



Perils and Psychological Effects of Joined Supervision in Nigerian University

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ABSTRACT

Key to putting forth a positive change in total migration from human cultural activities or myopic thinking in the aspect of socialization, religion and personal academic initiative was to pursue a doctoral study in various fields of knowledge. Though by experience and thought, the PhD journey and its supervision relationship has so many problems, difficulties and challenges around it, it requires constructive plans in managing it. Therefore this paper has grown to explain some of the perils of joint supervision against students (PhD) and the different styles with which students operate in managing the supervisor-student relationship. Especially nowadays that when closely observed the situation becomes too difficult and expensive. Therefore, it becomes a necessity if not obligatory for us to state or address this issue or tell all information that students might require most to have insight, capacity and confidence on how to go with their doctoral degree joint supervisors relationship. The outcome of some seminars delivered on the same topic brought tangible adjustment in student character and academic achievement. Finally, it would shed more light on students that have never come to terms with PhD and on those that went away indignantly, suffer or bitten out the certificate and left all they spent in vain. Indeed it can clear the doubt and offbeat ideas of the weak students

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is an overview of the peril relationship between a doctorate degree student and his supervisor. Often, doctorate degree students are assigned one or more supervisors for a sound guidance in their pursuit of the doctorate degree. There is needed to look into this student-supervisor relationship from either sides or angle of the students and the supervisors. From the students' angle, some pursue the doctorate degree to add to the current state of knowledge, while some pursue it because of the emotional blackmail from their colleagues for calling them "Dr" without actually acquiring the title. Some were also aimlessly pursuing the degree because of family and

friends pressure. From the supervisors' sides in the student-supervisor peril relationship, some supervisors are after raising their reputation by supervising large number of students while some are looking for research assistants from their students but also some supervisors believe in encouraging students for effective and sound programme. For this reasons, this paper detailed out the perils of joined supervision in many of the Nigerian universities in order to alert the PG-student on how to manage the student-supervisor relationship. It suggested attributes such as focus, determination, application and hardwork other than students' brilliance as the keys to his doctorate degree and success. The paper also listed some technicalities to be put in



place by the supervisor for a healthy student-supervisor relationship. In most of the Nigerian university, based research topics has a nature of a particular focus or interdisciplinary, which in turn leads the management to assign two or more supervisors to a student especially to one pursuing the certificate of doctorate of philosophy. Therefore, the joint supervisors might not be purely academics, could be a combination with those with technical experience or even working under company or industries of which the area or field of research directly has more concern with them. In fact, the student must carefully manage this crucial relationships for being not to afford to leave it to chance. (Batchelor & Di Napoli, 2006). Indeed, this paper intended to highlight considerable a series of technicalities and strategies for handling the supervisors and their relationships through better understanding of all. They were expected from him, some of their personal information and inside information on which to develop the necessary skills for reducing the communication barriers and to sustain the relationship manually.

A study by Wisker et al. (2010) shows that mostly, the various emotional aims and decisions with which many students decided to engage in postgraduate study was found to be the leading factor that distorted the supervisors' relationships. Firstly, some students have the ambition to contribute significantly in their area of particular interest and to the nation as whole by adding facts and values to the current state of knowledge. While other perceived it as an opportunity to further, explore and widen the scope of the major issue or serious problem that hinder the progress of professional practitioners. Furthermore many postgraduates want to enhance their career opportunities and the capacity of their future earning through obtaining the PhD degree. (Meyer & Land, 2006). Perceptively, they considered PhD degree as a bedrock plan or course for future achievement, job and palatable appointments straight from university. In similitude, some students force themselves in the PhD programme because some people were already calling them "Dr" and felt guilty accepting the title while they are yet to attain it. They think it is easier to compel themselves than to accept the defeat or than to

drag themselves into shame or mud. Another reason some students undertook PhD programme was aimless and think nothing about it even after graduation. Again, some students were simply directed to it by either their parent or guidance with their hidden mission not considering the capability of their son has or hasn't. While others have an idealistic view of whosoever have a PhD degree will honourably be considered by his family and community as dedicated expert and potential worthy somebody that might not be easy to deprecate or dispute in his area of study. Among the diverse reason for joining PhD programme was the nature or ethics of places of work, Example University lecturer would only be considered useful if and only if he has the PhD degree. Therefore the ethic compelled him to it against his wishes. There are many other reasons for students' engagement into PhD programme because the students' intentions do not remain the same overtime or throughout the period of study or before registration. Remember, some students have intrinsic satisfaction, compassion and commitment in doing a PhD research work due to their own sake of interest. But almost all students interviewed that weighed up the pros and cons of their emotional enthusiastic and decision before and after the PhD registration changes their way of thinking and took reasonable period of learning. This is because the student now has vast and new recruitment experience encountered in the period of studying their faculty of reasoning. Therefore, student eventually realised and narrowed their aim simply to have successful completion and the targeted aim "PhD" degree through focus, determination and application not by brilliance. Indeed, the sooner student learn more about this the better and easiest to get there degree he set out to have. (Wisker 2010)

Similarly, as students have a diverse interest and reasons on which they get started to a PhD programme, also the supervisors used to undertake supervision with different purposes. (Hodsdon, 2011). Some of the students get to the successful completion of the programme due to their intrinsic satisfaction and enthusiasm. While some found it more instinctive because they do not weighed up its pros and cons and there were



simply guided by their emotional decision. Therefore the later realised that the PhD is just a more fulfilling way to waste time and money spending programme. Finally, the abandoned it. In addition, the new recruited student overtime changes their perception on what and why they engaged themselves into PhD programme, simply because they were getting a professional guidelines and better experiences than what they pass by. Thereafter, they work hard to get it within the stipulated time or even before the minimum time. Conversely, it is important that unanimous of the PhD students realised that focus, determination, application, honesty and patience are the keys to a successful end mark of a PhD programme rather than to be proud of the intelligence and brilliant. (Kamler, 2006)

To manage a student-supervisor relationship students are expected to know the different reasons that made supervisors to undertake PhD-supervisors. (Land, 2008). Usually, there reasons differ from their personal aim in mind. At times some supervisors wished to have some level of reputation by supervising large number of higher calibrated students. Some want to raise their professionalism status within and outside Nigeria. Similarly, some are doing it to estimate or compare themselves to their peers or their success by graduating good student with qualitative work. Furthermore some supervisors are participating in postgraduate supervision just to look down or underestimate their students especially if they were colleagues in the same or other universities. But that kind of supervision used to delayed the programme and turn the students as their boys, so that all their achievements became his. Meanwhile, according to Vilkinas (2008), supervisors are of two kinds, among supervisors are those that believed in encouraging all post graduates under them to acquire an authentic knowledge, reasonable number of publications until they become autonomous and sound researchers worthy to compete internationally. In the same line, some wanted their students to be extremely efficient but only as research assistant. While some supervisors thought of treating their students, so as to tap or deduce something from them in either relatively simple manner or in a hard or weird ways. And of course, this implicated the

postgraduate education theory and the acquired training. Some dedicated and explored supervisors have a developed and defined area of research. Favourably, they asked their students to take to take different or related research problems to their own domain, attracting them with the intention to develop their own centre of excellence. The centre of excellence let to attracts some experts, administrates and specialists academic to visit the concerned University so as to create more room for discussion, conference, occasional seminars and symposium. The visitors would expose and pursued well the relatively define or closely bordered research problems that is difficult for the postgraduate students to open it. However there were some serious academics supervisors with integrity aiming to have honours from their government or to win a Nobel Prize. Such supervisors are difficult to compromise any academic standard and their postgraduate students served as research assistants. There students are expected to work out the set out government project in a limited subordinate manner but in a speedy and efficient way.

In addition, there are some supervisors that are willingly and genuinely interested in developing, producing and graduating better researchers. These supervisors run their supervision steadily and at times offer some services to their students, as demonstrators, laboratory assistants, teaching and coaching undergraduate students, marking practical reports in lieu for postgraduate students to individually develop their own research topic in the areas that they discovered some research gaps automatically. Even though, these rigorous training entails the restriction of more academic peer group to work under such kind of supervisor. Moreover, not all aims are mutually exclusive. That is why some supervisors find it difficult to accept a postgraduate student working already on a topic that wasn't in the area of supervisors' interest and vice-versa. Indeed, it becomes necessary for all the postgraduate students to carefully observed the existing politics and relationships of their supervisors and discover the prospective approach to use in managing the student - supervisor relationship in



favour of themselves and to avoid the unnecessary implications. (Phillips, 2005)

Major supervisors for been an expert academician supervised his supervisee with extreme and extra careful to avoid given chance to both internal and external examiners to look down on him or her due to laziness in the side of his supervision. The internal examiner is a college academic of the same university, department and field of research as well. Whole external examiner is also an academician from outside the universities other than the supervisors' University, but with similar discipline or experience. The team of examiners are set to examine the thesis and the physical presentation of the postgraduate students and give their comments, contributions, corrections, certification on the standard, quality and novelty of the work before affirmation of awarding or rejecting it if is not worthy enough to be PhD thesis. Even though the standard of quality of the thesis varies from one university to another or any other awarding degree colleges like polytechnics, colleges of education and institutes. Some supervisors have come to perception with other examiners on the aim of the PhD programme. Among common perception are: to be for Career training research, Introducing stepping stone to book writing, Academic - life preparation and professionally all-rounder. (Peelo, 2011),

Janssen (2005) describes a keen supervisor is one who compelled his candidate to spell out clearly the originality of his or her work and contributions compared to other's predecessors' work in the same area of research or interest in order to avoid negative or ambiguous interpretation of examiners. Therefore, they asked the candidate to stand upright, competent, composed with good language command and diligent responses during the oral viva voice examination, in order to satisfy the audience and the board of examinations. And as well to give the impression that the work has a degree of novelty and is unaided work of the postgraduate candidate. A good supervisor suggests to his supervisee some technical approaches that must be considered to have expressed the novelty of the work to prevent taking wrong decisions by examiners. Among which are: State out clearly new

information, Give good exposition of some researcher that published before you, Identify the gap from previous work and build it up continuously, Explain fully where the design was adopted or adapted, Provide good technique, design, observation and results of the research competently, Make sure all instructions and concepts were fully understood, Avoid doing donkey work by giving the work to others to suggest ideas or to do the methodology, experiment interpretation, computation of results or to do the field work for the candidate and test other ideas and compare with the candidates one to ensure and validates the work.

CONCLUSION

The paper concluded by what a PhD is and with what to get it. Customarily, some people thought that doctorate degree is something just got to get it like financial bonus. While some thoughts is about brilliancy or hardworking of a student that makes him/her to must finish it. But PhD programme is about constructive plan, determination, commitment, application of what was search in a systematic, scientific and standard order recognized and approved by educational board globally. Similarly, the paper enlighten on ways to manage student-supervisor relation especially when it is a joint-supervision. In few words, even if a student was outstandingly a skilful, brilliant, fraud, clever and coveted person, he must be patience, humble and persistent before he can overcome boredom feeling and frustrations of a joint-supervision. Therefore PhD is a transitional life perception to realistically life through constant nagging, anxiety and compassionate.

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