INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND LECTURERS' CAPABILITY IN PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN UGANDA: THE CASE OF BUGEMA UNIVERSITY

Dr Serunjogi Charles Dickens (PhD)
Dean School of Education, Bugema University –Uganda

Abstract:
The study investigated the role of Instructional Leadership (IL) in enhancing instructional capabilities of academic staff in private universities with specific focus on Bugema University in Uganda. Three specific objectives guided the study thus;

1. To examine lecturers' perception regarding the role of Instructional leaders at Bugema University
2. To establish factors affecting Instructional Leadership Efficacy (ILE) at Bugema University.
3. To examine the influence of Instructional Leaders' Practices(ILPs) on lecturers' instructional capabilities at Bugema University

The study applied a descriptive research design using a mixed methods approach. The target population included lecturers, Heads of Departments (HoDs) and deans of schools. Quantitative data was collected using a closed-ended questionnaire while qualitative data was collected using interview guides, FGDs and document review. Closed-ended questionnaires were administered to lecturers while interview guides and FGDs were administered to deans and HoDs respectively. Results showed that lecturers had a fairly good understanding of deans' and HoDs' instructional leadership roles. However, their understanding of these roles was mainly centered on ILs' ability to engage lecturers in professional growth and training; and providing resources for effective teaching and learning at the university. The factors that were found to be affecting IL at the university were mainly inadequate funding and insufficient instructional resources. The influence of ILs practices on lecturers' instructional capabilities was realized through enhanced functional capacity of lecturers, lecturers' ability to develop and manage the curriculum and lecturers' ability to promote an orderly and supportive learning environment. The study recommended that the university should diversify its income sources in order to strengthen its financial status for effective IL and performance of academic staff. It was also recommended that the university should improve on its instructional facilities to create a conducive instructional environment. Additionally, the study also suggested that deans and HoDs be subjected to regular Continuous Professional Development(CPD) processes to enable them acquire more skills in Instructional Leadership. This would help them to effectively mentor lecturers, build strong teams and develop assessment and evaluation tools to monitor lecturers' performance.

INTRODUCTION

The study focuses on the role of Instructional Leadership (IL) in enhancing instructional capabilities of academic staff in Private Institutions of Higher Learning (PIHL) in Uganda with specific reference to Bugema University. This is premised on the view that the quality of instructional leadership plays a critical role in determining the extent to which faculty members fulfill their academic mandate in universities. Several scholars have made attempts to define the concept of instructional leadership but Pearce(2017) avers that it is a process in which an instructional leader determines academic programmes and their goals in line with the university curriculum, mobilsing resources to implement the programmes, directing, supervising and monitoring programme implementation and evaluating lecturers regularly to establish progress. However, it is also described as the role that a leader in an educational institution plays in form of defining the institution's mission, managing its instructional programmes and promoting a positive teaching climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 1998). In universities, the Heads of Department (HoDs) and Deans of

Schools (DoSs) find themselves at the forefront of instructional leadership because they directly supervise the academic activities of lecturers (Erzozlu & Saklan, 2016).

Studies have revealed that there is need for change and innovation in the higher education sector in Africa where most universities face challenges among which are the acute shortage of competent staff; poor leadership and management and the deteriorating quality of teaching and research; weak knowledge generation and adaptation and capabilities (Association of African Universities, 2013; Kibwika, 2006).The need for new ways of doing things in African universities and Uganda in particular demands that the teaching staff adapt to change and innovation in instructional leadership (Kibwika, 2006). This will help the universities to provide quality higher education and other services which are crucial in meeting the expectations of students, employers' and society in general.

In its broadest sense, instructional leadership is directly related to quality teaching which is described in the context of using effective pedagogical techniques to produce learning outcomes for students. In this case, quality teaching involves effective design of curriculum and course content and use of learning contexts (NCHE, 2014). Contextually, the quality of instruction and academic staff performance in Private Universities in Uganda is one issue that has continuously been critiqued in different forums among practitioners and scholars (Atwebembeire, Musaazi, Namubiru & Malunda, 2018a; Atwebembeire, Namubiru, Musaazi, 2018b). Moreover, Mohamdbhai (2014) also reveals that a big number of Ugandan lecturers   and many others in the East African region are unable to effectively prepare graduates in their respective universities simply because of poor instructional leadership and mentorship. Despite the attempts made by a some scholars to expose the problem as highlighted above, the challenge of weak instructional leadership continues to bedevil higher education delivery in African universities and Uganda in particular not sparing Bugema. There is a general belief that given the liberalized nature of higher education in Uganda, the situation has been exacerbated by the massification of higher education and commodification of learning notwithstanding the damage it has continued to inflict on the quality of programmes being offered. This study seeks to make another attempt to address this dilemma by focusing on Bugema University (BU) which is equally affected by instructional leadership inadequacies.

STUDY OBJECTIVES
The following objectives guided the study;
1. To examine lecturers' perception about the role of instructional leaders in the development of instructional capabilities in the context of Bugema University
2. To establish factors affecting Instructional Leadership (IL) efficacy at Bugema University.
3. To examine the influence of Instructional Leadership Practices (ILPs) of Deans of Schools(DoSs) and HoDs on lecturers' instructional capabilities at Bugema University

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW
The study was guided by the situational leadership theory which was developed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard in 1969 (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). The Hersey-Blanchard theory suggests that a leader should bring out the best in their team by creating a democratic work environment through adaptability and flexibility. This is because all team members differ in their abilities, confidence levels and levels of motivation to work. In situational leadership, leaders recognize employees job growth and match their leadership style as employees advance through four primary development stages namely; development level 1(D1) – low competence but high commitment; development level 2 (D2) – some competence but low commitment; development level 3 (D3) – high competence but variable commitment; development level 4 (D4) – high competence and high commitment (Blanchard, 2010). The theory also considers four stages of maturity among employees namely; maturity level 1(M1) where members may be new to the role and have not yet gained knowledge and skills to complete the task; maturity level 2 (M2) where employees are eager and willing to perform their role but may require additional supervision; maturity level 3 (M3) – group members in this category possess higher skills level and competence but the final decision remains with the leader; maturity level 4 (M4) – members are willing and able to complete tasks independently from the leader's input (Thompson & Vecchio, 2009). The theory assumes that if the same leadership style is used for everyone, some team members may enjoy it while others might get disgusted and feel under-served.

 In the situational theory, four leadership styles are applied which include; directing, coaching, supporting and delegating (Blanchard, 2010). Under directing, the leader provides support, specific guidance and close supervision. In this style, leaders make decisions and direct actions through communication and interaction. This style is used when the team members require close supervision by the leader either because they are inexperienced or because they have low commitment to the task at hand. The theory also suggests the use of coaching style which is also known as selling or explaining. When coaching, the level of directive behavior is high and so is the level of supportive behavior. The leader accepts input from group members and encourages them to submit their ideas. The leader effectively sells his or her concept to the group and aims to recruit their cooperation through debate and collaboration although the final decision belongs to the leader. Lastly, delegating also known as empowering or monitoring involves low directive behavior and low supportive behavior because it is team member driven (Thompson, 2008). Delegating leaders may be consulted now and then, but they primarily pass less decision-making and project direction to the group members. This style promotes freedom for team members and fosters trust among teams. Therefore, situational leaders must have skills which include adaptability to changing conditions and awareness of their

employees' capabilities. They should also possess qualities such as insight, flexibility, trust, problem solving and coaching. In the case of instructional leadership at university level, the situational leadership theory is important in improving performance because it provides different avenues for team members to relate to their leader while helping the low as well as high performers to develop at different levels to improve teaching and learning.

PERCEIVED ROLE OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS (ILS) IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Studies reveal that Instructional Leadership (IL) plays a distinct role in higher education specifically in influencing teaching and learning (Munna, 2021). It is postulated that the role of instructional leaders differ in different settings (Nixon, 2015) although all instructional leaders influence learning outcomes (Wolverton et al, 2005). Nixon (2015) further notes that an instructional leader in a small school will be hands on while in a large school, they will focus on building the leadership capacity of other staff. Although Leithwood et al (1999) believe that IL should focus on the behavior of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students, Dimmock and Walker (2000) look at educational policy and practice as a vital element of IL.

However, Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008) believe that instructional leadership is a pathway for setting and communicating a clear vision and goals for teachers and students. They add that supporting teachers through coaching, mentoring and Professional Development clearly define the role of an instructional leader. On the other hand, duPlessis (2013) avers that instructional leaders should provide support for teacher in their teaching practice, Professional Development (PD), and resource management. On the contrary, Carraway and Young (2014) believe that IL should provide coaching and mentoring for the teachers in their schools. They insist that teachers who receive coaching are more likely to practice new skills in their classrooms and implement them accordingly. Nonetheless, other studies have shown that in a situation where resources should be availed, instructional leaders have to ensure that teachers have what they need in order to do their jobs effectively (Brolund, 2016). Yet it is also postulated that instructional leaders recognize that expertise is an important element in instructional leadership – so it is the role of an instructional leader to bring the experts together in order for teachers to have access to the knowledge they need (Graczewski et al, 2009). Therefore, it is important to point out that whereas the above studies focus mainly on institutions in a pre-university setting and provide perspectives of IL outside Africa, this study narrows on IL in Uganda's private universities with specific reference to Bugema University.

FACTORS AFFECTING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

According to studies carried out across countries and in varying contexts, different factors are said to be affecting IL in educational institutions. Bush and Bell (2003) assert that shortage of highly educated workforce is one of the critical issues that seem to bedevil instructional leadership in institutions. This assertion draws closer to Vu Thi Huong's (2020) view that leadership capacity of the Instructional Leaders (ILs) also determines the extent to which teachers are appropriately guided to perform their roles. It is argued that the leadership capacity of ILs is very important in as far as the teaching activities of an institution are concerned. It is averred that ILs with strong academic backgrounds were 3.3 times likely to recruit, select and retain teachers with similar academic attributes(Baker &Cooper, 2005). Yet Issa (2015) and Kieleko (2012) note that if the educational environment is not secure and conducive, it becomes very difficult to prepare for the professional development of a school-based staff.

Research also indicates that personal characteristics have a significant role in determining the success of Instructional Leadership (IL) in institutions (Tigit, B (2018). Personal characteristics are attributes that define ones status and this case they include age, educational background and work experience. There is a belief that older ILs are assumed to have greater experience in education and therefore expected to offer more IL –others expect the younger ILs to possess more energy and capacity and therefore strong IL (Tigit, 2018). Other studies have also revealed that the IL's years of experience correlate with high student achievement (Vu Thi Huong, 2020). Similarly, Botha (2004) also insists that theoretical knowledge is as important as tacit and experiential knowledge. It is further stated that the knowledge of practice and educational theories puts ILs in a better position to know the challenges teachers face when they are implementing the curriculum – ILs must always be well conversant with the current development in the education sector since instructional context is ever changing(Vu Thi Huong, 2020). On the other hand, earlier researchers had already indicated that there was a negative relationship which showed that older ILs provided less leadership than the younger ones (Jocobson et al, 1973.

Furthermore, it is claimed that school climate plays a critical role in influencing IL (Vu Thi Huong, 2020). In IL process, the availability of teachers, text books, equipment, supplies and finances are crucial for its success (McCormick, 2022). Divergently, it is also stated that to have successful Instructional Leadership (IL) in a digital age, effective schools need to exploit the advantages of physical resources, information and communication technology effectively –yet to the contrary, research conducted in developing countries revealed that the instructional improvement effort of ILs were highly constrained by the chronic shortage of materials, operating funds and staff development resources (Lockheed & Vaspoor, 1991).

INFLUENCE OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ON CAPABILITIES OF ACADEMIC STAFF

It is widely believed that the way an instructional leader manages instructional programmes and how it influences teachers' job performance impacts greatly on the quality of teaching (Hallinger, 2003). Studies also show that academic leaders are increasingly being asked to develop and promote instructional leadership practices that lead to

increased performance (Hess & Kelly, 2007; Glanz & Zapeda, 2016). This state of affair has led to greater accountability for academic leaders to focus on instructional leadership and for teachers to collaborate (Hallinger, 2005). As a result, investment in instructional leadership development has proved to positively influence teachers' commitment as suggested by Devos et al (2014). Other studies show that instructional leadership has a strong connection with professional learning (Liu & Hallinger, 2018) and teachers' job satisfaction (Leithwood et al, 2008; Cogaltay et al, 2016; Schwartz, 2017 and teacher self-efficacy (Fackler & Malmberg, 2016).

Furthermore, previous empirical studies have shown indirect effects of instructional leadership on student achievement which is mediated through teachers (Hallinger and Heck, 1998, Mascal, Leithwood, Straus & Sacks, 2008; Chang, 2011). Scholars consistently suggest that academic leaders play a key role in the successful implementation of change in schools (Leithwood & Day, 2007; Carrier, 2011) and teachers are the major players in the education process (Hattie, 2012). The role that academic leaders play in schools is a determinant factor for the development of its members and is fundamentally responsible for creating the necessary conditions that support both teaching and learning (and promoting instructional quality in schools (Hallinger, 2008; OECD, 2016).

Being an instructional leader as well as occupying administrative positions is not an easy role (Zapeda et al, 2017; Timperley, 2015). This is why it is averred that leadership has direct effect on teacher collaboration and teacher collaboration directly affects student achievement (Gaziel, 2007; Goddard et al, 2010). Day et al (2016) considers that establishing clear educational goals, planning the curriculum and evaluating teachers and teaching are the primary components of instructional leadership.

METHODS

The study employed a descriptive research design using a mixed-methods approach. This design was chosen because it is fast and cost-effective. The target population of 280 lecturers included deans of schools, Heads of Department (HoDs) and lecturers from the various schools at Bugema University Main Campus (BUMC). The sample size of 162 participants was determined using Krejcie and Morgan table (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970) and included 7 deans of schools, 21 HoDs and 134 lecturers selected from the seven schools at BUMC. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the deans of schools and HoDs while the lecturers from the various schools were selected using stratified sampling. To collect quantitative data, a closed-ended questionnaire was administered to lecturers which they filled at their own convenience. Focus Group Discussions and interview guides were used to collect data from HoDs/school deans. Three Focus Discussion Groups (FDGs) were formed, each comprising of eight participants with the intention of discussing the influence of Instructional Leadership Practices(ILPs) on instructional capabilities of lecturers while interviews were held with deans of schools to establish factors affecting instructional leadership at the university. Additional data in relation to the three research objectives was collected through the review of various documents in the seven schools and these included training reports, support supervision and monitoring reports of the academic activities, minutes of meetings held at school and departmental levels, lecturers' attendance registers and students' grades. Quantitative data was then entered into the computer and analyzed using SPSS version 19. Thematic and content analysis techniques were used to analyze qualitative data.

FINDINGS

Table 1.1: Lecturers' Perception about the Role of Instructional Leaders (Deans and HoDs)

Responses		Counts	Percent
Engaging lecturers' in professional growth and training at the university	70	52.3%	
Providing resources for effective teaching and learning at the university	30	22.4%	
Providing mentorship to lecturers at the university	12	8.9%	
Carrying out support supervision and monitoring at the university	10	7.6%	
Guiding lecturers to go for further studies	8	5.9%	
Providing a collaborative working environment at the university	4	2.9%	
Total		**134**	**100**

In the first study objective, the intention was to ascertain whether lecturers understood the perceived role of Instructional Leaders (ILs) particularly the deans and HoDs in the development of instructional capabilities at the university. And according to table 1 above, their views were spread across six roles and majority (52.3%) indicated that Instructional Leaders (ILs) have to engage lecturers in continuous professional growth through a wide array of training activities in their respective schools and departments. This was followed by 22.4% of the respondents who indicated that the role of Instructional Leaders (ILs) was to provide resources needed in the effective teaching and learning at the university. Those who opined that ILs needed to provide mentorship to lecturers were 8.9%. Others argued that Instructional Leaders (ILs) role was to conduct support supervision and monitoring (7.6%) while those who opined that Instructional Leaders (ILs) needed to encourage lecturers to go for further studies were 5.9% and those who pointed out that Instructional Leaders (ILs) needed to promote a collaborative working environment were 2.9%. Basing on the above results, it can be stated that lecturers at Bugema University had a reasonable understanding of the role of Instructional Leaders at the university although not all of them held the same views in relation to the university's prescribed roles of the deans and HoDs. Through document review, it was possible to establish the job description of Instructional Leaders (ILs) at the university and particularly the deans of schools and HoDs in relation to their instructional leadership role and accordingly it was established that deans and HoDs are

academic leaders who have academic, programmatic, managerial and fiscal responsibilities for their respective schools. In fulfilling their mandate, they verify the adequacy of instruction, monitor academic integrity and progress at the university. Additionally, they work closely with HoDs to enhance the ethical conduct of research and establish and maintain a culture of compliance and integrity among faculty, staff and students.

Table 2: Factors Affecting Instructional Leadership (IL) Efficacy at Bugema University

Factors	Counts	Percent
Inadequate funding of instructional activities	67	50%
Inadequate instructional resources	30	22.4%
Inconsistencies in the hiring of academic staffs	17	12.6%
Heavy workload among instructional leaders	07	5.2%
Unclear rewards and sanctions policy	06	4.5%
Competing priories in the schools and departments	04	03 %
Insufficient teamwork among academic staffs	03	2.3%
Total	134	100

In table 2 above, majority (50%) of the respondents singled out inadequate funding of instructional activities as the most significant factor affecting Instructional Leadership (IL) efficacy at Bugema. This was followed by inadequate instructional facilities (22.4%) and inconsistencies in the hiring of academic staff (17%). Others were; heavy workload (12.6%), unclear rewards and sanctions policy (4.5%), competing priorities in the schools and departments (3%) and insufficient team work among academic staffs (2.3%). Through interviews, one of the deans of schools averred that "for the university to run all its activities effectively, there is need to have multiple sources of funding in order to realize positive outcomes." The dean further explained that "during the two years of COVID 19 lockdown, the university's enrolment plummeted from approximately 5000 students to around 750 online students". Since the university heavily relies on students' tuition as its major source of funding, "this number could not effectively raise the required funds to facilitate all university activities effectively." And as the university re-opened for physical lectures, "there were already many debts that the university needed to settle before business to could normalize to its fullness." As a copying strategy, lecturers were given half pay (Bugema University, 2021) and as a result many other projects were put to halt – this in many ways affected instructional leadership efficacy at the university.

Table 3: Influence of Instructional Leaders' Practices (ILPs) on Lecturers' Instructional Capabilities

Statements	Level of Agreement/Disagreement			
	SDA	DA	A	SA
ILPs promote lecturers' professional growth	15%	30%	23%	32%
ILPs provide mentorship for lecturers to improve their work ethos	33%	24%	23%	20%
ILPs help to build the functional capacity of lecturers	22%	12%	30%	36%
ILPs help lecturers to develop and manage curriculum activities at the university	30%	13%	23%	34%
ILPs help lecturers to promote an orderly and supportive learning environment	24%	15%	35%	26%
ILPs help lecturers to initiate and promote team work among lecturers	25%	26%	30%	19%
ILPs help to assess the effectiveness of lecturers' instructional practices	35%	16%	24%	25%

In table 3 above, respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statements on the influence of Instructional Leaders' Practices (ILPs) in relation to roles of Deans of Schools (DoSs) and HoDs on lecturers' instructional capabilities. Results showed that majority (55%) agreed that Instructional Leadership Practices helped to enhance lecturers' professional growth while 45% disagreed. Through FGDs, it was established that at Bugema the Deans of Schools (DoSs) and HoDs usually worked hand in hand to enhance the professional growth of lecturers through Continuous Professional Development (CPD). It was noted that CPD is usually done through seminars, workshops and refresher courses organized from time to time. A review of work plans and training reports prepared by the deans and HoDs in the seven schools showed that Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of lecturers was one of the planned activities embedded in the annual work plans of School of Education (SoE), School of Health Sciences (SoHSs), School of Business (SoB), School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and School of Theology and Religious Studies (SoThRS). Through a review of the various training reports, there was evidence of a number of training activities that aimed at equipping lecturers with the relevant professional skills and knowledge in their fields of expertise between 2019-2022.

As to whether ILPs of deans and HoDs helped in the mentoring of lecturers in their work ethos, majority (57%) of the respondents agreed and 43% disagreed. In an interview, one of the deans, gave examples of work place ethos that he thought were very crucial for university lecturers and these included effective communication, being sensitive and responsive to deadlines, taking responsibility, maintaining standards, being accountable, upholding trust, showing initiative and respecting colleagues. The dean maintained that he often made serious emphasis of these ethos during

staff and faculty meetings, in general circulars and memos. In one of the FGDs with HoDs, the participants noted that although there was a lot that needed to be done, the deans had stepped up efforts to enhance mindset change among lecturers especially in regard to issues concerning time management, meeting deadlines, reporting and team work. In a review of the documents pinned on the noticeboard of one of the dean's office, two sets of work ethics were highlighted showing both the ethical and unethical workplace behaviors. According to this document, examples of good work ethics were; thinking outside the box, taking on new challenges, striving for excellence, adapting to changes, engaging in team work and exercising accountability. The examples of poor work ethics included; disrespecting university schedules, engaging in abusive behavior, participating in nepotism, taking credit of someone else's work and sabotaging a coworker. Asked why he decided to pin this information in his office, the dean pointed out that the aim was to ensure that "the information on work ethics should be available to all my clients including the staff and faculty."

As to whether ILPs of deans and HoDs helped to build the functional capacity of lecturers, majority (66%) of the respondents agreed and 44% disagreed. It should be noted that for lecturers to perform their tasks effectively, they ought to have relevant functional competences and skills in their areas of expertise and these include but not limited to; expertise in ones subject area, the capacity for original thought and the ability to produce original research for publication, networking in order to build relationships, ability to manage time, general IT skills and ability to undertake a range of administrative and managerial responsibilities. Through interviews, one of the deans reported that in the last three years (2019-2021), he had organized a series of workshops to equip lecturers in his school with IT skills, research and publication skills, proposal grant writing and the skills in international collaborations.

The study also revealed that majority (57%) of the respondents indicated that Instructional Leaders' Practices (ILPs) helped lecturers to develop and manage the curriculum in their various departments and schools. It is important to note that one of the cardinal roles of lecturers in curriculum development and management is to bring about curricular change from course level to governance level and administrative approval. In view of this role, the HoDs through FGDs observed that they had participated in a number of curriculum development related activities in the last two years. These activities include but not limited to the periodic review of the different programs in their respective departments, development of new programs and participation in the overall Program assessment as required by the National Council of Higher Education (NCHE). During the interviews, one of the deans emphasized that, "As dean, we are academic leaders who have programmatic and managerial responsibilities aimed at stimulating and facilitating curriculum and Programme development in our respective schools –we are always doing our best to involve all our academic staff in this endeavor." Through document review, it was established that all the departments and schools had participated in program assessment which was done in preparation for the visiting team from the National Council of Higher Education. Copies of the Program Assessment Reports (PARs) and minutes of the various meetings with evidence of lecturers' participation were available. To this, Chiedozi and Akinfolarin (2017) note and agree that university lecturers should be part and parcel of the broader curriculum development and management process which include the revision of the current programs, developing new programs, collaborating with students and colleagues to ensure the integrity of the curricular and bringing about curricular change.

The results also indicate that Instructional Leaders' Practices (ILPs) were instrumental in helping lecturers to promote an orderly and supportive learning environment as evidenced by the 61% and 39% of the respondents who agreed and disagreed respectively. It is important to emphasize that for effective learning and teaching to be realized in a university setting, the learning environment should be orderly, conducive and supportive to both the academic staff and students. As such, instructional leaders should always take it upon themselves to engage the university administration in activities and accomplishments that aim at improving the learning and teaching atmosphere. Through FGDs, the HoDs noted that although some success had been realized, there was a lot that needed to be done to improve the learning/teaching environment at the university. They specifically reported about the deplorable state of some of the lecture rooms, science labs and teaching equipment in some schools. The HoDs emphasized that lecturers can augment an orderly and supportive learning atmosphere only when the necessary facilities, equipment and motivation are put in place. In view of the above results, some practitioners and analysts have observed that the learning environment goes beyond the layout and facilities of the classroom – it also includes the instructors' relationship with their students wherein it is suggested that learners become more engaged within the supportive learning environment when lecturers respect them and appreciate their responses (Dallimore, Hertenstein & Platt, 2004; Mollet, Martin & Myers, 2004).

Furthermore, the study showed that Instructional Leaders (ILs) were facing an uphill task in promoting the spirit of teamwork among lecturers as highlighted in the above results where majority (51%) disagreed and 49% agreed with the statement. Some scholars have revealed that for teamwork to be effective, members must understand the team's purpose, work toward that purpose and be both independent of and dependent on other members to accomplish the task (Baker, et al, 2005). Results of FGDs were consistent in revealing that there was serious need for building strong teams at the university if the institution's strategies and plans were to be successful. Discussants advocated for a more deliberate approach in promoting team spirit at the university especially at departmental level. The deans of schools also opined that on many occasions, it had been difficult to achieve success in the some planned activities because of failure by members to work as a team. To this, one of them stated, "this is true, and it is not only here – institutions usually face such challenges especially when you are dealing with people, you expect such anomalies. But we are doing all it takes to build strong teams here." However, Ballangrud (2017) emphasizes the centrality of team

work and avers that it leads to decreased workplace errors, higher rates of satisfaction among employees and provides opportunities for continuous improvement among professionals.

It was also evident from the results of the structured questionnaire that ILPs did not have much influence in the assessment of lecturers' instructional effectiveness given that majority of respondents (51%) disagreed while 49% agreed with the statement. Results of FGDs showed that although HoDs had stepped up efforts to ensure that lecturers performed their instructional role as expected, there were still a number of inadequacies in the assessment and evaluation of instructional activities in the various schools. This had resulted in situations where some lecturers had not performed their teaching tasks effectively and students grades were not released in time. Through interviews, one of the deans explained that "some lecturers were not well equipped with necessary skills needed to implement online instruction and a good number of them were working on part time basis and were too preoccupied to attend to students' instructional needs." Nonetheless, Su Yahi Fu Bisheng (2015) argues that the assessment of instructional quality is the best method to strengthen instructional management. And to effect growth in the quality of teaching, there is need to improve the methods of teacher evaluation (Qingshan Zhao & Guoyan Mengi, 2008).

CONCLUSION

Given the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data, it can be concluded that lecturers' perception about the role of instructional leaders highly pointed to engaging lecturers in professional growth and providing instructional resources for effective teaching and learning. The factors that were considered to have highly affected instructional leadership at the university compared to the rest were low remuneration of the academic staff and inadequate instructional facilities. The study also revealed that Instructional Leaders' Practices (ILPs) influenced lecturers' instructional capabilities in various ways and the statements which were considered to have had a strong influence were those that scored above 50% and were backed by findings from FGDs, interviews and document review. These were; (i) ILPs helped to build the functional capacity of lecturers (66%), ILPs helped lecturers to promote an orderly and supportive learning environment (61%), ILPs helped lecturers to develop and manage curriculum activities in their respective departments and schools (57%) and ILPs promoted lecturers' professional growth (55%).

RECOMMENDATIONS

i.   There is need for the university to diversify its income to be able to generate reasonable amounts of funds to facilitate effective and efficient instructional leadership and lecturers' instructional capabilities.

ii.   There is need for the university leadership to improve the adequacy and quality of instructional facilities to enable lecturers perform their teaching role effectively.

iii.   Deans and Heads of Department (HoDs) should initiate ways of mentoring lecturers and other staff in their respective schools and departments.

iv.   There is need for instructional leaders to develop proactive approaches to enhance and build a culture of team work among the academic staff at the university.

v.   Instructional leaders specifically the deans and Heads of Department should develop assessment and evaluation tools to facilitate and strengthen lecturers' instructional practices at the university.

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