to mentee, inclusion of mentees in research projects and supervision of the mentees. Finding also indicated that mentors have supported their mentees in the area of research publication, financial support and counselling as well as international research networks. The unfeeling attitude of a lower ranking individual in teaching profession, inadequate funding, formal mentor/protégé structures and administrative duties' pressure were frequently showed as obstacles to mentoring. However, this study does not adopt any research design and sample size for this study is too small to generalize the findings. Likewise, the study fails to incorporate teaching into its findings. That is, the researcher does not establish relationship between mentor and mentee in the area of teaching.



Therefore, this current paper will fill this gap by adopting descriptive survey research design and increasing sample size. It is also hoped that the paper will investigate the relationship between academic mentoring and teaching effectiveness in Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria. This is another gap that the study wants to fill.

### **Methodology**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study while 800 academic staff and 4, 533 final year students constituted the population of the study. Accidental sampling technique was employed to select 40 academic staff, while two of the students being taught by each member of academic staff were purposively selected using simple random sampling technique for the study. This made up of 80 final year students. These students are expected to have spent at least six semesters with their lecturers and know their teaching effectiveness in the lecture room. So they are expected to assess their lecturers' teaching effectiveness within the period they spend with them.

Institutional Effectiveness Questionnaire (IEQ) and Academic Mentoring Questionnaire (AMQ) were used and developed for data collection. The IEQ was used for students with 10 items using 5-point Likert-type rating scale ranging from Excellent (E), Very Good (VG), Good (G), Fair (F) and Poor (P) while AMQ was employed to collect data from academic staff with 7 items. It is formatted on a 5-point Likert-type rating scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SA). The two instruments were face and content validated by experts in the Educational Management, and Measurement and Evaluation in University of Ibadan. The instruments were subjected to internal consistency reliability through Cronbach's Alpha method and a reliability coefficient of 0.79 and 0.87 were found for the students and academic staff respectively. Descriptive statistics of simple percentages, frequency counts was employed in answering research questions raised while hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the level of institutional effectiveness in FUTA, Nigeria?

**Table 1: Level of Institutional Effectiveness**

S/N	Statements	E	VG	G	F	P	MEAN( $\bar{X}$ )	Std D
1	Level of confidence	14 (17.5)	22 (27.5)	36 (45.0)	8 (10.0)	---- (0)	3.53	0.900
2	Providing help to students	10 (12.5)	24 (30.0)	42 (52.5)	2 (2.5)	----- (0)	3.54	0.751
3	Explains difficult concepts in the class	20 (25.0)	24 (30.0)	22 (27.5)	14 (17.3)	----- (0)	3.63	1.048
4	Friendliness with students	14 (17.5)	34 (42.5)	30 (37.5)	2 (2.5)	----- (0)	3.75	0.771
5	Mastery of content	16 (20.0)	24 (30.0)	28 (35.0)	12 (15.0)	----- (0)	3.55	0.980
6	Fairness in dealing with students	22 (27.5)	30 (37.5)	22 (27.5)	6 (7.5)	----- (0)	3.41	1.062
7	Regularity of assignment	12 (15.0)	26 (32.5)	26 (32.5)	10 (12.5)	4 (5.0)	3.77	1.031
8	Attentiveness to students' comments	24 (30.0)	22 (27.5)	22 (27.5)	10 (12.5)	----- (0)	3.36	1.151
9	Clarity of expression	12 (15.0)	30 (37.5)	14 (17.5)	18 (22.5)	4 (5.0)	3.67	1.077
10	Timely completion of course outline	20 (25.0)	26 (32.5)	20 (25.0)	10 (12.5)	2 (2.5)	3.45	1.124
<b>Weighted Average</b>							<b>3.57 (71.4)</b>	

Table 1 presented the result of institutional effectiveness of academic staff in the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria as perceived by their students. All the statements were rated to be good

with highest response. For instance, level of confidence of their lecturers (mean = 3.53); providing help to students (mean = 3.54); explains difficult concepts in the class (mean = 3.63); friendliness with students (mean = 3.75); mastery of content (mean = 3.55); fairness in dealing with students (mean = 3.41); regularity of assignment (mean = 3.77); attentiveness to students' comments (mean = 3.36); about 60% of the respondents agreed that clarity of expression (mean = 3.67) and 75.4% of the respondents agreed that timely completion of course outline (mean = 3.45). The cluster mean of items 1 to 10 was accepted as all rated above 2.50 cut off point and the weighted average is 3.08 which can be interpreted as 71.4%. This shows that the level of teaching effectiveness in Federal University of Technology, Akure was extremely high. This implies that academic staff were rated as being excellent by their students as far as teaching effectiveness is concerned in the university. The finding is in line with the result of Bolman and Deal (2003) who found that teaching and learning in America universities significantly determined university effectiveness. The finding of this study is also similar to the work of Stamp (2005) that most South Africa universities are greatly dedicated to quality teaching as a means of ensuring an institutional effectiveness.

However, this result is contrary to the finding of Saint, Hartnett and Swassner (2003) who found that performance of Nigerian universities is lowly in term of teaching and learning. The finding was against the result of Anho (2011); Onuocha and Ewuzie (2012); and Francis (2015) who affirmed that, there is loss of trust by the employers of university due to poor teaching of academic staff in Nigerian universities.

**Research Question 2:** What is state of mentoring young academic staff in the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria?

**Table 2: State of Mentoring Young Academic Staff**

S/N	Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD	MEAN ( $\bar{X}$ )	Std D
1	Senior lecturer/Professor mentors Junior lecturer for effective teaching	11 (13.8)	2 (2.5)	4 (5.0)	23 (28.0)	---- (0)	2.68	0.971
2	I have adequate time for guidance and mentoring junior academic staff	30 (37.5)	1 (1.3)	3 (3.8)	6 (7.5)	---- (0)	3.03	0.698
3	Quality teaching is attained while mentoring others.	25 (31.3)	2 (2.5)	2 (2.5)	11 (13.8)	---- (0)	2.88	0.723
4	Creating consultation time for mentee	22 (27.5)	4 (5.0)	5 (6.3)	9 (11.3)	---- (0)	3.13	0.911
5	There is joint teaching with mentee	20 (25.0)	6 (7.5)	2 (2.5)	12 (15.0)	---- (0)	2.95	0.815
6	Facilitating teaching on time with mentee	26 (32.5)	3 (3.8)	3 (3.8)	8 (10.0)	---- (0)	3.03	0.768
7	Assisting my mentee to draw up content to teach	11 (13.8)	22 (27.5)	6 (7.5)	1 (1.3)	4 (5.0)	2.83	0.712
<b>Weighted Average</b>					<b>2.93 (58.7%)</b>			

Table 2 revealed that 28.0% of the respondents disagreed that senior lecturer/professor mentors junior lecturer for effective teaching ( $\bar{X}$  =2.68). However, 38.8% of the respondents agreed that they have adequate time for guidance and mentoring junior academic staff ( $\bar{X}$  =3.03) and 33.8 % agreed that quality teaching is attained while mentoring others ( $\bar{X}$  =2.88). The result also revealed that 32.5% of the academic staff sampled agreed that creating consultation time for mentee ( $\bar{X}$  =3.13) and 32.5% of the academic staff selected agreed that there is joint teaching with mentee ( $\bar{X}$  =2.95). The table equally revealed that 36.3% of the respondents agreed that facilitating teaching on time with mentee ( $\bar{X}$  =3.03) and 41.3% of the sampled academic

staff agreed that assisting their mentees to draw up content to teach ( $\bar{X} = 2.83$ ). Based on the result from the table, the cluster mean of items 1 to 7 was accepted as all rated above 2.50 cut off point while the weighted average point is 2.93 which can be interpreted as 58.7%. The result shows that state of mentoring young academic staff in FUTA, Nigeria was relatively high. This implies that there is academic mentoring for most of young academic staff in the university.

The findings of this study is consistent with the view of Mathew (2003) who stated that mentoring provides an ongoing opportunity for more experienced academics to contribute to the goal attainment. The researcher added that mentoring is an important ingredient in the nurturing of junior scholars and enhancing research excellence in the universities. Similarly, the result agreed with the findings of Mundia and Iravo (2014) who established that mentorship programme play crucial role in performance of employee and is enhanced through skills enhancement, career development guidance and knowledge transfer. The result is also in line with the finding of Ofobruku and Nwakoby (2015) who submitted that mentoring had positive effects on performance of employees.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no relationship between academic mentoring and institutional effectiveness in Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria?

**Table 3: Relationship between Academic Mentoring and Institutional Effectiveness**

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	r	P	Remarks
Academic Mentoring	40	20.50	2.970	0.167	0.025	Significant
Institutional Effectiveness	80	25.10	5.999			

( $P < .05$ )

The results in table 3 indicated correlation between academic mentoring and teaching effectiveness. From the table, there was positive and moderate significant relationship between academic

mentoring and teaching effectiveness,  $r = (0.167)$ ,  $0.025$ ,  $P < 0.05$ . Going by this hypothesis which states that "there is no relationship between academic mentoring and institutional effectiveness in the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria" was therefore rejected. Significant positive relationship was found between academic mentoring and institutional effectiveness.

The finding of this study agreed with submission of Oladipo, Adebakin Iranloye (2016) who found that mentoring had significant relationship with succession planning of administrators in public and private secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. The finding is also consistent with the result of Uchenna and Nkechi (2019) found out that positive and significant relationship exists between knowledge transfer mentoring and career growth of junior lecturers. The study also indicated that positive and significant relationship exists between psychosocial functions of a mentor and career adjustment of junior lecturers. However, the result of this study is contrary to the findings of Agbionu, Emejulu and Egolum (2015) who indicated a moderately negative relationship between mentorship and performance of entrepreneurs in Awka metropolis of Anambra State. The finding of the study also indicated that entrepreneurs are no longer receiving positive mentorship.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, the study arrived at the following conclusion. The study provided understanding into the importance of academic mentoring in the university setting. The study further established that mentoring young academic staff is relatively high and level of institutional effectiveness is extremely high. This implies that academic mentoring exists and young lecturers enjoy academic mentorship. It also means that academic staffs of the university teach students very well. The study equally concluded that academic mentoring improves teaching effectiveness in the same institution. This implies that improvement of academic mentoring is necessary to enhance institutional effectiveness in Federal University of Technology Akure, Nigeria.

### Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, recommendations were made:

University management should take the issues of academic mentoring seriously so as to help in facilitating effective teaching and delivery of knowledge. All hands must be put on deck to ensure that academic mentorship are encouraged and improved upon among the academic staff for effective teaching in the university. For institutional effectiveness, senior lecturers and professors in the university system should embrace academic mentoring through knowledge transfer, career support and co-teaching among others.

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