

“My Academic Life is Screaming for Help!”

A Wake-up Call by a Nigerian Undergraduate
for Enhanced Academic Advising
in the Country’s Higher Education Institutions



National Open
University of Nigeria



“My Academic Life is Screaming for Help!”

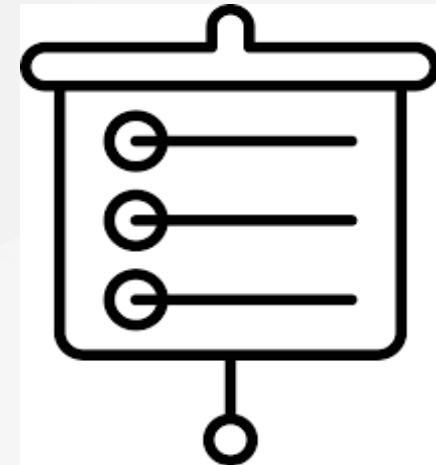
A Wake-up Call by a Nigerian Undergraduate for Enhanced Academic Advising in the Country’s Higher Education Institutions

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Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Basics of Academic Advising
- Academic Advising in Nigeria
- Academic Advising at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria
- Background to the Study
- Aim & Objectives
- Methods
- Results
- Way Forward
- Conclusion



Warm Greetings from Nigeria



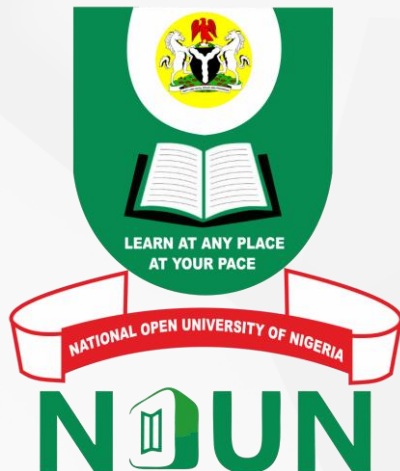
- **170 universities in Nigeria**, made up of 43 Federal (including ABU & NOUN) 48 State 79 Private (Source: NUC, 2023)

- **ABU @ 62** is a 1st generation Nigerian university - arguably, the largest, most influential and diverse face-to-face university in Nigeria; yet typical - due to oversight regulatory role of the NUC.



- **NOUN @ 21** is at least 2-3 times the size of ABU in student population and until last year, was the only 100% open and distance learning (ODL) university in Nigeria although 12 other universities, have approvals to run some of their programmes via ODL.

- **NUC**=National Universities Commission - a Fed. Govt. Agency mandated to regulate, & catalyse positive change + innovation for delivery of quality university education in Nigeria.





- Africa in relation to the rest of the world



- Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa



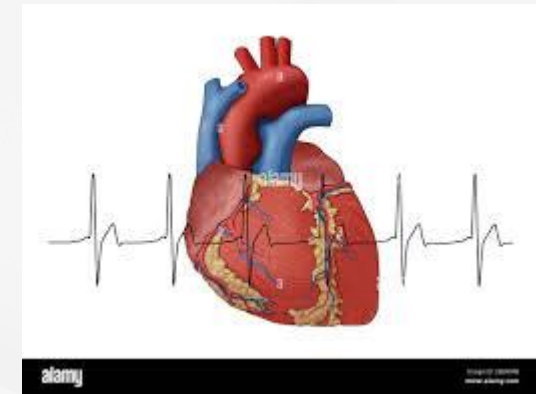
- Red double arrow head shows Abuja, FCT, Nigeria where presenter currently live/work & Zaria, KD, Nigeria (Study Site) where she lived/worked

Nigeria: Giant & Heartbeat of Africa

- “One out of every four Africans and one out of every five persons of African origin is a Nigerian.”
- “One out of every two West Africans is a Nigerian.”
- “If it is well with Academic Advising in Nigeria, it will be well with Academic Advising in LMICs”

Feature	Africa	Nigeria
Landmass	30.37 mKm ²	923,768 Km ² (3.04%)
Population in 2021	1,373,486,524	211,400,708 (15.39%)

Country	Ranking	GDP (\$Billion)
Nigeria	1 st	446.543
South Africa	2 nd	358.839
Egypt	3 rd	302.256
Algeria	4 th	172.781
Morocco	5 th	119.040
Kenya	6 th	99.246



HEIs in Nigeria & Selected Countries

Category of HEI	Nigeria	South Africa	UK	USA
World's Largest Country Ranking	32 nd	25 th	80 th	4 th
Universities	170	26*	166	> 4,000
Polytechnics**	179	2	36	
Colleges (of Educ.)	163	> 300	270	5,411 [#]
Total HEIs	512	> 328	472	> 9,411
Land Mass (Km²) (%)##	923,768 (0.6%)	1,220,000 (0.8%)	244,376 (0.2%)	9,834,000 (6.1%)
Population (2023)	226.2m	60,414,495	67,736,802	334,233,854

*Public universities; **447 Polytechnics worldwide??

[#]Polytechnic colleges; ^{##}% of World Land Mass

Nigeria is located in West Africa and is the most populous country in Africa

Advising, an international high impact practice



Responsibilities of Advisers & Advisees

- Space, creativity & boundaries
- Modelling the HEI
- Authenticity & confidentiality
- Advisee ownership
- Advisee abilities & interests
- Engagement
- Timeliness
- Encouragement
- Planning
- Monitoring & evaluation
- Referrals
- Mentorship
- Career opportunities
- Specific student populations
- Advocacy

Compiled by the researcher from various sources: Higgins (2017), Wesley College (2019) and TCNJ (2019)

- Open communication
- Be prepared
- Be knowledgeable
- Prompt attendance
- Planning
- Seek help
- Documentation
- Respect & professionalism
- Swot analysis
- Decision-making
- Take responsibility

Six Rudiments of Academic Advising



1. Review Advisee's Academic Career Plan
2. Parent & Teacher Conversations
3. Reflect on your vision & post-HS goals
4. Review Specialty Program & Advanced Course Offerings
5. Review Graduation Requirements
6. Balance Commitments, Academics, and Personal Wellness

Academic Advising in Nigeria & Selected Countries

Academic Advisor

Johns Hopkins University
Maryland, United States

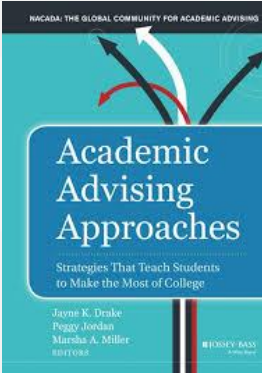
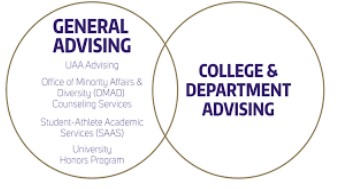


Why have Academic Advising?



ELETSA
Academic Advising
South Africa

THE IMPORTANCE
OF ACADEMIC
ADVISING IN
HIGHER EDUCATION



Advising, an international high impact practice

2006	2010	2017/2018	2021/2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catalyst: Student engagement – a national project (SASSE) Identification of high impact practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First University in SA joined NACADA 2 institutions taking the leap (1st academic advising initiatives) Are we killing students with kindness? Credit loading per student (individualized support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National support through Government (University Collaborative Grant) Professionalization of Academic Advising (accredited short learning programs) 7 institutions intentionally establishing advising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 institutions focused on intentionally strengthening academic advising 273 academic advisors trained via the AAPD SLP



Director of Academic Advising

Nebraska Wesleyan University
5000 Saint Paul Avenue, Lincoln, NE, USA

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

Academic Advising & Retention

Academic advising is a unique resource for students, aimed at ensuring each individual's academic path has both direction and purpose. We provide support for students throughout their programs, guiding them in making sound academic choices that reflect their educational and professional goals.

Our advising team is responsible for assisting students in shaping their academic experiences and developing goals and objectives to ultimately achieve their aspirations in life. This office also provides support and direction to students who experience academic difficulty during their studies and encourages those who perform well to continue to do so.



Academic Advising in Nigeria: Samples

- GOLD STANDARD
- PRIVATE UNIVERSITY
- STATE UNIVERSITY
- ONLINE UNIVERSITY
- FEDERAL UNIVERSITY / STUDY SITE
- American University of Nigeria (AUN)
- Veritas University, Abuja (VUNA)
- Yusuf Sule Maitama University, Kano (YUMSUK)
- Atlantic International University (AIU)
- Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria

Academic Advising in Nigeria: Summary

- The literature on academic advising in Nigerian HEIs, including universities is very sparse, although some information is available. As may be rightly expected, academic advising which traditionally, had been an integral part of American universities worldwide, was an important programme of the American University of Nigeria (AUN) in Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria (AUN, 2019). Academic advising was also observed to be a more common feature of such private universities as Veritas University Abuja (VUNA, 2019), and online universities as Atlantic International University (AIU, 2020), than public universities. However, some public universities such as Yusuf Maitama Sule University Kano (YUMSUK, 2019) have clear academic advising programmes in place. In reviewing academic advising in universities in Nigeria, the approach this researcher had chosen to adopt, was to take a look at academic advising at representative universities, namely: AUN (the Nigerian gold standard with respect to academic advising), VUNA (a private university), YUMSUK (a public, state, new generation university), AIU (an online university), and finally, ABU (a public, federal, first generation university, which was also this study site). Mostly, excerpts from the universities' websites told their individual academic advising stories, each of which is a far cry from good practices.

Academic Advising at ABU: 1 of 7

- On its website for example, only a relatively small presence was in existence, and this was courtesy of the **Faculty of Agriculture** (FOA). Titled: 'Academic Advisers to Students', the post which did not address the responsibilities of advisees at all, read as follows (ABU, 2019).
- By way of tradition and practice, all academic staff in the Faculty of Agriculture are available to students for consultation on matters which border on their studentship. Consequently, every student is assigned to an academic staff as an advisee.
- The academic advisers' responsibilities are as follows:
 - To help students select relevant courses, or suggest what courses the students should register in a particular semester.
 - To help put the students through, regarding academic problems, interests and progress.
 - To help the students on how to derive maximum benefits from his/her educational, social and vocational experience.

Academic Advising at ABU: 2 of 7

- Related links pointed to the University's counselling unit which official name was '**University Counselling and Human Development Centre**' (and which will henceforth be referred to, by its abbreviation, UCHDC; or simply as, Counselling Centre).
- The Counselling Centre offers specialized professional services to students on matters beyond the scope of the students' academic advisers, and had three functions which were:
 - Rehabilitative Function: helped students who were presently experiencing difficulties.
 - Preventive Function: anticipated, circumvented and forestalled difficulties which may arise in future.
 - Growth Function: helped the student derive maximum benefit from his/her educational, social and vocational experiences to enable him/her achieve his/her potentials to the fullest.
- The services of the Counselling Centre included the following: Career Talks, Career Library, Recruitment Interview, Scholarship and Bursary, and Part-Time Work. Others were Accommodation on Health Ground, Financial Management, Registration of International Students, Practicum for Postgraduate students in Guidance and Counselling, Research and Orientation.

Academic Advising at ABU: 3 of 7

- **2000**: **National Association of Women Academics (NAWACS) & Students Affairs Division (SAD)** joint AAS seminar. However, the NAWACS-SAD joint programme to resuscitate the AAS University-wide, confirmed that academic advising had been ongoing, to the point where by 2000, it was obviously experiencing sufficient malaise that warranted intervention for its resuscitation. Thus as at 2019, while academic advising was practised in some places like FOA and FPS, in other places like Department of Economics, it was virtually non-existent.
- **2019**: Kwanashie and Kwanashie (2019), revealed the absence of well structured and functional academic advising programmes at departmental and faculty levels; and at SAD and DAPM in the Senate (Administrative) Building. During a focus group discussion that cut across all levels among students of the Department of Economics, it was observed that informal academic advising existed for some of the students with the adviser-advisee relationships set up at the instances of the individual lecturers, individual students, and in some cases, by their parents/guardians.

Academic Advising at ABU: 4 of 7

Academic Adviser

Prof. Mrs. HELEN O. KWANASHIE, PhD

Lecturer's Name

is available to advise students on the days and at the times pasted below this sticker; or by appointment.

Courtesy of: National Association of Women Academics and Students Affairs Division



Academic Advising at ABU: 5 of 7

- As expected, academic advising at **ABU's Distance Learning Centre (DLC)** was mostly carried out virtually, via mobile phone calls, short message service (sms), and emails, except at Abuja, where there were established physical contacts between students and the Centre's Counsellor (Kantiok, 2020-personal communication). Like elsewhere, and regardless of whether academic advising was virtual or face-to-face, the DLC's academic advising main objectives were for the advisers to help students in their choice of courses, undergo career counselling while also addressing personal-social issues that would otherwise interfere with students' academic performance, including conclusion of their programmes of study. While the Abuja-based Counsellor did full time academic advising (with no teaching at all), academic advising was provided at Zaria, by teaching staff, particularly professors who were expected to undertake academic advising, as was expected of teaching staff at ABU's face-to-face programmes such as occurs in FPS (Kantiok, 2020-personal communication).
- These efforts were in the main, grossly inadequate.

Academic Advising at ABU: 6 of 7

- In **Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences (FPS)**, 200 Level students were assigned by the ADO to academic staff (from Assistant Lecturers to Professors), with the aim of establishing adviser-advisee relationships intended to last throughout the duration of the students' studies in the Faculty. Like existed across the University, nobody seemed to know either from records or oral tradition, when this practice started. However, with time, a number of changes had been put in place to improve the AAS in FPS, the most important of which was the Student Advisory Form (SAF) of which the improved version is shown in a subsequent slide.
- From the foregoing, it may be concluded that the SAF is at the core of AAS in FPS, because students were expected to submit it (signed by their advisers), along with their course registration forms in order to complete their semester/sessional registration exercise. This practice was similar to what obtained elsewhere including at Veritas University (VUNA, 2019) as earlier alluded to. Sadly, too often, much of the AAS in FPS begins and ends with the signing and submission of this form, resulting in dire consequences for some students' seamless progression and successful completion of the BPharm programme in the Faculty - thus setting the stage for this research.

Academic Advising at ABU: 7 of 7

FACULTY OF PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA
(OFFICE OF THE DEAN)
STUDENT'S ADVISORY FORM

Session:

Name of Student:

Registration Number:

Level:

CGPA:

Tel. No: Email Address:

Parents/Guardian Name:

Address:

Email Address:

Tel. No:

NUMBER OF COURSES AND TOTAL CREDIT UNIT REGISTERED

	First Semester	Second Semester
Number of Courses Registered		
Total Credit Units Registered		

Adviser's Comment:

.....

Name of Adviser:

Adviser Phone Number & E-mail Address:

.....
Adviser's Signature & Date

.....
Student's Signature & Date

Background to the Study

- Worldwide, academic advising programmes whereby lecturers (faculty) serve as advisers (advisors) to assigned students (the advisees), primarily on academic matters, throughout the latter's studies, is considered an essential students support service.
- At Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, Nigeria, where the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences (FPS) is one of 16 degree-awarding faculties, Adviser-Advisee Scheme (AAS) is the common designation for its academic advising programme.

Aim & Objectives

- The overall aim of this study was to ascertain the students' and lecturers' perspectives for improving the AAS in FPS, ABU, Zaria, Nigeria.
- The specific objectives were as follows:
 1. To identify the challenges encountered by student-advisees and their lecturer-advisers in the operation of the AAS in FPS.
 2. To determine possible solutions to the challenges identified in 1. above, which when implemented, will result in an improvement of the AAS in the Faculty.
 3. To categorise the identified challenges and proffered solutions into specific groups, namely: adviser-related, advisee-related and administrator-related, for more direct and effective interventions.

Methods

- Quantitative data was collected via questionnaires administered on SurveyMonkey™ platform and via email to:
 - randomly sampled male and female: 200L-500L students aged 21.96 ± 2.64 years, and
 - lecturers from all six departments in FPS with 14.92 ± 7.63 years teaching experience and 7.83 ± 2.98 advisees.
- Qualitative data was via 25.14 ± 7.56 minutes telephone-interviews of some purposively sampled lecturers.
- From students' and lecturers' populations of 558 and 99 respectively, 69 (12.37%) and 14 (14.14%) provided data which were triangulated for the report

SN	Category	Sub-category	No.	%
1	Level of Study	100*	0	0.00
		200	28	40.58
		300	13	18.84
		400	17	24.64
		500	11	15.94
		<i>Total</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>100.00</i>
2	Sex / Gender	Male	39	56.52
		Female	30	43.48
		<i>Total</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>100.00</i>
3	Age (years)		Years	
		Range	17-30	
		Mean	21.96	
		SD	2.64	

- **TABLE 1: Demographic characteristics of student-respondents**

- **HIGHLIGHTS**

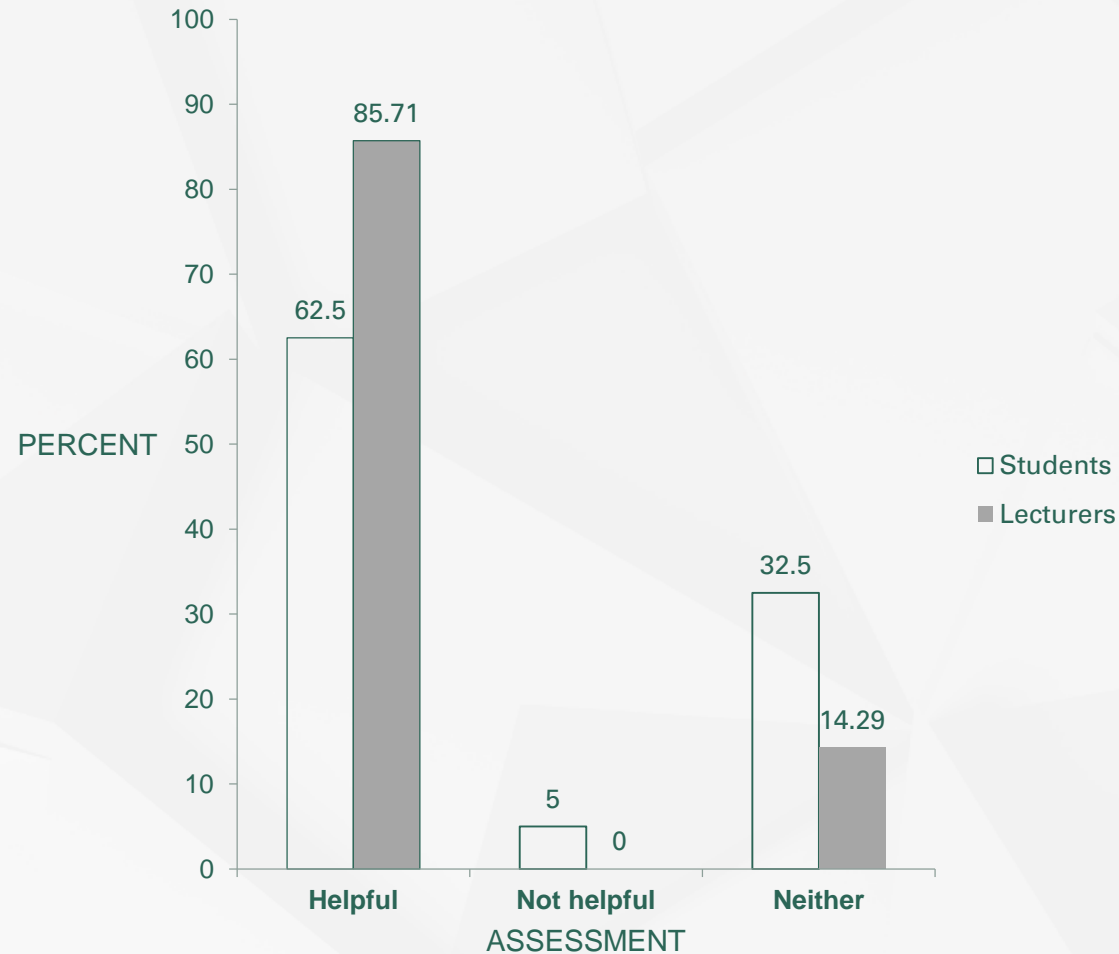
- *100 Level students were not assigned advisers, and were not included in the survey.

SN	Category	Sub-category	No.	%
1	Department in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences	Pharmacognosy & Drug Development	2	14.29
		Pharmaceutical & Medicinal Chemistry	4*	28.57
		Pharmaceutics & Industrial Pharmacy	2	14.29
		Pharmaceutical Microbiology	2	14.29
		Pharmacology & Therapeutics	2	14.29
		Clinical Pharmacy & Pharmacy Practice	2	14.29
		<i>Total</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>100.02</i>
2	Sex / Gender	Male	7	50.00
		Female	7	50.00
		<i>Total</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>100.00</i>
3	Rank	Assistant Lecturer	0	0.00
		Lecturer II	0	0.00
		Lecturer I	4	28.57
		Senior Lecturer	5	35.71
		Reader	1	7.14
		Professor	4	28.57
		<i>Total</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>99.99</i>
4	Teaching Experience		Years	
		Range	5-32	
		Mean	14.92	
		SD	7.63	
		Number		
5	Number of Advisees			
		Range	3-14	
		Mean	7.83	
		SD	2.98	

- **TABLE 2: Demographic and other characteristics of lecturer-survey respondents and key-informant in-depth interviewees**

- **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Younger lecturers = AL + LII + LI
Older lecturers = SL + RD + PR.
- *Two additional male lecturers (immediate past & current assistant deans) responsible for administration of AAS in FPS were key-informant, in-depth interviewees.



- **FIGURE 1: Assessment of the usefulness of the adviser-advisee scheme by lecturers and students in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences**

- **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Most students (62.50%) and lecturers (85.71%) found the AAS helpful.
- A significant proportion of students (32.5%) and lecturers (14.29%) were undecided whether the AAS was helpful or not helpful.

SN	Challenges (presented in alphabetical order of first word)	Students' Ranking	Lecturers' Ranking	Combined Ranking
1	Absenteeism by advisees, lack of commitment / discipline, and late presentation in crisis	7	10	10*
2	Advisees not willing to listen to advice	2	9	6
3	Advisers and advisees not committed to the advisory processes	1	6	3
4	Busy adviser and inadequate contact time between advisers and advisees	10	7	10*
5	Ineffective advisory scheme e.g. due to inadequate adviser guidance skills and inadequate advisee capacity	6	8	8#
6	Limited and/or poor communication between advisers and advisees including advisee phobia of being free with adviser	9	5	8#
7	Negative attitudes to the advisory scheme e.g. lack of adviser motivation and advisee understanding	4	3	2
8	Poor adviser-advisee relationships including abuse of the relationship by some advisees	3	1	1
9	Unavailability of advisers	8	2	5
10	Unfriendly and/or inapproachable advisers	5	4	4

- **TABLE 3: Challenges to the adviser-advisee scheme in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences identified by students and lecturers**

- **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Highly-ranked challenges highlighted in orange (shaded portions).
- The higher the ranked digit, the more important the challenge.
- *, #: Equal rankings indicated.

10 Direct Challenges Quotes by Both Students & Lecturers

BOX 2a: STUDENTS-ADVISEES

1. It's always hard to get to her.
2. Unavailability of the adviser when needed due to tight schedule.
3. I couldn't meet with him as he's on sabbatical leave.
4. It was hard to see him, a busy man.
5. Inadequate time from the adviser.
6. He is usually busy and so we hardly have time to meet physically.
7. He's not always around.
8. Sometimes, my course adviser is busy or sometimes he is on sabbatical.
9. He is not even granting me audience.
10. The lecturer is usually absent.

BOX 2b: LECTURERS-ADVISERS

1. The students only show up once a year and it is often too late then.
2. Absenteeism.
3. Lack of commitment from the students
4. Students don't show up.
5. Advisees do not come in time unless when faced with a problem.
6. Students who show up, already have challenges.
7. Late complaints.
8. They only come to you when the problem is enormous.
9. My advisees even run away when they see me coming.
10. I am the one always chasing after them... so I ask myself, why?

Direct Quotes on Poor Rapport & Communication

BOX 3:

- Lack of communication. (student-advisee)
- Lecturer is not friendly atimes. (student-advisee)
- Not friendly. (student-advisee)
- It is not easy talking to a stranger you see once in a session. (student-advisee)
- Fear, because some of my lecturers are very tough and principled. (student-advisee)
- I find it difficult to discuss with him. (student-advisee)
- Always afraid of him. (student-advisee)
- Many students don't understand the essence of the adviser-advisee system. (lecturer-adviser).

Other Challenges Identified by Both Students & Lecturers

BOX 4a: LECTURERS-ADVISERS

- I often feel like I am not getting through to them, like I lack the skills to adequately counsel them.
- Non-compliance to advice... they don't appreciate your advice.
- At times, they do not take the advice given... most especially when they are not doing too well in their studies. As an adviser, you ask them to drop a certain course so as to have better grades and improve on their performance, but they ignore you, and insist on doing what pleases them.

BOX 4b: STUDENTS-ADVISEES

Imposition of his own choice of number of courses to take.



‘Blame Game’: Discordance in Challenges Identified by Students & Lecturers

Whereas students considered **unavailable / busy lecturers** as the No. 1 challenge,

lecturers saw the No. 1 challenge to be **student absenteeism!**

- STUDENT: “Imposition of his own choice of number of courses to take.”
- LECTURER: “Non-compliance to advice... they don’t appreciate your advice.”

Challenges Identified by Students & Lecturers: References to Other Studies

BOX 5a: Najim and Rashad (1996)

“The philosophy of academic advising is based on the development and growth of the student personality through identification of his aptitudes, inclinations, psychological and health condition, the extent of his cooperation and trust in his academic advisor in order to help him face his personal and academic problems, make right decisions, determine his academic and career future on scientific basis that fulfil his ambition and help to develop his personality.”

BOX 5b: Other References

Chiemেকে and Nwelih (2008)
Sariem *et al.* (2012)
Dibia and Obi (2013)
El-Sheikh *et al.* (2019)
Mohammed (1995)

Banat (2015):

- Showed that male students suffered more from problems of academic advising, but sex differences were not looked into, in the present study.
- Indicated that college and academic year did not pose any academic advising problems.

Categorization of Challenges by Responsible Stakeholders

BOX 6a: ADMIN.-Related

- i. There was chaos at the university academic advising operation.
- ii. Accurate academic advising at the university was absent, leading to changing courses / programmes durations.
- iii. There was no way to help students with regards to postponed financial problems.
- iv. Students emphasized that registration regulations was difficult in the university.

BOX 6b: ADVISER-Related

- i. There were lacks of collective advising meetings held by the academic advisor.
- ii. There were large student numbers assigned to each academic advisor.
- iii. Academic advisors lacked the ability to ably advise students.
- iv. There were communication difficulties between the students and their academic advisors, with strong feelings of distance between them.
- v. Some students wanted to change their current academic advisors.

BOX 6c: ADVISEE-Related

- i. Inability of students to pay fees during registration period, offsetting their contact time with their supervisors.
- ii. There was ambiguity of the academic advising concept in university students minds.
- iii. Inability of students to follow the registration guidelines, and
- iv. Students having mistrust in their academic advisors.

Overcoming Challenges



SN	Solutions (presented in alphabetical order of first word)	Students' Ranking	Lecturers' Ranking	Combined Ranking
1	Advisers should be friendly to students, patient, readily approachable and accessible	10	10	10
2	Conducive and cordial relationship should exist between advisers and advisees	9	9	9
3	Frequent contact sessions between advisees and their advisers who should be more available	6	6	7*
4	Good communication between advisers and their advisees	7	5	7*
5	Guidance should extend beyond university academic life to post-graduation career, social life, etc	2	1	1
6	Monitoring and evaluation of the scheme, plus reward of deserving advisers	3	2	2
7	More time should be allocated for the advisory process and contact sessions officially timetabled	4	3	3
8	The advisory scheme to be mandatory during student orientation (and re-orientation)	5	4	5#
9	The scheme should be well established university-wide e.g. committees, logistics, compulsory implementation, early pairing, etc	8	8	8
10	Training of advisers e.g. on rudiments guidance and counselling	1	8	5#

- **TABLE 4: Suggested solutions to challenges working against the adviser-advisee scheme in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences proffered by students and lecturers**

- **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Highly-ranked suggested solutions highlighted in orange (shaded portions).
- The higher the ranked digit, the more important the suggested solution.
- *, #: Equal rankings indicated.

Topmost Suggested Solutions

BOX 7a:

- Advisers should be friendly to students, patient, readily approachable and accessible
- “The adviser should be like his advisees’ parent in the Faculty, rooting for their maximum success”
- Conducive and cordial relationship should exist between advisers and advisees
- Frequent contact sessions between advisees and their advisers who should be more available
- Good communication between advisers and their advisees
- The scheme should be well established university-wide e.g. committees, logistics, compulsory implementation, early pairing, etc
- Training of advisers e.g. on rudiments guidance and counselling

Top 5 Solutions to the Identified Challenges Suggested by Both Students & Lecturers

BOX 7b:

1. More available, accessible, friendly and approachable advisers
2. Better conducive and cordial relationship between advisers and advisees
3. Premised on good communication between advisers and advisees
4. Leading to more frequent contact sessions within better restructured AAS, and
5. Restructuring of the AAS, and training of advisers on rudiments of guidance and counselling.



Two Other Important Suggestions for Improvement of Academic Advising

BOX 8a: OFFICIAL TIME-TABLING OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

A minimum of three contact periods were identified, as:

- i. during registration (including 'Add and Drop' week)
- ii. before semester examinations, and
- iii. half-way in-between.

BOX 8b: DECREASING ADVISER-ADVISEES RATIOS

- To enable advisers follow-up extensively on each advisee
- Guidance meetings with many advisees, encouraged whenever possible
- However, such group academic advising sessions should not replace 1-on-1 sessions
- Online, flipped and other guidance options to be utilised, also.

QUOTES BY STUDENT-ADVISEES	QUOTES BY LECTURER-ADVISERS
The adviser should try to be available regularly.	Students should stop the culture of running away from their advisers.
I suggest the advisers should be cool minded. They should be friendly.	Students should be free to interact with their advisers.
The adviser should be a lot nicer to the students he or she is handling.	Advice should not be limited to academic activities but include also, social and moral character.
Good communication between adviser and advisees.	Advisee freedom of interaction.
Allocating specific times for adviser-advisee meetings.	Perhaps fixing specific times during the semester for students to meet with their advisers.
Provision of platform to evaluate the impact of the AAS on students sessionally.	Additional monitoring and evaluation procedures should be in place.
Provision for an avenue where we meet with them more than only when we want to sign adviser form.	Adviser-advisee Week/Day specified among other times that the advisee may seek advice.
Organising seminars that would orient students on its importance.	Orientation of students on the programme.
The scheme should start from immediately after students gain admission into the university... this will help reduce mistakes made by students due to unawareness.	Early allocation of students. The forms filled at the beginning of the session by the adviser should be taken into consideration before allowing students to register.
The advisers need to be serious with the job of advising... workshops should be organised for them	Training the lecturers to offer the type of support several of these kids need. Have Faculty-based interactions to educate advisers.

- **TABLE 5: Verbatim quotes of suggested solutions by student-advisees and lecturer-advisers to challenges working against the adviser-advisee scheme in FPS**

- **HIGHLIGHTS**

- These sample direct quotes student-advisees and lecturer-advisers support the suggested solutions discussed above.
- These have been organised in a tabular format in order to showcase the similarities and overlap of suggested solutions as made by students and lecturers alike.

From 'this' to 'that': Follow-up Capstone

- Although this was a small study, the desperate cry of one of the student-advisee respondents which largely echoed the mood of many other students (and indeed, many lecturers); and as quoted below, underscore the need to speedily actualise the suggested solutions and enhance academic advising in higher education institutions in Nigeria, in general.
- The student had stated: “... **my academic life is screaming for help!**” In response to the wake-up call and at her new job, the first author is undertaking a capstone project on ‘Needs Assessment and the Setting-Up of Academic Advising and Mentorship Programmes Within National Open University of Nigeria’s Department of Nursing Science’.

Comparative Ratios: Your experiences / suggestions most welcome!

ABU_This Study

- i. 558 Students
- ii. 99 Lecturers
- iii. Lecturer-adviser: advisee

1 : 5.64

- ABU_All Students (35,656):
FPS_Students (558)
 $558 \div 35,656 = 1.56\%$

1:63.90

- ABU_Lecturers (2,967):
FPS_Lecturers (99)
 $99 \div 2,967 = 3.34\%$

1:29.97

Student-

NOUN_General

- i. 687,586 ENROLLED Students
- ii. 350 Lecturers
- iii. Lecturer-adviser: Student-advisee

1 : 1,965

- i. 110,431 REGISTERED Students
- ii. 350 Lecturers
- iii. Lecturer-adviser: Student-advisee

1 : 316

NOUN_Nursing Sci.

- i. 7,804 REGISTERED Students
- ii. 11 Lecturers
- iii. Lecturer-adviser: Student-advisee

1 : 709

- NOUN_Registered (110,431):
NURSING_Registered (7,804)
 $7,804 \div 110,431 = 7.07\%$

1:14.15

- NOUN_Lecturers (350):
NURSING_Lecturers (11)
 $11 \div 350 = 3.14\%$

1:31.82

Summary

- Top challenges identified were: inadequate contact sessions between advisers and advisees due mainly to unavailable/busy advisers and widespread advisee absenteeism.
- Other highly-ranked challenges were: poor rapport and communication gap between advisers and advisees, poor guidance skills on the part of some advisers, and unwillingness to listen to advice by some advisees.
- Suggested solutions were in line with the identified challenges, with specifics for advisers (e.g. improved availability and approachability) and advisees (e.g. greater commitment and responsibility).
- Other suggestions were deemed to be in the purview of the AAS administrator (being the Assistant Dean's Office), and centred on restructuring of the scheme to include robust monitoring and evaluation, in addition to training of lecturer-advisers on rudiments of academic guidance and counselling.

Conclusion

- Although this was a small study, the desperate cry of one of the student-advisee respondents which largely echoed the mood of many other students (and indeed, many lecturers); and as quoted below, underscore the need to speedily actualise the suggested solutions and enhance academic advising in higher education institutions in Nigeria, in general.
- The student had stated: "... my academic life is screaming for help!"
- In response to the wake-up call and at her new job, the first author is undertaking a capstone project on 'Needs Assessment and the Setting-Up of Academic Advising and Mentorship Programmes Within National Open University of Nigeria's Department of Nursing Science'.

Dedication



The Development of Academic
Advising in Nigeria
&
My Student-advisees: Past,
Present and Future

“There is usually a way where there seems to be no way!”



- Academic Advising can flourish in Nigeria’s HEIs as elsewhere in the world.
- Let’s just find the way(s) to do it!

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Acknowledgements! Questions & Comments?

- Organizers of the 2024 IAPC World Conference for the opportunity to make this presentation
- IAPC Board Members support for registration & accommodation to part-fund my participation at this Conference, and make this in-person oral presentation, is gratefully acknowledged
- Thanks to everyone present, for their attention

