



Research Mentorship as Correlates of Attitude Towards Thesis Completion Among Post Graduate Students in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Keywords		Abstract
Research mentorship, Attitude; Thesis completion		This study examined research mentorship and attitude towards thesis completion among post graduate students in Cross River State, Nigeria. To realize the stated objectives, two null hypotheses were formulated to direct the study. The review of related literature was based on the sub-variables of the study. The research design adopted for the study was correlational research design. The population of the study consists of is 252 spillover post graduate students in 2023/24 session (masters M.Ed / M.Sc) and doctoral (PhD) programmes), made up of 153 males and 99 females drawn from University of Calabar and University of Cross River. Purposive sampling procedure was employed in this study. Due to the small number of the population, the entire population (census) was used as the sample. Hence, the sample size for the study consists of 250 (151 males and 99 females). The questionnaire titled Research Mentorship and Attitude Towards Thesis Completion Questionnaire (RIAQ) was the instrument for data collection. The Face validity of the instrument was explored to check for the appropriateness of the items. The Cronbach reliability estimate of the instrument gave a range of
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	0.63-0.83. The null hypotheses were analyzed using simple linear regression analysis. The result indicated that building of mutual trust/friendship and effective communication significantly predicts attitude towards thesis completion among postgraduate students. Based on the findings of the study, it recommended among others that Postgraduate school should establish regular feedback processes where students can express their concerns and successes. Open communication can enhance trust with mentor which can predict attitude towards thesis completion
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INTRODUCTION

Education is a vital tool for excellence. This is because embracing education can foster technological development, sound health care system and quality social life. Countries like China, Russia and USA have inculcated quality education through their curriculum, which has promoted their human and material advancement. Those countries are seen to have better education which understandably has enhanced their material resources, making them competent in this era where every aspect of education has been globalised. This is supported by Genelza (2022) who opined that humanity must learn and be taught, and that academia's major goal should be to maintain personal and community advancement, through quality education. This can be done through research which is a major requirement in university education. The National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004) through the 7 goals of higher education (universities inclusive) under section 8 no. 59 (a-g) states that higher institutions shall:

“Contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training; Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society; Develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and

external environments; Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society; Promote and encourage scholarship and community service; Forge and cement national unity; and Promote national and international understanding and interaction.”

Universities employ scientific approach to solve economic, sociological, technological and environmental issues of the nation by actively engaging in research through the collection of relevant data, analyzing the data, interpreting the data and making recommendations for practical solutions. This explains that research is a tool for the diffusion of ideas from universities to industries. At the fore front of research work in universities, are the post graduate students. Apart from the fact that research is the pre-requisite for the partial fulfillment of the post graduate programmes, research papers published by the post graduate schools’ graduates are invaluable for national planning and global consumption, Successfully completed research plays a crucial role in all facets of human endeavour; as a hub for both educational and human capital development; Research contributes to the advancement in education by generating knowledge, improving teaching methodologies and enhancing learning outcomes. It also plays a crucial role in fostering critical thinking skills, and preparing an individual for the job (World Bank, 2019).

Without research in medicine, diseases like Ebola, Covid-19, Malaria fever, etc, could have led to universal termination of lives in a dangerous proportion. Research therefore leads to advancement in disease diagnosis and prevention. It improves health care outcomes and reduces healthcare costs (Woolf & Johnson, 2005).

The researcher’s observation shows that most post-graduate students complete their course work, but find it difficult, if not impossible to effectively complete their

Thesis/Dissertation as and when due. As Idaka, Idika & Ukpore (2012) assert that, “About 80% of graduate students in the University of Calabar (UNICAL) do not complete their Thesis/Dissertations as and when due”. This to the present researcher, is as a result of lackadaisical attitude towards Thesis completion. Most students put up attitudes that portray them as students with “very busy schedules”. Some students develop the attitude of resisting feedback by refusing to do the necessary corrections, because they are offended by what they called, the supervisor’s “unreasonable criticisms and high handedness” instead of seeing it as an opportunity for improvement.

Few students frequently absent themselves from classes of courses that help in the writing of research like the advance statistics because of their nonchalant attitude. Worst are the attitude of the set of students who avoid to meet normally with their supervisors just for the sake of ego defensive, they don’t want to expose their laziness before their supervisors. These negative attitudes by the students have ended in frosty relationships between the supervisors and supervisees, hence have been a thing of concern to many stakeholders in the university system.

Indeed, the challenges which the post graduate students experience with research results in their frustration (Belgrave and Jules 2018). They pointed out that most students have negative research attitudes in research activities resulting in a very weak research performance. In another development, Bandele and Adebule (2013) study revealed that almost all the graduating students had a negative attitude towards research work, in respect of gender and faculty, this, according to them, is not a good development if a nation is to move forward technologically and in research. These have made some students stay longer than necessary in a programme they were expected to complete between two to three years. Other students who feel highly frustrated have given up and abandoned their dream programme. This has far-reaching

consequences on the students, the institution and the society at large: The students will have a low self-esteem, a sense of incompetence due to unfulfillment of dreams and the problem of incurring additional cost for spending extra years in their programmes. The institution will experience low graduation rate which might affect the reputation of the school with an adverse effect on the application for admission as prospective applicant (students) will be skeptical about the graduation trend. This is supported by Lertputtarak (2008) cited by Shafqat, Syed and Tariq (2018) “faculties research production is not only used as criteria for promotion, but also lifts university’s reputation and rank. This boosted status and rank may cause an increase in student’s enrolment and justifies claims for greater incentives and grants from government and donor agencies.

Delay in research completion will affect the society negatively as the research will not be able to beat the time and meet up with the needed purpose, and will hinder the innovation function of the research project. In line with this, the Director of Innovation and Technology Management Office (ITMO) at the University of Lagos (UNILAG) noted that “a total of 13,282 research papers were published in Nigeria in 2020, ranking 50th globally, but based on the figure, only 300 of the 13,282 research papers led to innovation” (Ileyemi, 2023). Accordingly, this is as a result of delayed completion that could not beat the time it was needed.

Mentoring occurs between a senior researcher (called Mentor) and a junior researcher (called Mentee) (Keyser & Lakoski, 1997). For post graduate studies, the supervisor is the mentor and the supervisee is the mentee, in some cases, mentoring can be between individuals of the same level of experience. This is supported by the National Academy of Science, cited by Keyser and Lakosky., (1997), that “the role of mentoring include teacher, role model, and friend”. These roles are compressed in the three Cs of mentoring, which are competence, connection, and challenges. Eyong

(2021) classified the role of mentoring as building mutual trust, effective listening and asking of the right questions

To address this problem, the researcher is therefore poised at investigating the relationships among research mentorship and attitude towards Thesis completion among post graduate students in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

1. Building of mutual trust/friendship in Mentors predict attitude towards Thesis completion among postgraduate students.
2. Communication with the Mentors predict attitude towards thesis completion among postgraduate students.

Research questions

1. To what extent does building of mutual trust/friendship with the mentor predict attitudes towards Thesis completion among postgraduate students?
2. To what extent does effective communication with the mentor predict attitude towards Thesis completion among postgraduate students

Statement of hypotheses

1. Building of mutual trust/friendship with the mentor does not significantly predict attitude towards thesis completion among postgraduate students.
2. Effective communication with the mentor does not significantly predict attitude towards thesis completion among postgraduate students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical evidence on building of mutual trust/friendship and attitude towards thesis completion.

Building of mutual trust will make mentee to ask questions. Listen attentively which consequently will affect the attitude towards thesis completion, Eyong (2008),

In his paper, correlates of research mentorship and attitude toward project completion among final-year students in Cross River State , Nigeria, he adapted three objectives, research questions and hypotheses to guide the study and the study adopts the ex-post facto research design with an accessible population of all final-year students in the Faculty of Education CRUTECH numbered 793 in 2016/2017. The study adopted stratified and purposive sampling techniques and a sample of this study is made up of 277 students in the Faculty of Education CRUTECH was purposively drawn. The study utilized a researcher's developed instrument entitled "Research Mentorship and Attitude Towards Project Completion questionnaire (RMATPCQ). Validated by experts in the Measurement and Evaluation Unit of the Department of Educational Foundations, and Childhood Education Faculty of Education, CRUTECH. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to test the reliability of the instrument Cronbach Alpha reliability method and the reliability index ranged from 0.76-0.82. The data were analysed with simple linear regression in testing the stated hypotheses. Based on the research hypotheses tested, the following findings were drawn; building mutual trust significantly predicts attitude toward project completion among final-year students in CRUTECH. Also, effective listening significantly predicts attitude towards project completion among final year CRUTECH. Finally, it was found that students asking the right question significantly predict their attitude toward project completion among final-year students in CRUTECH. It was concluded that the final year student in the faculty of education must develop a culture of mentorship, especially in all their research undertaking. It was however recommended among others that students and supervisors should be re-oriented by their respective departmental heads on the need for originality before they start any educational research project. This is related to my work partially in that the finding states that building of mutual trust predict attitude

towards project completion among under graduate in CRUTECH, it is different from the present work in that it is dealing with project among undergraduate and in CRUTECH, hence the need to study the current study.

Trust and friendship can elicit people to seek mutual help, guardianship and support in any area of human endeavour including mentoring, in the study, Trust, respect and friendship: The key attributes of significant others in the lives of young working men, Du Plessis and Corney (2011) A sample of 146 male construction industry apprentices (predominantly young men) in Australia self-reported on their significant relationships, as well as the key attributes of these relationships. The findings indicated that the young men shared events, disclosed confidences and looked for help and support from family, romantic partners and close friends. The key attributes of these relationships were trust, respect and friendship. Of concern are the 10 per cent of apprentices who are at risk of social isolation and who did not have anyone to turn to for support. This is related to this study because trust and friendship will make the mentee seek support and help from the mentor (supervisor) which will eventually affect the attitude towards thesis completion positively, the only thing is that they did not investigate how the help and support from friend can affect the overall outcome.

Trust is a vital component in all relationships including mentoring, according to the study by (Cosenza 2012) to determine the importance of trust in relationships. To determine the difference in trust levels, opinions on being hurt by an intimate partner are studied next to the participants' opinions of being hurt by a close friend. Surveys were completed by 65 participants ages 18-24 on Eastern Illinois University's campus. The survey was nine questions long and had mainly multiple choice answer options. Results were

surprising on participants' levels of trust. Every participant believed that trust was the key factor in making an intimate relationship work, yet an almost exact 50% of the participants had experienced infidelity or a breach of trust with their partner. This study was a great stepping-stone to open doors into a deeper study of trust between intimate and platonic relationships. The more trust mentoring partners will have for each other the better the mentoring relationship works and consequently the attitude towards thesis completion will improve.

The benefits of close relationship between the mentor and the mentee can not be overemphasized, this is in line with the study : Understanding the role of the mentor in developing research competency among undergraduate researchers (Davis and Jones, 2017) they opined that close relationship between an undergraduate student researcher and a mentor help the student's creativity and ability to apply knowledge to creatively answer questions, which are essential for research writing. Using survey data from 69 recent undergraduate researchers at one university, they investigated the characteristics and impact of these mentor-mentee relationships. they found that active mentoring practices were a significant influence on how competent students perceived themselves as scholars. These practices were more influential than practical aspects of mentoring. The findings reflect the complicated nature of mentoring in higher education and identify key characteristics of successful mentoring relationships. This is directly related to the present study, students friendship with the mentor, will affect his creativity with respect to writing of thesis, which will also produce positive attitude towards thesis completion,

Empirical studies by Okurame (2008) cited by Eyong (2018) look at the mentoring experiences, mutual trust and challenges among 48 members of the Academic Staff in a Nigerian university in social science faculty where the aim was to

enhance the skills of Academic Staff members through mentoring programmes. The findings revealed that the few mentoring relationship that is existing were informal and were based on the similarity of the research interests, the initial delegation of work activity by mentors to their mentees, the delegation of conference/workshop attendance by mentors to the mentee as well as inclusion of mentees in research project and supervision. Results showed that mutual trust has a significant influence on mentees' success in their academic exercise. This is related to the present work, research mentorship and ICT competencies as a predictor of attitude towards thesis completion among post graduate students.

Trust encourages the mentor to delegate conference/workshop attendance to the mentee, trust will prompt the mentor to delegate writing of papers to or other work to the mentees which will increase the research skill of the mentee and may consequently increase the capacity to successfully complete the thesis (Okurame, 2008). Study offers a unique method of mentoring through delegation of duties and involvement in research supervision with the condition that there is mutual trust which may increase the attitude and aptitude towards project completion, but the findings was aimed to enhance the skills of Academic Staff members through mentoring programmes while the researchers purpose is to find the correlation between building mutual trust/friendship and the attitude towards thesis completion among PG students.

Another study by Azam, Watson and Katie (2016), on the characteristics of effective student-supervisor relationships, mutual trust and the opinions of students and supervisors about research supervision. Four research questions were posed in the study and the survey research design was used in the study. Data were collected using an online questionnaire with 30 Likert-scale statements from 131 undergraduate and postgraduate research students and 77 supervisors. Following exploratory factor

analysis, a three-factor model consisting of leadership, knowledge, and support was extracted. Results indicate that mutual trust and understanding are strong attributes of effective supervision. The supervisors and the supervisees agreed that a supervisor should have an interest in the supervisee's research. The supervisor must provide up to date and rational report and should assist the student to economize time better. Supervisors and supervisees believe a supervisor should help the supervisees where constraints and learning needs emerged. Since mutual trust and understanding predict effective supervision just like research mentorship and ICT competencies predict attitude towards thesis completion among post graduate students, therefore the two works are correlated.

In another study, Lilian (2019) examined the relationship between social science students and supervisors attitudes toward research methods and statistics, self-efficacy, effort, and academic achievement. A self-administered questionnaire was chosen as the primary data collection method and a sample of 153 students from the Department of Applied Social Studies at the City University of Hong Kong were invited to complete the survey. After analyzing the data collected, Pearson's correlation coefficient reflected that there was a positive correlation between all four variables attitude toward research methods and statistics, self-efficacy, effort and academic achievement. Also, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to estimate the prediction power of attitude and self-efficacy on effort. The result showed that both attitude and self-efficacy could significantly predict effort. However, when another multiple regression analysis was conducted to estimate the prediction power of attitude, self-efficacy and effort on academic achievement, it was found that effort failed to predict academic achievement. To infer, in the present study, the effort could only be

regarded as an indirect factor but not a necessary factor in bridging the relationship between attitude, self-efficacy, and academic achievement.

Stoecklin-Serino, (2023) in a study involving “building trust: an examination of the impacts of brand equity, security, and personalization on trust processes”, documents a longitudinal experiment that tested hypotheses of the process model, producing data sets that were analyzed using regression and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results of the study indicate that the use of security symbols and trustworthy brand names have a positive and lasting effect on trusting beliefs. The results also show that personalization has a decreasing and lasting effect on trusting beliefs. There was no support for the hypothesis that trust develops over time in electronic environments. This is supporting the current work, in that, a trustworthy mentor will affect the attitude of a mentee positively to complete a thesis, but the author wrote about the impact of three variables on the trust processes, with respect to marketing advantage, the current study is on the impact of building trust on the attitude towards thesis completion among post graduate students. While the author is focusing on the trust that will boost marketing, the current work is about a trust that will boost attitude towards thesis completion. Hence, the need to investigate the building of trust as a correlate of attitude towards thesis completion among PG students.

Effective communication and attitude towards thesis completion

Listening as an essential part of communication predict attitude towards thesis completion, in a study by Amesi (2017), as reported by Eyang (2018) examined mentoring strategies and effective listening skills by mentees adopted by entrepreneurs in Rivers State. Two research questions were stated to guide the study and one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The entire populations of 471 were the target of the research and issued with a questionnaire . Questionnaire was used to

collect data. A total of 356 entrepreneurs who responded to their instruments were studied. Test-retest method was used for the reliability test, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.78. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypothesis. Findings revealed that entrepreneurs adopted some of the strategies and techniques raised by the researcher as the hypothesis proved that there was no significant difference in the strategies and techniques of the entrepreneurs in Rivers State. Based on the findings, recommendations were made which include that entrepreneurs should adopt effective mentoring strategies and techniques that will help them to excel and succeed in their businesses. This is equivalent to effective communication strategy that will help in research completion among post graduate students that is upheld by the present study.

Jeje, Elebute, Bolaji., Sule. Mofikoya Ajibola and Atoyebi (2022) study aims at ascertaining experiences of mentorship in their respective institutions and what they recommend as ways of bridging the gap between them (the mentees), and their trainers (mentors). The study was a cross-sectional descriptive study using a 19-item self-administered questionnaire. The study population consisted of all Resident Doctors attending the mandatory update courses of the Postgraduate Colleges. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 20. 437 (Four hundred and thirty-seven) doctors fully completed the questionnaires. There were 262 and 175 males and females respectively, giving a male-to-female ratio of 1.5 to 1. One hundred and eleven (25.4%) respondents claimed that their institutions had a structured mentorship program. Although the understanding of the concept of mentorship is widespread among resident doctors, there is a dearth of mentoring experiences among resident doctors in Nigeria due to the lack of formal mentoring schemes. The integration of formal mentoring programmes into the postgraduate medical curriculum may increase its prevalence. The

study clearly shows that the mentoring among doctors is short of bridging the gap between the mentor and the mentee. Without good communication skills, the act of bridging the gap will not be realized, and there will be no formal mentoring. Here again communication bring the mentor and the mentee closer which will improve attitude towards learning by the young doctors, just as effective communication will predict attitude towards thesis completion among post graduate students. the different is the context.

Adebayo (2021), in their empirical investigation of the mentor-mentee relationship among female Architects and female Architectural Students. The study utilized a research survey approach using a questionnaire data instrument. Using a purposive sampling technique, 84 research participants, consisting of female Architects and female Architecture students, participated in this study. The data collected are presented using bar charts, mean scores, principal component analysis (PCA), and categorical regression (CAT-REG). The study identified characteristics associated with good Mentors and good Mentees in the design profession. Mentees identified the main features that make a good mentor as the ability to teach, listen attentively, and communicate effectively. On the other hand, Mentors identified the qualities of a good mentee who communicates, is focused and demonstrates intelligence. The study showed that the significant negative experiences in a mentor-mentee relationship include a clash of personalities between the mentors and mentees, stealing credit for work done by both parties, and unrealistic expectations. Furthermore, these negative experiences result from poor attitude, wrong emotions, and loss of motivation. The current study is sharing in the investigation because effective communication through listening in mentor-mentee relationship, can affect attitude and motivation towards completing of a thesis, the difference is that the work is effective communication

involving female architects versus female architecture students, hence the need for the present study.

External stimulus can be used to arouse attention, because attention is the threshold of retention while retention will pave way for learning of research skills and subsequently engaging in thesis writing, in a study titled; “Capturing Students Attention: An empirical study”, Erik and Jackson (2019) examined a total of 846 College students ($n=846$) enrolled in a general education course and were randomly assigned to either an arousal (experimental) or no-arousal (control) group. The experimental group was exposed to a topic-relevant, 90-second external stimulus (a technique used to elevate arousal and focus attention). The control group listened to the instructor take roll. Both groups then listened to the same 30-minute lecture followed by an exam. An independent-samples t-test found a significant difference in exam scores measuring information retention between arousal ($M=13.36$, $SD=1.5$) and no-arousal ($M=12.85$, $SD=1.4$) conditions; $t(844)=5.20$, $p < .001$. Results suggest introducing a lecture with an external stimulus increases information retention. It is related to the present study because external stimulus is a type of effective communication strategy which will improve attitude towards thesis completion.

Furthermore, as has already been observed, listening is the starting point in communication. In a study of “Listening and Academic Learning: A survey of Listening Skills among Undergraduates in Lead City University Ibadan, Nigeria”, Olugbenga (2019) observed that tertiary institutions in Nigeria pay more attention to reading and writing than listening which has led to undergraduates’ experiencing low academic learning. Consequently, the study examined the influence of listening skill in student’s academic performance. Employing the survey technique and Focus Group Discussions to gather data from a private institution, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria, Using

the convenient sampling technique, 250 respondents (male and female undergraduate students) were drawn from students' population from various departments in Lead City University, Ibadan as sample size to complete the research questionnaire, while four FGD (Focus Group Discussion) sessions were also conducted with selected students among the various departments. In all, 240 duly completed copies of the questionnaire were used for the analysis of the study. Four Focus Group Discussion sessions which comprised eight (8) and seven (7) participants respectively were conducted to collect relevant information from students within the campus environment, evidence shows students adopting informative listening type for academic study, 76.6% of the respondents affirmed that they adopted the listening skills to understand the general idea of the subject than they do to knowing the detail information which however is not sufficient for thorough academic performance. Pearson Correlation between listening and academic performance was significant($r=.71, p<.05$) which shows the importance of listening to students' academic performance. There was need for students to combine analytical and critical listening with informative listening to enhance their academic performance.

Poor communication was adduced to be responsible for lack of mentoring partnership optimum results, in a study by Qureshi (2019) which investigates holistic impact of communication in mentoring on mentoring relationship in one-to-one mentoring sessions between mentor-mentee dyads. The topic was researched using constructivist approach. Hence, data was collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews from mentors and mentees enrolled in mentoring programs across Germany. A total of 25 interviews, 15 mentees and 10 mentors, were conducted, transcribed, and coded. The data was analyzed using tri-tier Grounded Theory approach, namely, Initial Coding, Focused Coding and Theoretical Coding accompanied and complimented by

memo writing and constant comparisons techniques. The result of extensive analysis of the data revealed four patterns in mentoring communication. These patterns were Collaborative Communication, Shallow Communication, Mentor-Directed Communication and Mentee-Directed Communication. The study found collaborative Communication as the most successful pattern with most satisfied mentors and mentees, and shallow Communication as ineffective due to dissatisfied mentors and mentees. Whereas, directed Communications showed varying results. The findings revealed that the role mentors and mentees adopt in mentoring relationships affects their communication. Most recurrent roles for mentors were mentors and advisors, and for mentees the roles were mentees or advisees. The study found that mentors adopting the role of mentor were most successful and were found to be engaging in Collaborative Communication, and mentor-mentee dyads engaging in Shallow Communication were taking up the role of advisor/advisee. Whereas, when one was mentor/mentee and the other was advisor/advisee then Directed Communications happened. Also, the selection process plays an important role in mentoring communication. The study found four selection scenarios that influenced mentees Self-Satisfactory, Prescribed-Satisfactory, Self-Dissatisfactory, and Prescribed-Dissatisfactory. The collaborative style obviously will be the best communication style because collaborative style is satisfying to both the mentor and the mentee. This will enhance success in mentoring, because this is a two way communication, and will motivate student to complete thesis as at when due. Whereas, others like mentor-directed and mentee-directed are one way communication that will not satisfy both simultaneously. Pairing will encourage or discourage collaborative communication. If a student is paired with a mentor that he/she did not like, collaboration may suffer, as breakdown in trust can injure collaborative communication.

Similarly, in a study of “Dissertation Mentor Communication Style and Behavior as Predictors of Student Stress and Satisfaction” by Julien (2017), communication style by the mentor was heavily judged to be responsible for the reason many graduates (60%) do not complete their programme of study. The purpose of this multiple linear regression study was to identify predictor variables of dissertation student stress and overall dissertation satisfaction. Deci and Ryan’s self determination theory and Lazarus’ theory of cognitive appraisal were used to guide this research to identify how student perception of mentor communication styles can be used to predict how students appraise stress and overall satisfaction with dissertation. A convenience sample of 178 dissertation students identified through several online dissertation student support and student-led Facebook groups completed the online survey. According to study results, student perception of questioning and preciseness as mentor communication styles predicted significantly lower scores of student appraisal of stress experienced in dissertation. However, student perception of verbal aggressiveness as a mentor communication style predicted significantly higher scores of student stress.

Mentor behaviors of academic assistance, mentoring abilities, and personal connection predicted significantly higher levels of overall student dissertation satisfaction. Positive social change initiatives formed by faculty and staff can be made to educate dissertation chairpersons about the communication style and behaviors that are the most effective in mentoring dissertation students. Poor communication in this study lead to student dissatisfaction and consequently, drop out in a Ph.D programme. These communication problems include verbal aggressiveness, mentor behaviours of academic assistance, and other poor communication styles, gives the students stress, and the finally defeats their dreamed degree. This is indirectly related to the current

work in that, the study emphasized ineffective communication leads to poor attitude towards programme completion.

In addition, openness as a particular style of communication was advocated by many authors. In particular, the investigation made by Azman, Asniah and Ahmad (2018), about “Mentors’ communication styles as predictors of mentees’ academic performance”, they used a population of undergraduate students of a defence based university, Malaysia. The researchers had obtained an approval to conduct the study from the management of the university and were advised on the procedures of conducting the survey in the institution. Based on the information given, the researchers had distributed 300 survey questionnaires using a convenient sampling technique to undergraduate students. This sampling technique was chosen because the list of students of the organization was not available due to confidential reasons and this constraint had not allowed the researchers to randomly select respondents for this study. From the survey questionnaires distributed, 107 usable questionnaires from the university were returned to the researchers, yielding 35.7 percent of the response rate. The survey questionnaires were answered by participants based on their consents and a voluntarily basis. The number of this sample exceeds the minimum sample of 30 participants as required by probability sampling technique, showing that it may be analyzed using inferential statistics ..

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 17.0 was used to analyze the data. Firstly, validity and reliability analyses were conducted to assess the validity and reliability of measurement scales (Wunally & Bernstein, 1994). Secondly, Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics were conducted to determine the collinearity problem, and further confirm the validity and reliability of constructs (Hair et al., 2006; Nunally & Bernstein, 1994). Finally, multiple regression analysis was

recommended to assess the magnitude and direction of the relationship between two independent variables and one dependent variable . In this regression analysis, standardized coefficients (standardized beta) were used for all analyses. The majority of the respondents were male (65.4 percent), their ages vary from 20 to 22 years (75.7 percent), students who registered as ROTU (49.5 percent), second year students being the majority in the respondent group (41.1 percent), and students achieving CGPA between 3.01 to 3.50 being the majority amongst the respondents (45.8 percent). The results of this study highlight two major findings: firstly, communication openness has been an important predictor of academic performance.

This result has supported studies by Cambell and Camsbell (1997), Santos and Reigadas (2002), . Secondly, interpersonal communication has not been an important predictor of academic performance. This result may be affected by different backgrounds and inconsistent views of the mentees that affect their perceptions on the implementation of interpersonal communication in mentoring activities. This situation may overrule the effectiveness of interpersonal communication on academic performance in the organization. This result has supported partially that openness in communication is a predictor of performance. The second result is a negative impression of the present work, in that interpersonal communication as a vital component in communication is not a significant predictor of academic performance. Therefore there is still more to be investigated.

Aman, Amin and Baloch (2021) differ from the last result in their work, “role of Interpersonal competencies and students’ academic performance”. The study aimed at examining the relationship between the role of interpersonal competencies and students’ academic performance in the education sector of Pakistan. Students of Public sector universities operating in Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan

were considered the population for the research. A stratified random sampling method was adopted for the selection of the sample. A survey method based on a questionnaire was applied for the collection of data. Before the conduction of the field survey, the validity of questionnaires was confirmed through a pilot study followed by an expertise review. A total of 328 questionnaires were administered and responses were received from 261 with duly filled questionnaires. The collected data was analyzed through SPSS and LISREL software. Analysis included Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Regression Analysis. CFA model fitness was evaluated based on seven fit indices and the model was significant and well fitted. Regression analysis was undertaken to examine the association amongst dependent variables and independent variables. Regression analysis values depict a positive significant association among communication skills and students' academic performance. It also showed a positive significant association among group/teamwork skills and students' academic performance. Students' findings were found consistent with previous studies conducted by (Latif 2006; Nasser, 2014; Nurmi, 2012; Korthagen, et al., 2014). The study recommended that at university level foundation course regarding the development of communication skills may be introduced to enhance the communication skills among students. It is also recommended that students may be engaged in interactive sessions for the development of their group/teamwork skills. The study further suggests that interactive seminars/workshops shall be arranged for students to exercise the importance of interpersonal competences. The above is in line with the thought of the current study, components of communication (openness, interaction) will predict academic performance, but since the work did not mention attitude towards thesis completion and the study was carried out in Pakistan, hence there is gaps to fill.

According to Schlee (2000), mentoring involves effective listening and putting yourself into multiple roles to improve a younger person's life. Whether helping someone to cope with a difficult situation, survive school or achieve a personal goal, mentors serve the role of being caring, a friend, and a confidant. The relationship and extent to which the supervisee effectively listens to all the instructions of the supervisor to promote speedy completion of the research exercise. Many students entering undergraduate programs are misinformed about the process of undergraduate education and lack the knowledge necessary to navigate the system (Golde & Dore, 2001). A failure for students to adhere to and listen to the corrections of the supervisor can pose serious damage to the research undertaking (Lindblom-Ylance, 2016).

Thus, there is a need for cordiality about these requirements so that the students can be prepared. Students also need determination and perseverance (rather than brilliance) to complete their research (Phillips & Pugh, 2000). In addition, they need adequate supervision and clear communication with supervisors. They should also be familiar with evaluation criteria (Shannon, 2015). Another problem is that the role of supervision and the motive for supervision also seem to be unclear. In the first instance, the role of supervision is described as the most advanced level of teaching. This implies that insufficient time and effort in establishing trust within the supervision relationship is likely to be reflected in trainee resistance to addressing client or therapist issues because they have differential needs for support depending on the level of training.

For example, Heppner and Roehkle (2014) conclude that supervisory interaction may become more complex and confrontative depending on the experience of the trainee. In this sense, the person of the supervisee is increasingly likely to become the focus of supervision as the trainee becomes more skilled. This is supporting the current study, because, without interaction, there is no mentoring, which implies there

will be no building of trust, no feedback which are essential in building attitude towards thesis completion, though it emphasize effective mentoring and business success.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted correlational research design. Correlational research design investigates relationships between variables without the researcher controlling or manipulating any of them. The study is conducted in Cross River State. Cross River state is located between (lat 5°45'N, Long 8°30'E)and (,Lat. 6°40'N, Long9°53'E) in Nigeria. The population of the study comprised all post graduate students in 2023/2024 academic session who are currently in their at least second year and third year, specifically masters and doctoral prorammes (spillovers) in University of Calabar and University of Cross River .these students are due to graduate, but have not completed their Theses. The estimated/accessible population for the study is 252, these were made up of 153 males and 99 females, distributed in the two (2) institutions. Homogeneous Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select the study sample. Homogeneous Purposive sampling is a technique in which the person conducting the research relies on their judgment to choose members who have the same characteristics to be part of the study. Due to the small nature of the population, the census of 252 was adopted by the researcher as the sample. The instrument for this study was a questionnaire constructed by the researchers titled: Research Mentorship and Attitude Towards Thesis Completion Questionnaire. (RMATTCQ). The questionnaire consists of three sections: A and B. Section A was designed to obtain information on the respondent's biodata, while section B consists of 25 structured items on two independent variables reviewed in the literature, with five items for each variable building of mutual trust/ friendship and effective communication with the mentor; 15 Items measure attitude towards thesis completion is also developed. Respondents are asked to tick (✓) correct

options among the four options of the likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree with all sincerity and the importance of confidentiality on any information they give in their response is emphasized in the questionnaire.

Face validity of the instrument was explored, to check for the appropriateness of the items, by taking the initially constructed 40 items to three experts in measurement and evaluation in the faculty of Educational Foundation Studies, university of Calabar. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Crombach Alpha reliability and the reliability estimate ranged between 0.63-0.83. The researchers personally visited the information units of the two universities; the university of Calabar and university of Cross River State.

Presentation of results

Hypothesis one: Building of mutual trust/friendship with the mentor does not significantly predict attitude towards thesis completion among postgraduate students. To test this hypothesis of the study, simple linear regression analysis was employed with building of mutual trust/friendship as predictor (independent) variable and attitude towards thesis completion (dependent) variable. The results obtained from the test statistical analysis are summarized and presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of Regression Analysis for the prediction of the attitude towards thesis completion on building of Mutual trust/friendship

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
.405	.164	.160	8.83443		
Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	3790.434	1	3790.434	48.566	.000
Residual	19355.710	248	78.047		
Total	23146.144	249			

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		p-value
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	
Constant	46.054	1.732		26.596	.000
Building of mutual trust/friendship	-.737	.106	-.405	-6.969	.000

*p<.05

Table 1 gives an interpretation of the results of the simple linear regression analysis of attitude towards thesis completion on building of mutual trust/friendship. An R-value of .405 was obtained, resulting in an R-squared value of .164. This implies that the variation in building of mutual trust/friendship can account for about 16.4% of the total variation in attitude towards thesis completion. Thus, the p-value (.000) associated with the computed F-value (48.566) is less than .05. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that the building of mutual trust/friendship significantly predicts attitude towards thesis completion with both the regression constant (46.054) and coefficient (-.737) making a significant contribution to the prediction model ($t = 26.596$ & -6.969 respectively, $p = .000 < .05$). The mathematical relationship of the regression model is depicted by the following equation $y = 46.054 - .737x$ thus, $x =$ building of mutual trust/friendship and $y =$ attitude towards thesis completion.

Hypothesis two: Communication with the mentor does not significantly predict attitude towards thesis completion among postgraduate students. To test this hypothesis of the study, simple linear regression analysis was employed, with communication as predictor (independent) variable and attitude towards thesis completion (dependent) variable. The results obtained from the test statistical analysis are summarized and presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Summary of Regression Analysis for the prediction of the attitude towards thesis completion on communication with the mentor

		Adjusted R			
R	R Square	Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
.421 ^a	.177	.174	8.76212		
Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	4105.990	1	4105.990	53.481	.000 ^b
Residual	19040.154	248	76.775		
Total	23146.144	249			
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	p-value
Constant	47.181	1.803		26.165	.000
Effective communication	-.802	.110	-.421	-7.313	.000

*p<.05

Table 2 gives an interpretation of the results of the simple linear regression analysis of effective communication and attitude towards thesis completion. An R-value of .421 was obtained, resulting in an R-squared value of .177. This implies that the variation in the attitude towards thesis completion by variation in communication is about 17.7%. The p-value (.000) associated with the computed F-value (53.481) is less than .05. shows significant of the regression model As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that the communication significantly predicts attitude towards thesis completion with both the regression constant (47.181) and coefficient (-.802) making a significant contribution to the prediction model ($t = 26.165$ & -7.313 respectively, $p = .000 < .05$). The mathematical relationship of the regression model is depicted by the following equation $y = 47.181 - .802x$ thus, where x is communication and y is attitude towards thesis completion.

Discussions of findings

The results of the first hypothesis revealed that building of mutual trust/friendship with the mentor significantly predict attitude towards thesis completion among postgraduate students. This means if mutual trust and friendship are built

mutually between the mentor and the mentee, the attitude towards thesis completion will improve and vice versa. This result is in tandem with the findings of Eyong (2018) who examined the correlates of research mentorship and attitude toward project completion among final-year students in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study found that building mutual trust significantly predicts attitude toward project completion among final-year students in CRUTECH. Also, effective listening significantly predicts attitude towards project completion among final year CRUTECH. Finally, it was found that students asking the right question significantly predict their attitude toward project completion among final-year students in CRUTECH. Building of mutual trust will make mentee to ask questions. Listen attentively which consequently will affect the attitude towards thesis completion.

From the result of hypothesis two, it was found that effective communication with the mentor significantly predict attitude towards thesis completion among postgraduate students. This implies , if there exist flow of communication with the mentor, there will be an improvement in the students attitude toward thesis completion. This finding is in line with the findings of Eyong (2018) who examined mentoring strategies and effective listening skills by mentees adopted by entrepreneurs in Rivers State. The findings revealed that entrepreneurs adopted some of the strategies and techniques raised by the researcher as the hypothesis proved that there was no significant difference in the strategies and techniques of the entrepreneurs in Rivers State. Jeje, Elebute, Olawepo, Sule and Atoyebi (2017) study aims at ascertaining experiences of mentorship in their respective institutions and what they recommend as ways of bridging the gap between them (the mentees), and their trainers (mentors). The integration of formal mentoring programmes into the postgraduate medical curriculum

may increase its prevalence. The study clearly shows that the mentoring among doctors is short of bridging the gap between the mentor and the mentee.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that research mentorship is a significant predictor of attitude towards thesis completion among post graduate students in Cross River State, Nigeria. Building of mutual trust/friendship and effective communication play critical roles on thesis completion among post graduate students.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings.

- i. Postgraduate school should establish regular feedback processes where students can express their concerns and successes. Open communication can enhance trust with mentor which can predict attitude towards thesis completion
- ii. Regular meetings between students and their supervisors should be encouraged. Because consistent communication can provide guidance, clarify expectations and strengthens the supervisor-supervisee effective communication .

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