

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ACADEMIC ADVISING IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES,  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

MARTHA BOSUA HACKMAN

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

BY

MARTHA BOSUA HACKMAN

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## **DECLARATION**

### **Candidate's Declaration**

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name:.....

### **Supervisors' Declaration**

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: .....

Co-Supervisor's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: .....

## ABSTRACT

The study sought to evaluate academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Using the census sampling, multi-stage sampling, cluster sampling, proportional allocation of sample size as well as the simple random sampling procedures, 383 respondents consisting of 356 students and 27 academic advisors in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast were selected to participate in the study. Questionnaire was used to gather the requisite data for the study. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean of means distributions as well as independent sample t-test. The study among other things found out that academic advisors to a large extent apply a multidimensional approach in the academic advising they render to students in terms of the five main domains (integration, referral, information, individuation, and shared responsibility). However, the academic advisors responded that, class sizes are too large, and the College does not allocate enough funds needed for the acquisition of infrastructure for enhancing academic advising, to enable advisors follow-up on each of their advisees. Again students are very satisfied with academic advising services rendered to them in the University of Cape Coast. The study recommended that, in order for academic advisors to be able to operate to the fullness of their capacity, the College of Education should; reduce the number of students to advisors; and make resources (financial, material, and human) available to enable advisors follow-up extensively on each of their students.

## KEY WORDS

Academic Advising

CIPP Evaluation Model

Developmental Advising

Prescriptive Advising

Students Personnel Services

Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory

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## **DEDICATION**

To my children, Nordine and Chris-Cyril.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The college student population in different institutions across the world is increasing in diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, race, social class, and age. Colleges and universities since the 1980's, have become a much more diverse environment as ethnic minority and other groups continue to increase in numbers (Priest & McPhee, 2000). Given the numerous changes in the characteristics of student bodies, such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and gender, many institutions have begun to re-examine the important role that academic advising plays as part of the student personnel services.

Academic advising programmes in educational institutions are designed to give professional relationships between advisors and students and intended to guide, direct, assist students to solve their problems and develop their potentialities as well. Unfortunately, this programme is not given the desired patronage by students (Sindabi, 2007). It is therefore imperative to evaluate academic advising in the University of Cape Coast in general, in order for academic advising to make the desired impact on students as intended.

#### **Background to the Study**

According to Poliner and Lieber (2004), student personnel services consist of a number of programmes and services designed to support student academic achievement and personal growth. These services are aimed at ensuring satisfaction of learners' needs in the areas of provision of administration, registration, orientation, hostel accommodation, health services, results, supervision of school programmes, guidance and counselling

services and academic advising. Apart from the normal classroom instruction, these facilitate the attainment of the desired educational objectives (Poliner&Lieber).

Guidance and counselling as one of the student personnel services in schools, colleges and universities in Ghana has been in existence for many years (Appiah, 2013). The guidance and counselling programme in many institutions of learning addresses various issues affecting learners such as financial, psychological, social, academic, career and developmental. Since counselling deals with so many issues at the same time, it is possible to overlook some areas at the expense of others. For this reason many developed countries address academic advising in schools and colleges separately from the guidance and counselling programme. Hence the recognition of the fact that setting of academic goals is critical to educational and career development of learners Sindabi (as cited in Muola&Mwania, 2013). Academic advising as a separate entity from the general guidance and counselling programme exists in higher levels of education in Ghana such as schools, colleges and universities.

Academic advising is viewed as the process of “assisting students to realize the maximum educational benefits to them by helping them to better understand themselves and to learn to use the resources of the institution to meet their special educational needs and aspirations” Crockett (as cited in Muola, Maithya, &Mwinzi, 2011). According to Sindabi (2007), the purpose of academic advising programme is to assist students in the development of meaningful educational and career goals. Academic advisors assist students in developing educational plans consistent with their life goals. Academic advisors at the university level provide information about academic progress

and degree requirements, and carefully review students' academic and educational needs, performance, and challenges. The role of the advisor is to assist students in making academic choices, discover learning styles, practice goal setting and problem-solving techniques, and gain access to the necessary support services offered by the institution (Love, 2003; Schreiner & Anderson, 2005).

To students' affairs professionals, student development has a number of definitions. According to Rodgers (as cited in Pargett, 2011), student development is defined as the ways that a student grows, progresses, or increases his or her developmental capabilities as a result of enrollment in an institution of higher education. Sanford (as cited in Gardner, 2009) explains that, student development occurs when students are faced with new challenges in their lives, a response or way to cope with the situation must emerge. Again Sanford (as cited in Pargett, 2011) defines student development as a growth process within the student in which he/she becomes increasingly able to integrate and act on many different experiences and influences.

Despite the varying definitions, one common theme among theorists is that student development is a positive change within the students. However, student development is also a process and each individual's higher education environment will alter that process causing different challenges and obstacles to be overcome. It is at the moments of challenge and obstacles when a student's academic advisor can help the individual get back on track of positive development (Pargett, 2011).

Furthermore, as part of students' development in their higher education, they go through transition which comes with its problems. During



transition, students make decisions that can profoundly affect their lives (Frost, 1991). Therefore, the main objective of advising students in transition is to provide support and aid in decision making. According to Poloson (as cited in Karp, 2013), students should be encouraged to focus on life, career, and educational goals before trying to choose a major, or class schedule.

Academic advisors are one of the key links between students and higher education. Academic advising can be viewed as a powerful intervention for positively influencing the educational and personal development of students (Ender, Winston, & Miller, 1994; Walsh, 2001). Developmental advising identifies, encourages, recognizes, and tailors advising practices for special student populations.

According to Appiah (2013), when students join university for the first time, they are exposed to a lot of freedom which is a big contrast to the strict discipline and restriction that characterize many secondary schools and homes in Ghana. It is assumed that these students are above the age of 18 and therefore mature enough to make decisions independently. Consequently, they might engage themselves in behaviours that may interfere with their studies. Mohammed (1995) asserts that, peer influence sometimes entices students into antisocial behaviour like drug abuse and irresponsible sexual behaviour which eventually interrupt their studies. Some students might not have been admitted into programmes of their choice and as a result may find it difficult to create interest and concentrate on their current programmes. This makes the role of the academic advisor very essential in ensuring that, students' academic needs are addressed, pass their examinations or graduate from college and benefit largely from the tuition and resources spent and thus increase their chances of

employment (Brower, 1992; Habley & McClanahan, 2004). This makes academic advising essential in ensuring the total development of the student.

Generally, males are less willing to seek help in dealing with academic difficulties (Daubman & Lehman, 1993; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997), psychological problems (Cook, 1984; Kligfield & Hoffman, 1979; Möller-Leimkühler, 2002; Padesky & Hammen, 1981), career counselling (Di Fabio & Bernaud, 2008). Such lower rates of help seeking among males go beyond racial and national limits (Neighbors & Howard, 1987; Oliver (as cited in Muola & Mwanja, 2013)). Men do not fail to seek help because they do not have problems but because social norms of traditional masculinity frowns on help seeking by men (Kessler, Brown, & Broman, 1981; Lee, 1997; Möller-Leimkühler, 2002; Wisch, Mahalik, Hayes, & Nuttas cited in Muola et. al., 2011). Males unfortunately, appear to be hesitant to avail themselves for services even when the helper is a peer rather than some authority figure. With males, it may be prudent to institute an “intrusive” form of mentoring (Redmond, 1990), in which the mentor takes the lead and contacts the student on a periodic basis rather than waiting for the student to initiate such communication.

For a long time, academic advising in institutions has not been given the needed attention. Marques (2005) explains that, many students go to school without knowing what they are supposed to do and leave school without any idea of what they are supposed to do and careers they should follow. They have little understanding of themselves and their socio-economic and political environment since the needs of students are not fully met. It seems imperative therefore that the necessary structures and conditions are put in place for implementing a comprehensive and effective academic advising

programme in our schools so that the Ghanaian educational system would produce people with enough skills to avoid increases in unrest and crime rate to which the youth are most vulnerable (Appiah, 2013). The need for a comprehensive and an effective academic advising should therefore not be over emphasized since when effectively and comprehensively embraced, will play an enormous role in shaping the destiny of individuals and the nation at large, thereby eliminating the canker of ill-education, mis-education and uneducated graduates (Karp, 2013).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Academic advising services aim at helping student to deal with challenges such as identity development, personal adjustment problems: feelings of insecurity, low academic achievement, peer influence and loneliness. They also help deal with issues as stress problems which create tensions, depression and anxieties that invariably impact negatively on their academic achievements and career goals (Frost, 1991; Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010).

Unfortunately, these services are not given the desired patronage by students. Additionally, the academic advisor is perceived as not working with the zeal and versatility expected. Very often, students desire to be independent of adults which blocks their impulse to seek any advising which may stem from their unawareness of the service, the kind of posture that the advisor puts up because of lack of advisor training, advisor load and advisor experience. Furthermore, the atmosphere may lack the ambiance that portrays the true advising setting which could also be attributed to lack of appropriate resources (Habley, 2004; Koring, 2005; Tuttle, 2000).

Overall, a common thread throughout existing literature indicates that academic advising continues to be a field that remains largely unexamined in Ghana and Africa at large in relation to the amount of work that exists since most of these works are conducted in the developed countries. Furthermore, there is little evidence to show that academic advising is entrenched and well patronized in learning institutions such as the University of Cape Coast. As a result of this, it has become timely and imperative for a study to be conducted to evaluate the academic advising in the University of Cape Coast, particularly at the College of Education Studies which is one of the oldest segments of the university.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. Specifically, the study sought to examine the models/styles of academic advising, aspects of quality academic advising, resource availability, as well as the level of satisfaction of students regarding the academic advising services rendered to them in the University of Cape Coast using the Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP) evaluation model developed by Daniel Stufflebeam.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions and hypotheses guided the study:

1. What are models of academic advising adopted in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast?
2. What are the aspects of quality academic advising offered by advisors in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast?

3. What are the resources available for effective and efficient academic advising carried out College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast ?
4. What is the level of satisfaction of students regarding academic advising services rendered to them College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast?

### **Hypotheses**

1. Ho: There is no statistically significant between the rate of patronage of academic advising by male and female students in the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast.

H<sub>A</sub>: There is statistically significant between the rate of patronage of academic advising by male and female students in the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast.

2. Ho: There is no statistically significant difference between male student and female student level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered by College of Education Studies, in the University of Cape Coast.

H<sub>A</sub>: There is statistically significant difference between male student and female student level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered by College of Education Studies, in the University of Cape Coast.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study is intended to bring to the limelight the benefits academic advising has on students. It is important that students are guided and directed in their formative and developing years of life. Identifying problems that prevent them from going in for advice will go a long way to help in the development of the students' careers and attitudes. The study affirms the need for making the academic advising service part and parcel of the everyday life of the student. It is to help students in future to develop their potentials in all fields of human endeavour. Practitioners will be exposed to emerging obstacles in the delivery of the programme. Information gathered could be used to redesign and support capacity building in the field of academic advising to enhance its future. It will also serve as a source of reference material and add up to existing body of knowledge for a comprehensive development of the programme.

### **Delimitations**

The entire workforce of the university was too large to be covered within a limited time frame. Therefore, the study focused on the students and academic advisors in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. It excluded other students and academic advisors in the whole university. The scope of the study comprised an evaluation of academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. The scope basically focused on finding out the models/styles of academic advising adopted in UCC, aspects of quality academic advising in UCC, availability of resources for effective and efficient academic advising, as well as the level of satisfaction of students with academic advising services rendered to them in the University of Cape Coast.

## **Limitations**

The questionnaire was the only instrument used for data collection. Since the research relied mainly on the questionnaire, some challenges emanated from this source. Some of these challenges were that some of the items on the questionnaire were left unanswered by the respondents and some advisors misplaced the questionnaires given to them. However, this hurdle was quickly overcome as another set of questionnaire was given immediately so that an extensive coverage of the academic advisors in the entire College of the Education Studies could be achieved to increase the representativeness of the sample units used. The use of only questionnaire as data collection instrument deprived the researcher the opportunity to interact with the respondents.

## **Organisation of the Study**

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter One deals with introduction, background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses, significance of the study, delimitation, limitations and organization of the study. Chapter Two entails the Literature Review with a focus on reviewing the works of authors pertaining to the concept of academic advising, roles of academic advisors, models/styles of academic advising, aspects of quality academic advising, problems/challenges academic advisors face concerning academic advising, level of satisfaction of students with academic advising, factors that affect the rate at which students patronise academic advising as well as the CIPP evaluation model by Stufflebeam as the theoretical basis for the work. Chapter Three discusses the Methodology. This includes the study design, population, sampling technique, research instruments, and data collection procedure as

well as data analysis. Chapter Four focuses on the discussion of field data and findings and finally, Chapter Five deals with the summary of the research process, summary of key findings, conclusions, recommendations as well as areas for further research.

### **Chapter Summary**

Student Personnel services consist of a host of programmes and services designed to support student academic achievement and personal growth. These services are aimed at the satisfaction of learners' needs in the areas of provision of administration, registration, orientation, hostel accommodation, health services, results, supervision of school programmes, guidance and counselling services and academic advising. However, because counselling deals with so many issues at the expense of others, it has become imperative to set up academic advising as a separate entity in order to assist students in their educational and career development goals. However, in many institutions and in UCC for that matter, many academic advisors are seen not working with the zeal and enthusiasm partly because of resource unavailability as well as low student patronage. These observations doubled with literature gap in this area as virtually no study seemed to have been conducted in the African context, Ghana nor in UCC which necessitated this study to be carried out by evaluating academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. The CIPP evaluation model developed by Daniel Stufflebeam was used to assess the models of academic advising; find out the aspects of academic advising offered by advisors; examine the extent to which resources are available for effective and efficient academic advising; as well as assess the level of satisfaction of students regarding academic advising



rendered in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. The findings of this study bring out the need for making the academic advising service part and parcel of the everyday life of the student and exposes to practitioners emerging obstacles in the delivery of the programme. The study also serves as a source of reference material and adds up to existing body of knowledge for a comprehensive development of the programme.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews relevant literature regarding academic advising. The Stufflebeam's Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) evaluation Model is presented as a theoretical basis for this work. In addition, the conceptual framework reviews relevant concepts in relation to academic performance such as; the concept of academic advising, models/styles of academic advising, aspects of quality academic advising, problems/challenges confronting academic advising, gender and academic advising, as well as an empirical review concerning students' level of satisfaction with academic advising services.

#### **Theoretical Background-CIPP Evaluation Model**

The theoretical framework for the study is rooted in CIPP model. CIPP evaluation model is a program evaluation model which was developed by Daniel Stufflebeam and colleagues in 1960. Stufflebeam is an "influential proponent of a decision-oriented evaluation approach" designed to help administrators make good decisions (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2011). His approach to evaluation is recognized as the CIPP model. CIPP is an acronym for Context, Input, Process and Product (Robinson, 2006).

Stufflebeam's Context, Input, Process, and Product evaluation model is "a comprehensive framework for conducting formative and summative evaluations of projects, personnel, products, organizations, and evaluation systems" (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007, p. 325). Stufflebeam (1971a) describes evaluation according to the CIPP model as a "process of delineating, obtaining and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives"

(p.267). In other words, CIPP is based on providing information for decisions (Stufflebeam, 1971a). Moreover, Boulmetis and Dutwin (2005), named the CIPP model as the best decision-making model. The CIPP evaluation model “is configured especially to enable and guide comprehensive, systematic examination of social and educational projects that occur in the dynamic, septic conditions of the real world” (Stufflebeam&Shinkfield, 2007, p. 351). Over the years, the model has been refined (Alkin, 2004),and used by a wide range of disciplines (Stufflebeam&Shinkfield, 2007).

In education settings, the CIPP evaluation model has been used to evaluate number of educational projects and entities (Zhang & Griffith, 2009; Zhang & Zeller, 2008). Nicholson (1999)recommended the CIPP evaluation model to evaluate reading instruction. Mathews and Hudson (2001)developed guidelines for the evaluation of parent training projects within the framework of the CIPP evaluation model. A faculty development project designed to support the teaching and evaluation of professionalism of medical students and residents was examined using the CIPP evaluation model (Steinert, Cruess, Cruess, & Snell, 2005). The model was used to construct Taiwan’s national educational indicator systems (Chien, Lee, & Cheng, 2007). Osokoya and Adekunle(2007) also used the modelto assess the trainability of enrolees in the Leventis Foundation (Nigeria) Agricultural Schools’ projects. Furthermore,Combs, Gibson, Hays, Saly, and Wendt(2008),derived a course assessment and enhancement model based on the CIPP evaluation model because of its flexibility in providing formative and summative results.

The CIPP evaluation model (see Figure 1) is a framework for guiding evaluations of programs, projects, personnel, products, institutions, and

evaluation systems (Stufflebeam, 2003). Its main components are context, input, process, and product evaluation, with the intention of not to prove, but rather improve, the program itself (Stufflebeam, 2003). An evaluation following the CIPP model may include a context, input, process, or product evaluation, or a combination of these elements (Stufflebeam, 2003).



*Figure 1.* Components of Stufflebeam's (2003) CIPP Model

1. **Context Evaluation:** Is often referred to as needs assessment. It asks, "What needs to be done?" The context evaluation stage of the CIPP Model creates the big picture of where both the program and evaluation fit (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). This stage helps in decision-making related to planning, and enables the evaluator to identify the needs, assets, and resources of a community in order to provide programming that will be beneficial (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011; Mertens & Wilson). Context evaluation serves planning decisions by identifying unmet needs, unused opportunities and

fundamental problems that avert the meeting of needs or the use of opportunities to assist decision makers define goals and priorities and to assess them as well as to judge whether or not outcomes have been met. Context evaluation also identifies the political climate that could influence the success of the program (Mertens & Wilson). To achieve this, the evaluator compiles and assesses background information, and interviews program leaders and stakeholders.

2. **Input Evaluation:** Helps prescribe a project to address the identified needs. It asks, “How should it be done?” and identifies procedural designs and educational strategies that will most likely achieve the desired results. It serves structuring decisions by projecting and analyzing alternative procedural designs; Input evaluations (“I” in CIPP) assess alternative approaches, competing actions, staffing and budget plans for their feasibility and cost effectiveness. In this stage, information is collected regarding the mission, and goals of the program. Its purpose is to measure the program’s strategy, merit and work plan against research, the responsiveness of the program to client needs, and alternative strategies offered in similar programs (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). The objective of this stage is to choose suitable strategy to implement to resolve the program problem (Fitzpatrick et. al., 2011).
3. **Process Evaluation:** Process evaluation investigates the quality of the program’s implementation. Process evaluation serves implementing decisions by monitoring project operations that assist staff to carry out an activity and for users to be able to judge program performance. In

this stage, program activities are monitored, documented and assessed by the evaluator (Fitzpatrick et. al., 2011; Mertens& Wilson, 2012). Primary goals of this stage are to provide feedback regarding the degree to which planned activities are carried out, guide staff on how to modify and improve the program plan, and assess the degree to which participants can carry out their roles (Stufflebeam, 2003).

4. **Product Evaluation:** The final component of CIPP, product evaluation, assesses the positive and negative effects the program had on its target audience (Mertens& Wilson, 2012), assessing both the intended and unintended outcomes (Stufflebeam, 2003). It asks, “Did the project succeed?” Both short-term and long-term outcomes are judged. At this stage, judgments of stakeholders and relevant experts are analyzed, viewing outcomes that impact the group, subgroups, and individual. A combination of techniques should be used to assess a comprehensive set of outcomes (Mertens& Wilson; Stufflebeam). Product evaluation serves recycling decisions by determining the degree to which objectives have been achieved and by determining the cause of the obtained results. Product evaluations (second “P” in CIPP) identify and assess a project’s intended and unintended outcomes to help maintain the program’s focus and help staff decide whether or not planned needs are being met (Stufflebeam).

The CIPP evaluation model emphasizes “learning-by-doing” to identify corrections for problematic project features. According to Stufflebeam, the most fundamental tenet of the model is “not to prove, but to improve” (Stufflebeam&Shinkfield, 2007, p. 331). The proactive application

of the model can aid decision making and quality assurance, and its retrospective use allows the faculty member to continually reframe and “sum up the project’s merit, worth, probity, and significance” (Stufflebeam&Shinkfield). In summary, the researcher believes that the model can help guide academic advising needs assessment and planning, monitor the process of implementation, and provide feedback and judgment of the academic advisor’s effectiveness for continuous improvement.

### **Theoretical Basis of Academic Advising**

Vygotsky is one of the Russian psychologists whose ideas have influenced the field of educational psychology and the field of education as a whole. For him, although biological factors constitute the necessary prerequisite for elementary processes to emerge, socio-cultural factors are indispensable for elementary natural processes to develop. He argues for the uniqueness of the social milieu and regards socio-cultural settings as the primary and determining factor in the development of higher forms of human mental activity such as voluntary attention, intentional memory, logical thought, planning, and problem solving. On the other hand, his most outstanding work is the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is regarded as a remarkable contribution to the field of education and learning process.

One of the fundamental concepts of socio-cultural theory, according to Lantolf (2000), is its claim that the human mind is mediated. Lantolf claims that Vygotsky finds a significant role for what he calls tools in humans’ understanding of the world and of themselves. According to him, Vygotsky advocates that humans do not act directly on the physical world

without the intermediary of tools. Whether symbolic or signs, tools according to Vygotsky are artefacts created by humans under specific cultural (culture specific) and historical conditions, and as such they carry with them the characteristics of the culture in question. They are used as aids in solving problems that cannot be solved in the same way in their absence. In turn, they also exert an influence on the individuals who use them in that they give rise to previously unknown activities and previously unknown ways of conceptualising phenomena in the world. As a result, they are subject to modification as they are passed from one generation to the next, and each generation reworks them in order to meet the needs and aspirations of its individuals and communities. Vygotsky suggests that the role of a psychologist should be to understand how human social and mental activity is organised through culturally constructed artefacts.

According to Vygotsky(as cited in Lantolf&Appel,1994; Lantolf, 2000), the socio-cultural environment presents the child with a variety of tasks and demands, and engages the child in his world through the tools. In the early stages, Vygotsky advocates that the child is completely dependent on other people, usually the parents, who initiate the child's actions by instructing him/her as to what to do, how to do it, as well as what not to do. Parents, as representatives of the culture and the conduit through which the culture passes into the child, actualise these instructions primarily through language. On the issue of how do children then appropriate these cultural and social heritages, Vygotsky (as cited in Wertsch 1985), states that the child acquires knowledge through contacts and interactions with people as the first step (interpsychological plane), then later assimilates and internalises this



knowledge adding his personal value to it (intrapsychological plane). This transition from social to personal property according to Vygotsky is not a mere copy, but a transformation of what had been learnt through interaction, into personal values. Vygotsky claims that this is what also happens in schools. Students do not merely copy teachers' capabilities; rather they transform what teachers offer them during the processes of appropriation.

Vygotsky(as cited in Lantolf&Appel, 1994;Lantolf, 2000), argues that the field of psychology has deprived itself of crucial information to the understanding of complex aspects of human behaviour by refusing to study consciousness. This refusal, according to him, has restricted the role of psychology to just the explanation of the most elementary connections between a living being and the world. Consciousness in his view distinguishes human behaviour from other living beings and links the individual's knowledge to his/her behaviour. It arises, functions and develops in the process of people's interaction with reality on the basis of their socio-historical practices. He insists that socially meaningful activity has to be considered as the explanatory principle for understanding consciousness and he rejects any attempt to decouple consciousness from behaviour.

Lantolf and Appel(1994) indicate that the latter's understanding of consciousness in the field of teaching is embodied in the concept of metacognition, which according to him, incorporates functions such as planning, voluntary attention, logical memory, problem solving and evaluation. Williams and Burden (1997) claim that socio-cultural theory advocates that education should be concerned "not just with theories of instruction, but with learning to learn, developing skills and strategies to

continue to learn, with making learning experiences meaningful and relevant to the individual, with developing and growing as a whole person". They claim that the theory asserts that education can never be value-free; it must be underpinned by a set of beliefs about the kind of society that is being constructed and the kinds of explicit and implicit messages that will best convey those beliefs. These beliefs should be manifest also in the ways in which teachers interact with students.

Socio-cultural theory has a holistic view about the act of learning. Williams and Burden (1997) claim that the theory opposes the idea of the discrete teaching of skills and argues that meaning should constitute the central aspect of any unit of study. Any unit of study should be presented in all its complexity rather than skills and knowledge presented in isolation. The theory emphasizes the importance of what the learner brings to any learning situation as an active meaning-maker and problem-solver. It acknowledges the dynamic nature of the interplay between teachers, learners and tasks and provides a view of learning as arising from interactions with others. According to Ellis (2000), socio-cultural theory assumes that learning arises not through interaction but in interaction. Learners first succeed in performing a new task with the help of another person and then internalise this task so that they can perform it on their own. In this way, social interaction is advocated to mediate learning. According to Ellis, the theory goes further to say interactions that successfully mediate learning are those in which the learners scaffold the new tasks. However, one of the most important contributions of the theory is the distinction Vygotsky made between the child's actual and potential levels of

development or what he calls Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The question then is, what is ZPD?

### **The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)**

Lantolf(2000), Wertsch (1985) and Shayer (2002), assert that Vygotsky's introduction of the notion of the ZPD was due to his dissatisfaction with two practical issues in educational psychology: the first is the assessment of a child's intellectual abilities and the second is the evaluation of the instructional practices. With respect to the first issue, Vygotsky believes that the established techniques of testing only determine the actual level of development, but do not assess the potential ability of the child. In his view, psychology should address the issue of predicting a child's future growth, "what he/she is not yet". Because of the value Vygotsky attached to the significance of predicting a child's future capabilities, he formulated the concept of ZPD which he defines as "the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" Wertsch (1985, p. 60). According to Vygotsky, ZPD assists in determining a child's mental functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that are currently in an embryonic state, but will mature tomorrow. Furthermore, he claims that the study of ZPD is also essential because it is the dynamic region of sensitivity in which the transition from interpsychological to intrapsychological functioning takes place.

Shayer (2002) claims that a crucial feature of learning according to Vygotsky is that it creates a ZPD, that is to say, learning awakens a variety of

internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalised, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement. Vygotsky advocates that ZPD is not the role of instruction alone, but developmental (biological) factors do have a role to play. It is jointly determined by the child's level of development and the form of instruction involved. Vygotsky asserts that, instruction and development do not directly coincide, but represent two processes that exist in a very complex interrelationship. Vygotsky argues that the child can operate "only within certain limits that are strictly fixed by the state of the child's development and intellectual possibilities". Vygotsky in Shayer (2002), advocates that good instruction should proceed ahead of development and should awaken and arouse to life an entire set of functions, which are in the stage of maturation and lie in the ZPD. It is in this way, as he claims, that instruction can play an extremely important role in development. This suggests, according to Shayer, that the "natural or spontaneous" thinking lags behind the intellectual challenge of schooling, however, at the same time; this natural thinking provides children with new tools for thinking to meet the learning demands of the school. It also suggests that teachers are responsible for offering learning contexts in which the instruction marches ahead of the development and leads it. Vygotsky claims as Shayer reports, that good instruction must always be focused not so much at the developed but the developing functions.

Shayer (2002) posits that despite the attractiveness of the concept of ZPD in its simplicity, its application in practice is more problematic. He

claims that Vygotsky himself did not offer much practical advice as to how ZPD might be successfully applied in classrooms. Shayer claims that Vygotsky left it to others to find effective ways of doing so. It is also imperative to note that the concept of ZPD does not imply that these levels of learning are hierarchically ordered or neatly sequenced. Specifically, Shayer says that Vygotsky explicitly stated that they are not. An issue that arises in school contexts is what are the means that can help learners progress from one level to the next and what is the teacher's role in facilitating this progress? Two vital concepts are discussed, one is the concept of mediation, which is central to socio-cultural theory, and the second is the concept of scaffolding that was engendered by cognitive psychologists.

Vygotsky's Socio-cultural Theory is pertinent to academic advising since it assumes that learners are assisted by others who are more knowledgeable and skilled to function intellectually and independently on their own as individuals (Hetherington & Parke, 1999). In Vygotsky's opinion, the child grows and changes as a function of his/her efforts and support from others who are more skilled. Students improve academically when significant others such as parents, teachers and so on help them to solve problems related to learning. Academic advisors are expected to be well informed on academic and career development issues to an extent of being very resourceful to students. Students who recognize the fact that academic advisors are more knowledgeable, experienced and can assist them will tend to seek their assistance and will benefit from their guidance. These theoretical perspectives can be used to account for academic related problems as well as a basis for psychotherapy.

From the abovementioned, it can be concluded that, Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of human learning describes learning as a social process and the origination of human intelligence in society or culture. The major idea of Vygotsky's theoretical framework is that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Vygotsky believed everything is learned on two levels. First, through interaction with others, and then integrated into the individual's mental structure. A second aspect of Vygotsky's theory is the idea that the potential for cognitive development is limited to a "Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD). This "zone" is the area of exploration for which the student is cognitively prepared, but requires help and social interaction to fully develop. A teacher or more experienced peer and for that matter an Academic advisor is able to provide the learner with the necessary support in order to facilitate the understanding of knowledge domains or development of complex skills.

### **The Concept of Academic Advising**

Even though Midgen (1999) defined the academic advisor essentially as a source of information about the curriculum and the university, other definitions regarding academic advising are also found in the literature. Grites (2009) defined academic advising as a "decision making process during which students realize their maximum educational potential through communication and information exchanges with an advisor" (p. 1). Furthermore, Creamer (2000) defined academic advising as an educational activity that helps college students in making decisions in their personal and academic lives. Again, Frost (1990) explained that advising has moved from just providing students with information to a student-centered service that includes the needs of the

institution as well. Ender et. al.,(1994) stated that a shift in the advisor/advisee relationship began in the 1970's when advising went from being purely informational to being more holistic. The holistic academic advisor needs not to be familiar only with the curriculum and the institution but also with theories of student development, learning styles, cognitive abilities, and cultural diversity (Grites& Gordon, 2000).

“Academic advising has the advantage of providing students with repeated one-on-one interactions across multiple years”.The relationship that exists between a student and their faculty advisor is an essential relationship to have. The student has a chance to get to know their professional advisor over the course of several years, making it easier for the student to deal with concerns or ask any questions to their advisor (Pizzolato, 2008, p. 21). Additionally, the student-faculty relationship should be one where both the student and the advisor know personal information about the other. For instance, the advisor should know where the student works, what their hobbies and interests are, and maybe even some family information. This relationship can provide many benefits to the student. The relationship between a student and their advisor can increase student development and increase academic success for the student(Pizzolato).

Pizzolato, 2008 stated that “Academic advising has moved toward providing guidance to students that focuses on meeting their learning and developmental needs”. In every institution, there are many professors and advisors with whom students might have interactions; nevertheless, it is the meetings with one's faculty advisor that increases student development. In college, “students are exposed to a variety of faculty or adjunct-faculty

members for different courses, but course instructors often do not know students well enough or see them frequently enough to attend to each student's specific developmental needs" (Choate & Granello, 2006, p. 116). Although these continuous interactions with various faculty members do not hinder student development, faculty advisors can help a student grow academically and personally because of the professional relationship between the student and advisor.

According to Baker and Griffin 2010 the faculty advisor has many roles and responsibilities when it comes to advising students. "Advisors are expected to share their knowledge of major and degree requirements, help students schedule their courses, and generally facilitate progress to degree in a timely manner". The ultimate goal of an advisor and for the institution is to see students graduate; however, much more needs to be done in order to attain that goal. The goal in advising is not to increase or decrease a particular rate, such as decreasing the dropout rate and increasing graduation rate; rather, the goal in advising is to create a relationship with the student so that the student is getting the most out of their education. The academic advisor to any student assumes to play a vital role to their progress by coaching new and continuing students through general education choices, major selections, minors and possibly certificate options. Misinformation can have a negative impact on students who enrol in unsuitably advanced courses and lose precious financial aid in an unsuccessful attempt in such course (Hollis, 2009).

Dillon and Fischer (2000) conducted a study where student perceptions of the characteristics and functions of academic advisors were explored by surveying faculty advisors from a Minnesota college. Faculty based their



responses on ranking what they thought to be effective characteristics of an advisor. Of their responses, the top characteristics associated with being an effective advisor were knowledgeable, available, communication, advocacy, authenticity, accountability, and approachable (Dillon & Fischer). Faculty perceptions of advising indicated that these characteristics were essential in their role of being an advisor to increase student development and guide students in the desired track. This study provided insight to what faculty advisors view as important in advising students, as well as also a workshop conducted by Marques (2005), which found the top five best practices for faculty advising. Marques asserts that advisors should be: involved in and knowledgeable of the student's position and program; attuned to the student's personal well-being in the learning environment; available to the student in diverse ways (in person and by telephone, e-mail, and fax); honest with adult learners; and should develop and maintain a peer-to-peer relationship with the adult learner (Marques).

The best five practices to academic advising should be used by every faculty advisor to guarantee that each student has the opportunity to attend college in a supportive environment that enhances learning and development. The faculty advisor will be the one constant person throughout the course of a student's college career and knows more than anyone else the needs of the student (Choate & Granello, 2006). In addition, the advisor can also "tailor advising methods to match the developmental needs of an advisee" and can also "interact with other program faculty, when necessary, to ensure the optimal learning environment for that student" (Choate & Granello).

In spite of the fact that there are numerous roles assigned to a faculty advisor and as much work and effort that goes into advising a student, there should be just as much work for the student to be willing to develop academically and personally. Academic advising can be seen as the responsibility of the advisor to make contact with the student; however, it is just as much the student's responsibility to seek advice to further their academic success. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), have found in past research "that the quality of effort or involvement students make in meeting the requirements of their formal academic program has an impact on their self-ratings of growth in career-related competencies and skills" (p. 522). Students must make an effort in furthering their academic career and ensuring that they are on the path to degree completion. Higher education administrators need to make advising an important, monitored, rewarded activity. Administrative ignorance or neglect of advising will usually mean that students will receive less than they deserve from their college education. Effective advising is a team effort involving administrators, faculty or staff advisors, and students.

Advising is a key component of a college career (Petress, 2000), in order for academic advising to be a successful process for the student to see the benefits of having an advisor, it is imperative that both the advisor and the student make conscious efforts to play their respective roles effectively. For instance, advisors and faculty members might find it challenging to guide a student who is undecided in their major because the student might not reach out to the advisor making it more work for the advisor to contact the student. "Faculty members frequently feel quite uncomfortable with the process of helping 'undecided' students gather sufficient data with which to make

intelligent choices” (Stein & Spille, 2004). Student effort is just as important as the advisor being reachable and approachable, which means student focus and preparedness is a key element when meeting with one’s advisor.

From the discussions above, it would suffice to concede that, there is little debate concerning the constituents or the composition of academic advising. This is because, the common idea that runs through the various definitions provided is the fact that, academic advising is the process whereby a resource person helps an individual student to make a choice/ an assessment of his/ her academic life in order to realize the full potential of the student (Creamer, 2000; Grites, 2009; Midgen, 1999). However, there seem to be a paradigm shift in contemporary times as the focus of academic advising has shifted from the advisor who acts as a repository of knowledge and provides the student with the needed information to student-centeredness where students’ needs, interests and aspirations are encouraged (Frost, 1990). In order to make the student feel free to air his concerns or ask questions, there is the need for a cordial relationship between the student and the advisor which is necessary for effective academic advising. To ensure this, the academic advisor should be the one and regular person throughout the life of the student in the college, as well as being well attuned to students’ learning and being available in many ways to the student. Honesty, cordial relationship and in-depth knowledge are key to the success of the entire process as misinformation can hinder the success of the whole idea.

### **The Role of Academic Advisors**

The role of the advisor is to assist students in making academic choices, discover learning styles, practice goal setting and problem-solving

techniques, and gain access to the necessary support services offered by the institution (Love, 2003; Schreiner & Anderson, 2005). Sindabi (2007), outlined a number of academic advisors' roles that include: answering all sorts of academic questions; referring students to someone who can answer their questions; providing information and guidance on academic and curriculum matters; referring students to heads of department or deans of faculties for answers to curriculum and academic programme questions; and exploring students' academic and career goals and providing guidance where needed. Again, Sindabi adds that advisors' roles include: maintaining records of academic performance that can serve as a basis for advising; advising students on and channelling them to diverse resources that will enhance their overall intellectual development; providing reference for jobs or further education to aspiring student advisees; addressing any academic issues or problems that arise; referring students to specialized advising available from within and without the institution; and making follow up to assess whether students benefited from previous contacts and referrals.

The roles and responsibilities of an academic advisor are therefore enormous and would require commitment, up-to-date information, and a lot of effort to meet the needs and concerns of students to deliver optimum results. With modern technology in communication, students can easily submit e-mail inquiries which can be answered by their academic advisors depending on the nature of the problem instead of seeking extended hours for academic advising. Group advising can efficiently impart important information to many students at once (King, 2008), thus making the role of the academic advisor

easier. For example, orientation of new students typically involves group advising.

In summary, it needs to be mentioned here that the roles of the academic advisors are huge and gargantuan and it takes an advisor with commitment and dedication for the job in order to take up the mantle and follow the process of student development until the procedure is fully completed. This means, the advisor needs to serve as an *in-loco parentis*, that is, someone who provides love, care and takes absolute interest in helping the student to realize his or her maximum potential, thereby playing the role of the parent in the school.

#### **Academic Advising Models/Styles**

There are two models to advising students: one is called prescriptive, where the advisor tells the student what needs to be done in order to graduate; and the other is called developmental, where the advisor and student collaborate to ensure that the student graduates on time. A prescriptive advisor does not allow the students to make their own choices in the direction of their education, rather they are told what they should do and what they need to know according to their advisor. The relationship between a student and advisor who uses prescriptive advising is very “impersonal and authority-based, answering only specific questions and not taking individual development into consideration” Jordan(as cited in Hale et. al, 2009). Prescriptive advising tends to be more task-oriented and concrete, focusing mostly on course selection and registration. It is imperative that advisors understand that each student who seeks and needs advising brings with him or her specific experiences and perceptions of the student/faculty relationship.

Furthermore, a successful advisor needs to understand student development as a means to deliver and create a successful advising approach within a specific environment according to Chickering and Reisser (1993).

On the other hand, a developmental advisor allows the student to make all choices in their education, resulting in the students feeling as if they have chosen their own path rather than being told what they should do. “A developer extends the kinds of support provided through advising relationship; however, in addition to career and psychosocial support, a developer engages in knowledge development, information sharing, and support as students set and achieve goals” (Baker & Griffin, 2010, p. 5). Allowing the student to choose their own direction will leave them feeling more satisfied with the career path they desire and take an interest in their own education. Developmental advising stimulates and supports students in their quest for an enriched quality of life and it focuses on identifying and accomplishing life goals (Hale et. al.,2009).

In a study conducted at a Mid-South University, 429 students were surveyed to determine the style of advising used by their current advisor and also the advising style that the student preferred. Results indicated that nearly all (95.5%) students preferred the developmental advising style and 78% out of all students were actually receiving developmental advising (Hale et. al.,2009). Although faculty advising is one key to student success, the type of advising is crucial to student development. Every student is different, but past research has shown that most students prefer developmental advising rather than prescriptive advising because it not only allows them to make their own

decisions in their education, but it also allows them to create a professional relationship with their advisor in order to seek guidance and support.

Many universities have recently implemented advising centres that help with the increase in enrolment and influx of students needing guidance. The various models of advising include the faculty-only model, split model, supplementary model, total intake model, and satellite model. The *Faculty-only model*, where a fresh student is assigned to a faculty member in their department, is still the most popular and widely used among all campuses. However, this model has recently been declining and is now only used (Tuttle, 2000, p. 16). The *Split model* is a model in which advisors provide advising at a specific student centre, to undeclared students, while faculty members provide advising of declared majors. In 2000, this model was used in 27 percent of all institutions. One reason the split model has become so popular is because it suits the needs of a certain group of students. “The popularity of the split model, which includes an advising centre for a designated group of students, such as those with undeclared majors, with all other students assigned to academic departments has grown in recent years” (p. 16). The *Supplementary model* uses advising centres like the split model, but students are also assigned to a faculty advisor once the student has declared a degree of study. This model is not as popular for larger colleges and universities; rather, this model is popular among private colleges (p. 16). The *Total Intake model* is used in community and junior colleges. This model “involves staff advising all students for a particular period of time and then transferring them to departments” (p. 16). Finally, the *Satellite model* allows each academic unit responsible for their own advising, but conduct advising

across the campus. This model has become more popular with the increase in distance education (p. 16).

The 3-I process developed by Gordon (2006) is among the most popular advising frameworks. The 3-I process integrates career advising with academic advising through the use of the following three stages: inquire, inform, and integration. It provides for a planning and action phase in which both students and advisors are decision makers. During the "inquire" phase, the student is seeking answers to questions and may begin to identify certain academic and career options of interest. Furthermore, the student begins to ask direct questions that are triggered by thinking about career concerns as well as identity concerns. The second phase is the "inform" stage, in which the student begins to gather information concerning his or her personal attributes, career goals, and coursework. The inform phase the advisor plays a crucial role in giving curriculum and academic information as the student attempts to retain and organize its meaning in order to make the right academic and professional decision. Again, Gordon adds that third phase, "integration," which allows the student to engage actively in decision making by using the information he or she has learned about in the previous two stages. Even though the student is encouraged to develop autonomy, the advisor continues to play a vital role in guiding student development. The model/style used to guide students is instrumental, since it may affect the relationship between advisor and advisee.

Although faculty advising and advising centres have recently become more popular, the reason for their popularity is because of higher student enrolment. Higher education has recently seen an increase in student



enrolment regardless of the recent recession. “Enrolment increased phenomenally-in the thirty years between 1945 and 1975, and rose by more than 500 percent, from around 2 million to 11 million students” (Cohen & Kisker, 2010, p. 208). As a result of higher enrolment in higher education, there arose a high demand of academic advising in order to increase the retention of students and assist students to complete their degree. As the diversity of the student body and concerns for student retention increased, “so did the need for professional advisors and comprehensive advising systems” Frost (as cited in Tuttle, 2000, p. 15).

From the above, it can be said that, traditionally, there are two major models/styles of academic advising which are the prescriptive and the developmental models. The prescriptive model tends to make the student passive in the process of academic advising who receives guidance from the academic advisor whereas the developmental model makes the student an active participant who makes choices and feels that he/she has contributed or forged their own paths in the whole advising process. However, studies on the subject seem to suggest that, students prefer the developmental model to the prescriptive model of academic advising. Apart from the two major models/styles to academic advising, there are some other models such as; faculty only model which used to be the most popular and widely used among all campuses; the split model which is gradually gaining popularity in place of faculty only model; and the supplementary model which is usually adopted and popular in the private universities or colleges. Again, literature seem to suggest that, the increasing need for academic advising in our colleges/ universities is as a result of the increase in the enrolment in our various

institutions which makes the guidance and counselling services overlook some areas of concern of the student so far as student development is concerned.

### **Aspect of Quality Academic Advising – A Synthesized Learning**

#### **Paradigm**

There has been significant debate recently regarding what constitutes quality academic advising, and what specifically students should learn in relationship to academic advising. The global community for academic advising National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), has published a Concept of Academic Advising which claims advising as having its own pedagogy, learning outcomes, and curriculum (NACADA, 2006). NACADA considers these learning outcomes critical to the teaching and learning mission of higher education stating “Academic advising synthesizes and contextualizes students’ educational experiences within the frameworks of their aspirations, abilities, and lives to extend learning beyond campus boundaries and time frames” (p. 524).

Lowenstein (2005) has provided the most descriptive account of learning-centered advising noting that advisors should be focusing on student academic learning and not be concerned with student interpersonal growth and development. The “logic” of the curriculum becomes the primary focus and discussion point in an advising session (Lowenstein, 2000, p. 2). Advisors help students make sense of the curriculum and guide students through a process of active learning, identifying key relationships between courses and disciplines with a focus on logical reasoning. Hemwall and Trachte (2005), when addressing the concept of praxis with academic advising believe that advisors should be engaging students in a dialogue about the purpose and

meaning of course requirements and that ultimately these discussions should prompt changes in goals and values; making meaning of the world to transform it rather than focusing on student self-development.

Lowenstein (2005) along with Hemwall and Trachte (2005) argue that learning-centered approaches focused primarily on the curriculum and the meaning of the curriculum are superior to what has traditionally been identified as developmental or prescriptive advising. They believe that these two traditional approaches to academic advising have ignored the crucial link between learning and the curriculum and believe a correction is necessary to bring advising practices back in line with curricular and liberal learning.

Smith and Allen (2012) suggest that the learning-centered approach is a welcome addition to development and prescription advising approaches, but warn that neither developmental nor prescriptive advising should be abandoned in light of this renewed focus on curricular or structural “learning”. In fact, their examination of advising literature over the last 30 years (Smith & Allen, 2006; Allen & Smith, 2008), suggest that quality academic advising is a multidimensional approach that involves five domains encompassing 12 advising functions, and actually utilizes approaches and components that are prescriptive, developmental, and learning-centered across many of the academic advising roles.

The authors describe the *integration* domain, the first of five domains, as one involving holistic advising which assists students in connecting their curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career, and life goals. The *referral* domain comprises referral to both academic and non-academic problems a student may encounter which may be detrimental to goal

achievement. The *information* domain relates to advisors providing students with accurate information about degree requirements as well as helping students understand how things work, particularly with policies and procedures at a given institution. The *individuation* domain focuses on knowing the student as an individual, based on the student's skills, interests, and abilities. The *shared responsibility* domain involves helping students to problem-solve, plan, and improve decision-making skills; allowing students to take greater responsibility for their success and progress in higher education.

Interestingly, the specific domain that students uniformly believe is to be the most important is the *information* domain, which is prescriptive in nature (Smith & Allen, 2006). Students across institutional type indicated that receiving accurate information from advisors about degree requirements was more important than any of the other 11 functions (Allen et. al., 2012). This particular study involved two public community colleges and five four-year public institutions in a northwest state. Students at the community college were all enrolled in credit-bearing classes at the community college in anticipation of transfer to four-year universities. Over 100,000 students were invited to participate with an overall response rate of 25%. Second in importance to receiving accurate information about degree requirements was advising that helps students to choose among courses in their program of study, a function that can be seen as partially prescriptive in nature.

Smith and Allen (2012), in later work sought to empirically assess if learning occurs in an advising encounter namely, is there an association between student learning and academic advising? The researchers closely examined the literature on academic advising in relation to student success and

developed eight learning outcomes that represent knowledge, skills, and values, that are important to navigate the educational landscape. In a study at nine institutions consisting of 22,000 students, researchers asked two questions; (1) do scores on eight specific learning outcomes vary as a function of frequency of contact with advisors in the formal advising setting, and (2) among students who have contacted advisors, are scores higher for those who have more contacts than for those with fewer contacts (pp. 10-11)? This study included two community colleges, two private not-for-profit institutions, and five public universities. The study used an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to control for outside variables that could be hypothesized to affect advising learning. The results indicated a consistent pattern across learning outcomes, namely students who were advised frequently scored highest on learning outcomes, followed by those students advised occasionally, followed by those students who were not advised (pp. 15-16). Although institution was a variable examined in this study, under a non-mandatory advising system it is possible that other factors such as motivation may be influencing some of these learning outcomes. Smith and Allen (2012), have identified quality academic advising as incorporating concepts from both prescriptive and developmental advising O'Banion(as cited in Karp, 2013), as well as learning-centered advising (Lowenstein, 2005; Hemwall&Trachte, 2005). They have identified that these concepts actually work in tandem in advising encounters and combine to form an integrated whole that can be assessed by looking at specific advising functions.

It can be concluded from the discussions above that, in order to ensure quality academic advising, there is the need for academic advising to have its

own pedagogy, learning outcomes, and curriculum (NACADA, 2006). Lowenstein (2005), seems to agree with Hemwall and Trachte (2005) when they argue that, the two traditional approaches to academic advising have ignored the crucial link between learning and the curriculum and believe a correction is necessary to bring advising practices back in line with curricular and liberal learning. In this regard, Smith and Allen (2012) suggest that the learning-centered approach is a welcome addition to development and prescription advising approaches, but warn that neither developmental nor prescriptive advising should be abandoned in light of this renewed focus on curricular or structural “learning”. Therefore, there is the need to adopt a multidimensional approach to academic advising in order to ensure a quality academic advising service.

#### **Need for Academic Advising Programme for Students**

The guidance and counselling programme in schools, colleges and universities focus on many issues affecting learners. It is possible for some learners’ needs to be given less emphasis during counselling. Students in secondary school are faced with a number of problems that may affect their academic development such as subject and career choices and lack of time management, test-taking, note-taking and writing skills. In schools, colleges and universities, counselling is managed by a few full-time employees who hardly have enough time for each individual student. Academic advising unlike professional counselling can be offered by teachers who in addition to serving as mentors to the young people will also be their role models (Sindabi, 2007).

When students join colleges and universities for the first time, they are exposed to problems related to transition, orientation, career choice, adjustment, and few disciplinary restrictions. Students need frequent updates on the dynamic job market. Students who need to pursue further education also need information on opportunities for advancement. If students are not well guided in the new environment they will experience problems. In a recent survey on a sample of 187 university students on the need for academic advising, it was revealed that the highest ranking need for academic advising is on how to maintain high academic grades (77%) (Muola, Maithya & Migosi, 2012). This was followed by handling of academic workload (74.3%), setting career goals (71.1%), setting academic goals (64.2%), acquisition of computer skills (62%) and test-taking skills (60.4%). These findings have important implications on areas that should take priority in academic advising in high school and other institutions of higher learning.

In a survey of 920 undergraduate students in Nigeria, it was revealed that there is need for counselling on time management, drug concerns, family problems, career needs, relationship problems, finance, sexual harassment, academic ability, personality types and anxiety/depression (Aluede, 2006). Among other areas, students seek help in: improvement of their study skills; career uncertainty; self-confidence problems; lack of motivation; fear of failure; depression; lack of purpose in life; anxiety and nervousness (Gallagher, 2002). Other areas include: academic and school related problems, study skills; time management; overcoming fear about taking examinations; meeting academic and career needs (Bertocci, 2002). Gallagher adds that fear (lack of Self-confidence, lack of assertiveness, anxiety about test taking skills,

worries about getting a job) seems to be a common theme in many of the highly ranked concerns of students. Guneri(2003), in their study on university students in Turkey showed that students' academic related needs ranked as follows:managing time (60%); identifying and planning goals for life and concentrating on studies (53%); getting a job after school (50%);getting better grades (46%); and completing assignments on time (45%).

Arco's(2005) study of the profile of university students in Spain revealed that, students rated academic needs such as getting easily distracted, need to improve their study skills, problem of time management and problem of test taking anxiety as the areas desiring significant attention. Despite the context and location of study, the foregoing discussion and research findings seem to show a lot of concurrence on the general academic areas in which students need assistance. Academic advising programmes in Kenyan schools, colleges and universities can benefit from past research findings in planning for academic mentorship.

From the abovementioned, it can be concluded that there has been the need for academic advising because of the fact that, guidance and counselling programme in schools, colleges and universities focus on many issues affecting learners. Hence, it is possible to overlook some academic needs such as subject and career choices, lack of time management, test-taking, note-taking and writing skills of some learners during counselling. In order to ensure that students learning needs are met and fully maximized, the need for academic advising as a subject cannot be underestimated.



## **Influence/Effects of Academic Advising on Students**

Academic advising is one of the very few institutional functions that connect all students to the institution. As higher educational curricula become increasingly complex and as educational options expand, pressure to make the academic experience as meaningful as possible for students has increased as well. Higher education, in turn, has responded with renewed attention to the need for quality academic advising. Once almost exclusively a faculty function, today academic advising has come forward as a specialization within the higher education community. While remaining a role that faculty members play, academic advising has emerged as an area of expertise in and of itself (NACADA, 2005).

Habley (2005), expounds the notion that “advising bears the distinction of being the only structured activity on campus in which all students have the opportunity for ongoing, one-to-one interaction with a concerned representative of the institution, and this fact is a source of its tremendous potential today” (NACADA, 2005). This, coupled with increasing educational options, has brought pressure to make the student educational experiences as meaningful as possible.

Academic advising is a crucial component of all students’ experiences in higher education. Within this context, students can find meaning in their lives, make significant decisions about the future, be supported to achieve to their maximum potential, and access all that higher education has to offer. When practiced with competence and dedication, academic advising can enhance retention rates. In an age often characterized by impersonality and

detachment, academic advising provides a vital personal connection that students need.

Additionally, empirical research on the effects of academic advising is clear and consistent: Advising can have an impact on persistence and graduation (Pascarella&Terenzini, 2005). Seidman (1991), for example, conducted a randomized experiment of 278 matriculating community college students. Seidman randomly assigned them to a treatment group that received pre- and post-admissions advising or a control group. The pre- and post-admissions advising received by the treatment group included meetings with advisors to discuss course schedules, involvement opportunities, and progress during the first semester of college. Participants in the treatment group were significantly more likely to persist into the second year than those in the control group. The results of several other studies confirm these findings and indicate that participation in advising programs is positively associated with persistence and graduation (Austin, Cherny, Crowner, & Hill, 1997; Elliott &Healy, 2001; Metzner, 2009; Peterson, Wagner, & Lamb, 2001; Smith, 2005; Steele, Kennedy, & Gordon, 1993; Yorke, 1998).

While the aforementioned literature provides evidence that advising can affect persistence and degree completion, research on how the nature of academic advising influences students' success is less clear. Although the quality of academic advising has been linked to persistence, the paucity of literature on the influence of the qualitative aspects of academic advising on students is problematic. Only a few empirical studies have focused on understanding how academic advisors shape undergraduates' experiences (Harrison, 2009; Shultz, Colton, & Colton, 2001). Harrison, for example,

analyzed a survey of pre-nursing and nursing students and concluded that academic advisors who are approachable, available, communicative, organized, fostering, and nurturing were perceived as effective advisors. However, empirical studies that describe the elements of academic advisors or advising relationships that negatively or positively influence undergraduates' experiences are difficult to find. Moreover, in our extensive review of extant literature on this topic, we found no rigorous empirical studies focused on the characteristics of academic advisors or advising that positively or negatively impact the success of students of colour. The dearth of research in this area could be one reason that many institutions fail to maximize the potential positive impact of their advising programs (Habley, 2004). For institutions of higher education to maximize the effectiveness of academic advising on their campuses, their administrators must have a better understanding of the characteristics of advisors and advising that foster or hinder success among racial and ethnic minority college students.

Research on faculty-student interactions can be used to begin understanding how academic advisors might be able to interact with undergraduates of colour in meaningful ways that increase success among those students. For example, scholars have found that both the quality and quantity of faculty student interactions are associated with positive academic outcomes (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Berger, 1997; Kuh & Hu, 2001; Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). While providing valuable insights into the salience of faculty-student interaction in fostering success, these researchers primarily measured academically focused interactions (e.g., work on research projects and receiving prompt feedback from faculty members). They assessed

non-academic interactions by asking Likert-type survey questions; for example, they would query how often students “worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework” (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2010). Recognizing that such measures might oversimplify or mask the full range of faculty-student encounters, researchers have qualitatively uncovered several types that can positively impact students’ experiences, including academically driven, personal, structured, incidental, and mentoring interactions (Cox & Orehovec, 2007).

Additionally, academic advising plays a fundamental role in the student’s university life beginning from the moment he is admitted to the university until the time he has graduated. An academic advisor is considered as part of the total educational process in the university life. This advisor plays the role of the educator and his responsibility is to build a relationship of cooperation based on trust and honesty with the student. This would enable the student to decide what and how to apply the information made available to him by the academic advisor (Hammad, 2000). In this context, Abdel and Azzeh (1999), focused on the significance of the advising relationship which is considered as a fundamental element in the process of advising. They based their view on Humanitarian Theory (Roger, 1996) which states that successful advising is the basis in bringing about a change in behaviour. If the student feels secure and free from any threats, he will be able to go over his previous experiences and fully assimilate them with the help and support of the advisor. This true perception of experiences would release the motivating force of the student to fulfil the goals of academic advising. Advising alone is not enough

to bring about the desired change. However, positive advising relationship is a prerequisite for academic advising. Meanwhile,

Mohammed (1995) reinforced this view when he found out that one of the main reasons that obstructed academic advising and established distrust was the difficulty the student faced in dealing with the academic advisor who was unavailable. Hence, this made it difficult for the student to deal and understand him. This academic advisor was ignorant of the rules and regulations and did not have the enough time for academic advising.

Again, Carlin (2000) highlights the significance of following up with your academic advisor in the process of student development over a period of four years. He indicated that the student must stay in contact with his academic advisor in order to benefit from the available academic services. Besides, Melvin (2000) stresses the significant relationship between the student and the academic advisor. The researcher refers to several academic problems and disturbing incidents happening to students as a result of this poor relationship. She stresses that it is essential for the student to keep in touch with the academic advisor until the advising process becomes a professional value. In this regards, the study of Muolaet. al., (2012)recommended that academic advising should actively involve more students.

Furthermore, Hunter (2004) wonders that in the event of reformation, academic advising would be able to reform higher education? The author stresses the importance of effective academic advising in improving the quality of higher education. The article introduces fundamental elements for an effective and ideal advising system. If it is applied as expected, it would

provide a better opportunity for advising between the students and the teaching staff. Also, it focuses on students who are the core of the academic institutions since the mission of academic advising is considered the vital foundation for the general and specific objectives of academic advising program. In the same time, Dibia and Obi (2013) found that academic advising and counselling is the lynchpin for students' success in the university and is integral in fulfilling the teaching and learning mission of higher education. Consequently, most of the academic advisors were not always accessible and the institutional mechanisms were weak.

In addition, the process of academic advising is supposed to be an uninterrupted process beginning from the time the student is admitted, registered for courses and graduated from university. However, the student's need for academic advising increases at certain times like applying for study for the first time, at the beginning of courses registration, and in addition to drop period. In this context, Shbiyl (2004) points out that the absence of effective academic advising at the university might lead to great educational waste leading to the confusion of academic advisors in carrying out their responsibilities. Also, students may commit certain negative behaviours that are in breach of the university rules like: registration of course outside their paradigm, register courses without taking their prerequisites, delay in taking certain courses which future courses depend on, failure in certain courses, delay in withdrawal from certain courses which constitute a studying problem or increase in their study load(Pargett, 2011). This would lead to a drop in their average grade point leading to a loss of money and effort, postponement of graduation, and the formation of negative attitudes on the part of the

students regarding the system of credit hours and maybe the university. Besides, Rabai (2004) mentions that the reality of academic advising in Arab universities is still facing negligence and indifference in spite of labelling the advising process as one of the most important stages of university.

It is noticed through a review of previous literature on academic advising that the results of these studies (Möller-Leimkühler, 2002; Levinson, 1998) showed that students in general face problems throughout their different educational stages including university students. These problems have increased during the eighties and nineties. Academic advising services are essential in the educational institution; however, they sometimes do not meet the advising needs of the students especially in the absence of a clear understanding of the concept of academic advising. This is reflected in the emergence of some problems facing students in their university life. They need advising services and psychological care. Such needs vary in accordance with the variables of gender, academic level, and faculty (Lee & Cheng, 2007).

In institutions where counsellors are overburdened and individualized attention is not always the norm, advisors play a critical role in answering questions, writing recommendation letters, and ensuring that students are on track to graduate. Malone (2009) noted that advising is key to students' success. According to him, high school students need diverse support to gain skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college including academic content competencies, college application guidance, cognitive and critical thinking skills, civic awareness, time management and teamwork strategies, and healthy social-emotional coping abilities.

In the view of Poliner and Lieber (2004), students' academic skills can grow through academic advisory which a structured programme is built into the school/college day through which an adult and a small group of students meet regularly for academic guidance and support. Advisory programmes aim to lower individual students' barriers to success.

Advising is seen as a means for promoting student retention (Walker & Taub, 2001), particularly the retention of first-year students (Johnson & Morgan 2008). Researchers such as McArthur (2005), Sayles (2005), and McLaren (2004) suggest that academic advising improves retention through improved academic performance among other benefits. Research findings also indicate that mentoring has a positive impact on the personal and professional development of young adults (Levinson, 1998).

According to Habley (2004), one of the primary factors affecting college retention is the quality of interaction a student has with a concerned person on campus. Hester (2008) found that students who had increased interactions with their advisors had higher grade point averages (GPAs). In a study of 69 freshman students by Haight (2008), it was found that students who received academic advising had a higher semester GPA at the end of the semester, and a higher cumulative GPA at the end of the following semester as compared to a control group. These findings imply that students who utilize advisors will benefit the most from the advising relationship.

A study by Pargett (2011), reported a positive relationship between academic advising and student development and student satisfaction with college. Students who are satisfied with college life are likely to be adjusted and focused as a result of which they may do well in their studies.



The failure by some students to complete their college degrees in four years or failing to graduate at all has been attributed to decreasing standards in high school education and lack of college preparedness Greene and Winters (2005), which could be partly addressed through academic advising in high school. Adelman (1999) found that 40% of students enrolled in institutions of higher education require at least one remedial course that not only adds time to the degree process but also decreases the likelihood that they will graduate.

Several studies have indicated that the quality of academic advising can directly affect a student's chances of graduating (Backhus, 2009; Pascarella&Terenzini, 2005). Steingass and Sykes (2008) highlighted a positive relationship between effective academic advising and student retention, especially for first-year students. Students who receive quality professional academic advising tend to have better retention and graduation rates (Pascarella&Terenzini; Steingass&Sykes).

Studies have indicated that academic advising tends to rank among the lowest areas of higher education satisfaction for college students (Keup&Stolzenberg, 2004). Possibly the reason for this problem is the fact that many institutions do not formally compensate, reward, or recognize academic advisors for their responsibility (Habley, 2003, 2004).

In conclusion, academic advising plays a fundamental role in the student's university life beginning from the moment he is admitted into the university until the time he graduates. Academic advising is one of the student personnel services that connect all students to the institution. Several empirical researches on the subject resonate with the fact that academic advising influences degree completion, persistency and graduation. However, the

student's need for academic advising increases at certain times like applying for study for the first time, at the beginning of courses registration, and in addition to drop period. For that matter, the absence of effective academic advising at the university might lead to great educational waste leading to the confusion of academic advisors in carrying out their responsibilities (Shbiyl, 2004).

The above discussion reinforces the need for academic advising in our institutions discussed earlier. From the discussions, it is realized that, academic advising is key to students' success and Pargett (2011), purports that, there is a positive relationship between academic advising and student development and student satisfaction with college. In addition, several studies have indicated that the quality of academic advising can directly affect a student's chances of graduating.

#### **Problems/Challenges Associated with Academic Advising**

Although research tends to show that there is a growing need for academic advising in institutions of learning, the programme may be hindered by a number of factors. In situations where advisors carry a heavy student-to-advisor load, the success of the programme may be limited. Institutional factors that affect the type of advising offered include large enrolment, type of programme, religious affiliation, institutional mission, and private or public status (Abelman, 2007). Kennedy-Dudley (2007) found that senior students had a more positive evaluation of advising than their juniors. This may imply that they are in more need and may tend to seek academic advising more. A study by Wolfe (2002) on 350 students in post-secondary institutions revealed that students in older classes paid more visits to their advisors. Students who

are about to complete their studies would want to get information related to their future educational and career goals and therefore will be more likely to seek the advice of their academic mentors among other sources.

Gender has been identified as a factor that affects students' tendency to seek academic advising. As explained by (Daubman&Lehman, 1993; Ryan &Pintrich, 1997) males have been less willing to seek help in dealing with academic difficulties. Men do not fail to seek help because they do not have problems but because social norms of traditional masculinity frowns on help seeking by men (Kessler et. al., 1981; Lee, 1997; Möller-Leimkühler, 2002; as cited in Muola et.al., 2012). Kennedy-Dudley (2007) found that women were more likely than men to have been advised professionally.

In a study conducted by the National Science Foundation (2008), it was found that female respondents at the bachelor, master's and doctoral degree programme levels considered all types of advising roles to be significantly more important than male respondents. The exception to this trend was the Academic/Career factor, which showed no significant differences in gender for the masters' level respondents. These findings imply that gender is likely to influence perceptions on academic advising and the tendency to seek the service. In another study of 238 students (Clark, 2005), it was reported that females had a higher perception of being mentored. Male students have less social support in university settings and are less likely to reach out for educational support (Hernandez, 2004). These findings imply that gender should be one of the factors to consider when planning for academic advising with the possibility of instituting an "intrusive" form of mentoring (Redmond, 1990) for male students. In intrusive mentoring, the

advisor takes the lead and contacts the student on a periodic basis rather than waiting for him or her to initiate contact.

The availability of academic advisors is crucial for the success of the student-advisory programme, especially in colleges and universities. At the university, students may fail to make contact with their faculty advisors due to their own tendency to leave immediately after class, lack of extracurricular involvement, the lack of on-campus residence, lack of on-campus employment, and the large number of adjunct instructors that do not have office hours (King, 2003). All these factors may hinder interaction between students and their mentors.

Many advisors bear additional responsibilities to advising students, including teaching, marking, performing committee work, working at institutional events, and undertaking various other duties that take time away from direct advising with students. Institutional duties may differ from institution to another, thus allowing plenty of time to advise for some academic mentors while leaving others with very little time for advising (Koring, 2000).

The capability of some institutions to utilize and manage the student-academic advisory programme may affect the expected outcome. Research evidence suggests that many postsecondary institutions are underutilizing and poorly administering their academic advising programmes (Habley, 2004). Many colleges and universities have been reported to have failed to capitalize on the benefits of quality advising, particularly, in relation to helping students stay in school or college. Failure by students to utilize academic advising services affects the success of the mentorship programme. Research findings

have revealed that students often meet academic advisors for reasons other than academic issues and concerns (Edwards & Murdock, 2004; Brown, 2003).

From the discussions above, it has been realized that, academic advising is faced with challenges such as; heavy student-to-advisor load, gender, whereby, males are less willing to seek academic advising, the unavailability of academic advisors, student's own tendencies such as lack of extracurricular involvement, the lack of on-campus residence, as well as lack of on-campus employment. All these factors may hinder interaction between students and their mentors. Many advisors bear additional responsibilities to advising students, including teaching, marking, performing committee work, working at institutional events, and undertaking various other duties that take time away from direct advising with students.

### **Academic Advising and Gender**

Students at different years of study experience different and unique problems and therefore are likely to perceive the need for help differently, and vary at the rate at which they seek academic advising. For example, first year students are expected to need a lot of help in subject and career choices than students in the subsequent years. Once students settle down and acquire adequate information about university life, they may not require a lot of assistance from their academic advisors. In this study, it was expected that the need for help at different years of study will be revealed through the rate at which students seek academic advising.

Generally, males have been less willing to seek help in dealing with academic difficulties (Daubman & Lehman, 1993; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997),

psychological problems (Cook, 1984; Kligfield & Hoffman, 1979; Möller-Leimkühler, 2002; Padesky & Hammen, 1981), career counselling (Di Fabio & Bernaud), and retirement planning Joo and Grable (as cited in Moula, et. al., 2012). Such lower rates of help seeking among males transcend racial and national limits (Neighbors & Howard, 1987; Oliveras cited in Moula, et. al., 2012). A similar trend of unwillingness to seek help was expected in the current study. Men do not fail to seek help because they do not have problems but because social norms of traditional masculinity frowns on help seeking by men (Lee, 2002; Möller-Leimkühler, 2002; Wischet. al., (as cited in Muola et. al., 2002). Unfortunately, males appear to be reluctant to avail themselves for services even when the helper is a peer rather than some authority figure. With males, it may be prudent to institute an “intrusive” form of mentoring (Redmond, 1990), in which the mentor takes the lead and contacts the student on a periodic basis rather than waiting for the student to initiate such communication.

Whether male or female, students fail to make contact with their faculty advisors due to their own tendency to leave immediately after class, lack of extracurricular involvement, the lack of on-campus residence, lack of on campus employment, and the large number of adjunct instructors that do not have office hours (King, 2003). Academic advising is a voluntary service to students and they are expected to seek the service at their own will. All these factors may hinder interaction between University of Cape Coast students and their mentors.

In conclusion, the discussion above has brought to the bare that, men are less likely to seek academic advising as compared with females. Also, first

year students, normally, need a lot of help in subject and career choices and for that matter, tend to seek academic guidance than students in the subsequent years. Once students settle down and acquire adequate information about university life, they may not require a lot of assistance from their academic advisors.

## **Empirical Review**

### **Student satisfaction in relation to academic advising**

In 2006, Noel-Levitz compiled data from a three-year survey of over 53,000 students from 170 institutions of higher education in the United States; approximately 30,000 of these students were undergraduates. The study examined what the author terms a “performance gap” (Noel-Levitz, 2006) which is the difference between an importance rating and a satisfaction rating on eight functional areas identified in the literature as being important to students. These eight functional areas are “instructional effectiveness, academic advising, campus climate, registration effectiveness, service excellence, admissions and financial aid, safety and security, and academic services” (p. 4). The study established that the two most important functional areas for students were instructional effectiveness and academic advising, in that order, while student satisfaction with academic advising in particular was rated mediocre. Given the relative importance student place on academic advising, these relatively low satisfaction rates imply that this “performance gap” may be problematic. One significant limitation of this study was the assumption that importance and satisfaction ratings were comparable on the same scale. Because these two types of ratings measure significantly different phenomena, the use of one scale to evaluate these ratings is a concern.

A study of 20 students was conducted by Beasley-Fielstein (2006) which examined student perceptions of the academic advising relationship. This phone survey was split between students who expressed satisfaction with academic advising and those who expressed dissatisfaction. Each student was asked to describe and rate advisor qualities and characteristics, experiences, delivery methods, behaviours, perceptions of the advising relationship, and ideas for improvement. Dissatisfied students described advisors as inaccessible, intimidating, indifferent, and even unpredictable. Students who were satisfied with advising believed advisors were interested in their program, a reliable source of information, generous with their time, and accessible. Several themes of “effective advising” emerged from this study regarding the importance of taking a personal interest in students, focusing on both academic and career advising, showing genuine concern for students, and being efficient in helping to solve student issues.

In a study conducted by Kent (1993), students were asked to assess academic services, programs, and institutional climate. Students rated and made comments on many campus services including registration, advising, student records, student activities, program curriculum, teaching quality, career planning, and course availability among others. Among the items listed, academic advising received the lowest ratings score as well as the majority of the negative comments. Students were not satisfied with errors made by advisors, appointments that were not kept, advisor incompetence, and a general lack of appreciation of student needs by advisors.

Schreiner (2009) conducted a survey of over 27,000 students at 65 four-year institutions in an effort to empirically determine if there is a positive



relationship between student satisfaction and retention beyond what can be predicted based on student and institutional characteristics. Nearly 75% of the institutions in this survey were private, 40% were baccalaureate only, 38% from master's only institutions, and 15% from doctoral institutions. A large number of the institutions were located in the Midwest, but all regions in the United States were represented. A student satisfaction inventory instrument was used with a seven point scale asking students to rate item importance from 1= not at all important to 7= very important. In addition, students rated satisfaction from 1= very dissatisfied to 7= very satisfied. The reliability of the instrument was high with an alpha of .98 and a 3-week retest  $r$  of .87. This study utilized a logistic regression analysis allowing the researchers to predict actual retention 4 to 12 months later, after accounting for students' demographic characteristics as well as institutional characteristics. The study found that across all models and class levels, satisfaction indicators added significantly to the ability to predict student retention, in fact, for each class level satisfaction indicators almost doubled the ability to predict retention beyond what demographic characteristics and institutional features could predict (Schreiner). The study found that campus climate was the most important factor related to student satisfaction. Regarding academic advising and satisfaction, several items were important. Advisor availability and approachability were identified as key items for first-year students. Those first-year students who rated their advisor as approachable and available persisted at a rate higher than those who did not have this same belief. For sophomores, satisfaction with advising overall increased their chances of persisting to year three, and for juniors, having knowledgeable advisors who

can guide students effectively through the curriculum was a key factor. This study is mostly important given the strength of findings related to student satisfaction and persistence. Based on the findings, the more satisfied lower division students were with their advising experiences, the higher the chance of retaining those students through the upper division years towards graduation.

A study at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Business (Schroeder, 2012), examined undergraduate academic advising satisfaction as well as the level of expectation and importance that students place on specific advising functions. The study utilized an adaptation of a survey instrument developed by Smith and Allen (2006), the *Inventory of Academic Advising Functions-Student Version*. The adaptation involved in this study was adding a scale of student expectation to scales in the instrument that involve student importance and satisfaction ratings. Approximately 1,900 students were surveyed with a 38% response rate. A variety of statistical analysis methods were applied to the data with student satisfaction used as the dependent variable. Several conditioning variables were included such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, year in school, and GPA to control for demographic characteristics (p. 27). The study findings concluded that both student importance and expectation ratings were an important determinant of student satisfaction with advising. The study did not specifically examine student-learning outcomes in relation to academic advising and the study population was limited to business students within one institution.

## Summary of Literature Review

This chapter reviewed extensively the relevant related literature concerning academic advising. Owing to the purpose of the study, the CIPP evaluation model developed by Stufflebeam was used as the theoretical framework for the study. This is because, Stufflebeam's CIPP model has withstood the test of time and has been widely used in many educational settings so far as evaluation is concerned. Again, the socio-cultural theory developed by Vygotsky's provided the theoretical framework for academic advising as a means for social interaction and plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Hence, a teacher or more experienced peer and for that matter an academic advisor who is able to provide the learner with the necessary support in order to facilitate the understanding of knowledge domains or development of complex skills becomes vital. The concept of academic advising was considered and the common theme that seems to cut across all the definitions was the fact that, academic advising is the process whereby an experienced person helps the student to make choices in his or her academic life in order to realise the full potential of the student. However, there seem to be a paradigm shift in contemporary times as the focus of academic advising has shifted from the advisor who acts as a repository of knowledge and provides the student with the needed information to student-centeredness where students' needs, interests and aspirations are encouraged. It was also realised that, the roles of the academic advisors are huge and gargantuan and it takes an advisor with commitment and dedication for the job. The advisor also needs to serve as an *in-loco parentis*, that is, someone who provides love, care and take absolute interest in helping the student

realize his or her maximum potential, thereby playing the role of the parent in the school. The two traditional academic advising models/styles such as the prescriptive and developmental models were considered. Therefore, the need for academic advising cannot be overemphasised as the guidance and counselling programme in schools, colleges and universities focus on many issues affecting learners to the neglect of other academic essential areas of learners. However, the fact that academic advising was not alien to the challenges that face many of the student personnel services in our institutions was highlighted and for that matter, the need to adopt a multidimensional approach to academic advising in order to ensure a quality academic advising service becomes essential.

A common thread throughout these existing literature is a primary focus on academic advising and student's retention, student's satisfaction with academic advising, problems/factors affecting academic advising, academic advising and gender. In addition, it should be noted that several of these studies are doctoral theses and published articles which are conducted mostly in developed countries. Overall, academic advising continues to be a field that remains largely unexamined in Ghana and Africa at large in relation to the amount of work that exists. Also because of these challenges face by academic advisors they are seen work with little or no zeal. It is upon these that it has become imperative that this study is conducted to evaluate the academic advising in the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast Ghana.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

This section examined the research methodology that was used to carry out the research. It comprised the research design, the population from which sample was selected, sample and sampling procedure, research instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis procedure.

#### **Research Design**

Research design provides the glue that holds the research project together (Newman, 2006). Research design is therefore a systematic plan adopted by the researcher to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately and economically. The research design that was used for this study was the descriptive design. To be specific, the cross sectional survey design was employed in carrying out this study. Descriptive survey design involves the collection of data in order to test hypothesis or answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject under investigation (Gay, 1992). This design was chosen because it offered the researcher the opportunity to assess and describe the nature of academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. Amedahe (2002) maintains that in descriptive research, accurate description of activities, objects, processes and persons is the focus. However, the design has its own weakness as there is no manipulation of variables as in experimental designs (Shuttleworth, 2008). Academic advising is a process and in order to have an objective analysis of the situation on the ground, I used the descriptive survey design.

## **Study Area**

The College of Education Studies (CES) formally known as The Faculty of Education established in 1964/1965 is one of the five Colleges in the University of Cape Coast. The College has been in existence since 1st August 2014 after the University Council had approved the report of the Inter-Faculty Committee on the Collegiate System for the establishment of five colleges. The College of Education Studies, as at now, is a two-tier college with a Provost and Heads of Department and Directors of Institute. The college has six academic departments (Department of Science and Mathematics Education, Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education, Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Department of Educational Foundations, Department of Vocational and Technical Education and Department of Basic Education), two institutes (Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) and Institute of Education (IOE)) and six centres/units (Counselling Centre, Centre for Educational Research, Evaluation and Development, Teaching Practice Unit, Education Resource and Documentation Unit, Centre for Teaching Support and Child Development, Research and Referral Unit).

The College has the mandate of training high calibre personnel for Ghanaian educational institutions, research educational systems and training other professionals for all sectors of the economy. The College has the highest number of students and faculty in the University with students' population of 4920 and academic staff strength of 105 out of which 35 of them are academic advisors.

## **Population**

A population in a research refers to the larger group with common observable features to which one hopes to apply the research result (Fraenkel&Wallen, 2003). According to Newman (2006), population is the unit being sampled, the geographical location, and the temporary boundaries. It can be a person, organization, a written document or a social action. Also, Kwabia (2006) posits that social research is an investigation into the actions of people in society. He stressed that these social actors constitute what we call population. Absolutely, when the boundaries of a population are not clearly defined, it may be referred to as “universe”. Thus, population can be described as any set of persons or objects that share common characteristics.

The population of the study comprised all academic advisors and students in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. There are 35 academic advisors and 4655(levels 200, 300 and 400)regular students in the College of Education Studies in UCC (UCC student record, 2016). Academic advisors were selected to participate in the study because, they are responsible in ensuring the total development of the student in order to help him or her develop and resolve challenges confronting them. The study was undertaken in the College of Education because, the College has the largest number of UCC regular students as such their views on the subject may increase the representativeness of students in the university for generalisations to be made.

## **Sampling Procedure**

It has been confirmed by some scholars in Social Science that for a sample to be representative in a study, it must be a good proportion of the

population (Welman, Kruger, & Mitchell, 2005; Zikmund, 1994). This establishes the fact that samples of the study population are taken when it is not feasible to carry out whole population studies. Thus observing the characteristics of a sample, one can make certain inferences about the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn. Sampling enables the researcher to study a relatively small number of units in place of the target population, and to obtain a representation of the whole target population. In fact, “samples are expected to be representative. For that reason, samples are expected to be chosen by means of sound methodological principles” (Sarantakos, 1997, p. 140). In all 383 respondents (27 academic advisors and 356 students) in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast were selected to participate in the study. This is because, out of the 35 academic advisors in the College of Education Studies, two (2) advisors were on sabbatical leave whereas the other two (2) were not available as at the time of data collection. Out of 31 copies of the questionnaire administered, 27 (87.1%) were retrieved with difficulty. The researcher had to call at respondents’ offices on several occasions before getting the 27 completed questionnaires. Out of the 4655 (levels 200, 300 and 400) students in the College of Education Studies, 356 students were selected based on the recommendation from the table for determining sample size by Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

In this study, the census sampling was adopted in sampling the 27 academic advisors in the College of Education Studies due to the limited number of people in my target population. Therefore, the entire population was used as the sample for the study. Census surveys are the types of surveys



involving the process of collecting information about each member of a given population. The use of census surveys is usually employed for statistical research and population count. One of the advantages of census surveys over the other types of surveys is accuracy. Since the respondents involved in census surveys are the members of a given population, the survey data to be collected will be more reliable and accurate than the data gathered from sampling surveys. However, among the other types of surveys, census surveys are considered to be the most time consuming and physically demanding. Unlike sampling surveys, census surveys require statistical data from each member of the population and not just a portion of it. Researchers need to gather information from every single member of the given population in order to come up with accurate results so encountering reluctant respondents will be very difficult. Since researchers need to travel often to gather data, census surveys tend to be more costly too (Shuttlesworth, 2008).

Again, in selecting students to participate in the study, firstly, the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size was used to select the 356 students out of the 4655 students in the college. The multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select the 356 students for the study. With this, a list of all the students in each of the six (6) departments was obtained from the UCC students' record. This served as a sampling frame of students for the study. Then, the students were put into six (6) clusters based on the six (6) departments in the College of Education Studies. The third phase involved the proportional allocation of sample size, where students were selected from each cluster (department) based on the number of students in the cluster (department) to give a fair representation of each department (i.e.

number of students in each department divided by the total number of students in all the six (6) departments and the result was multiplied by the sample size i.e. 356 of students). When this was done, the sample of students that constituted the study were as follows; Department of Arts and Social Science Education DASSE (178), VOTEC (29), Basic Education (43), Educational Foundation (37), HYPER (12), and Science and Mathematics Education (DSME) (57). Finally, the sample unit were selected by using the simple random sampling technique, specifically, the table of random numbers. “Obviously this method is more convenient and less time consuming” (Sarantakos, 1997, p. 142). The list of students from each department served as a sample frame during the use of the table of random numbers. Thus, each student in the accessible population was given a unique number. By the use of the table of random numbers, the required sample unit of respondents from each department were selected to be involved in the study. I drew lines across the numbers on the table of random numbers. Any student whose number was crossed by the lines were chosen to serve as respondent. The process continued until the required number of students for each department was obtained.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

Instrumentation refers to the tools or means by which investigators attempt to measure variables or items of interest in the data collection process. Instrument for data collection is a tool that is used by researcher for collection of data in social science research (Bhandarkar& Wilkinson, 2010). It is related not only to instrument design, selection, construction, and assessment, but also the conditions under which the designated instruments are administered (Hsu

&Sandford, 2010). The questionnaire was the sole data collection instrument used in the study. Reasons for the choice of the instrument are that, questionnaire is described as structured instrument for gathering data from a potentially large number of respondents, within a shorter possible time when especially the population is easily accessible (Amedahe&Gyimah, 2005; Deng, 2010). Again, was used questionnaire because, it is advantageous whenever the sample size is large enough to make it uneconomical for reasons of time or funds to interview every subject in the study (Osuala, 2005).

McBurney (2007) gave two basic categories of questionnaires as closed ended and open ended questions. Two different sets of questionnaire were designed and administered to both the academic advisors and the students. The questionnaire items for the academic advisors was grouped into four sections (A-D) consisting of 32 items. Section A comprised five (5) items which considered the background characteristics of the academic advisors. Section B comprised eight (8) items which considered the academic advising models/styles used in the University of Cape Coast. Section C comprised ten (10) items which looked at the aspects of quality academic advising. Section D consisted of nine (9) items which looked at the resource availability for academic advising. Again, the student questionnaire was grouped into four sections (A-D) consisting of 31 items. Section A comprised six (6) items which considered the background characteristics of the students. Section B consisted of eight (8) items which looked at the academic advising models/styles; Section C comprised nine (9) items which looked at the aspects of quality academic advising; and the final section (D) comprised eight (8) items which considered students' level of satisfaction regarding academic

advising services rendered to them in the University of Cape Coast. Whereas the questionnaires for the students were on a three point Likert scale, the questionnaires for the academic advisors were on a five point Likert scale. However, the first parts (Section A) of both questionnaires were a mixture of both closed and open ended questions.

### **Pilot-testing**

The research instrument was subjected to a validity and reliability test. The instrument was given to an expert, my supervisor, to ascertain how they met face and content validity. The suggestions as given by the expert were used to effect the necessary changes to improve upon the instrument. Thereafter, a pilot-test of the instruments was conducted whereby the questionnaires were administered in Departments of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the College of Humanities and Legal Studies. The pilot-testing covered 15 academic advisors and 50 students. Apart from proximity reasons, these departments were also chosen for the pilot-testing because the students there are confronted with similar academic challenges and are graded with the same cut-off/grade points as pertaining in departments of College of Education Studies. In the same vein, academic advisors in these departments are also confronted with similar problems from their students concerning how to cope with their academic problems. The data gathered were analysed and the Cronbach's alpha established for each of the items that fall under the four research questions formulated to guide the study.

The questionnaire for the academic advisors consists of four (4) sections i.e. sections A, B, C, and D covering various relevant areas such as bio-data, aspects of quality academic advising, resource availability for

academic advising as well as academic advising models/styles. The homogeneity values (Cronbach's alpha) of the scales vary between .70 and .86. The Cronbach's alpha of .79 was obtained for the academic advisors' questionnaire. The 4 sections cover the following areas: bio-data (items nr. 1, 2, 3, 4; Cronbach's alpha 0.70). This area covers background information such as gender, age, department/section/unit, years of experience, and highest qualification attained. Section B (items nr. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14; Cronbach's alpha 0.86) included aspects of quality academic advising. Section C (Items Nr. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23; Cronbach's alpha 0.86) consisted resource availability for academic advising. Section D (items nr. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31; Cronbach's alpha 0.70): This section covered academic advising models/styles.

The questionnaire for students also consists of four (4) sections i.e. sections A, B, C, and D covering various relevant areas such as bio-data, aspects of quality academic advising, academic advising models/styles as well as students' level of satisfaction. The homogeneity values (Cronbach's alpha) of the scales vary between .72 and .91. The Cronbach's alpha of .91 was obtained for the students' questionnaire. The 4 sections cover the following areas: bio-data (items nr. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; Cronbach's alpha 0.72): This area covers background information such as gender, age, level, and number of academic advising sessions attended. Section B (items nr. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; Cronbach's alpha 0.93) included aspects of quality academic advising. Section C (Items Nr. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23; Cronbach's alpha 0.83) consisted academic advising models/styles. Section D (items nr. 24, 25,

26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32; Cronbach's alpha 0.89): This section covered students' level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered to them.

According to De Vellis (1991), such a reliability coefficient is said to be respectable. Therefore, the instrument was considered reliable and appropriate to collect the relevant data to answer the hypotheses posed. Also, Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) posited that "For research purposes a useful rule of thumb is that reliability should be at .70 and preferably higher". With this, the instrument could be said to be of good quality capable of collecting useful data for the study. The queries that came out of the item analyses were catered for. The reliability of the instruments was determined using Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS). All these actions were taken to ensure that the instrument would be capable of collecting quality and useful data for the study.

#### **Data Collection Procedures**

In order to ensure a high return rate, the instruments were administered personally by the researcher. Before data collection, the researcher presented copies of an introductory letter from the head of the Department of College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, to the Academic advisors as well as students who served as respondents for the study. The purpose of this introductory letter was to solicit for cooperation and also to create rapport between the researcher and respondents who served as respondents for the study. The questionnaire was personally administered by the researcher (self-administered). The respondents were briefed concerning how to respond to the items and supervised by the researcher to complete the questionnaire.

## **Data Processing and Analysis**

This study sought to assess academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. To answer the research questions formulated to guide the study, both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in the analysis of the data. Specifically, frequencies and percentages were used to analyse the background characteristics/demographics of the respondents. Research question 1 (models/styles of academic advising adopted in the University of Cape Coast) was analysed using frequencies, percentages as well as mean of means distributions). Again, frequencies, percentages, and mean of means distributions were used to analyse research question 2 (aspects of quality academic advising offered to students). Research question 3 (resource availability for effective and efficient academic advising) was analysed using mean of means distribution. Frequencies and percentages were used to analyse research question 4 (level of satisfaction of students regarding academic advising rendered in the University of Cape Coast). The independent sample T-test was used to analyse the two hypotheses formulated to compare the differences between the rate of patronage of academic advising between male and female students (hypothesis 1); as well as the differences between male students' and female students' level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered to them in the University of Cape Coast (hypothesis 2). These were done with the use of computer software called Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS) version 21.

## Chapter Summary

The descriptive survey design was employed in the carrying out of this study. The population for the study involved all academic advisors and students in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. With the use of the census sampling and multi-stage sampling techniques, 27 academic advisors and 356 students in each of the six(6) departments (DASSE, VOTEC, Basic Education, Educational Foundation, HYPER, and Science and Mathematics Education) from the College of Education Studies were selected to participate in the study. The questionnaire was used as the instrument for the data collection because, it provides a wider coverage of respondents, less expensive, and offers greater assurance of anonymity other than other methods such as interview and observation. Again, since the respondents were all literate, the questionnaire was considered appropriate for collecting the data for the study. However, the questionnaire has its own weakness as some of the respondents left some of the items unanswered, and there is no way of telling how truthful a respondent has been in filling them out. The instrument (questionnaire) was pilot-tested at the Department of Social Sciences at the College of Humanities and Legal Studies in order to make sure that the instrument was capable of collecting relevant data to answer the research questions and hypotheses guiding the study. Finally, the data was self-administered and analyzed using both descriptive (frequencies, percentages, and mean of means distribution) and inferential statistics (Independent-sample t-test) with the use of computer software called Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS) version 21.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. Two sets of questionnaires were employed to gather the requisite data for the study. The data from both students and academic advisors were analyzed through the computation of frequencies, percentages, mean of means distributions as well as independent T-test. Both the descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in the data analysis. This chapter presents the interpretations, discussions and inferences that were made from the output.

#### **Characteristics of Students**

The personal data of students are discussed under the following sub-headings: gender, age, department, level of education, student's awareness and number of sessions attended. The reason for this aspect of the analysis was to determine the calibre of students used for the study in order to make a fair assessment on their views on academic advising services rendered at College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. The results are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1

*Characteristics of Sampled Students*

Variable	Subscale	No.	%
Gender	Male	229	64.3
	Female	127	35.7
Age	Below 20 years	16	4.5
	21-25 yrs	293	82.3
	26- 30 yrs	36	10.1
	31-35 yrs	8	2.2
	36-40 yrs	1	0.3
	41-45 yrs	2	0.6
	Department	DASSE	178
VOTEC		29	8.1
Basic Education		43	12.1
Educational Foundations		37	10.4
HYPERS		12	3.4
Science and Mathematics		57	16.0
Education			
Level	200	127	35.7
	300	120	33.7
	400	109	30.6

Table 1, continued

Variable	Subscale	No.	%
I am aware of			
academic advising as			
a student personnel	Yes	224	62.9
service in the College	No	132	37.1
of Education Studies.			
Academic Advising	None	231	64.9
Sessions Attended	One	71	19.9
	Two	31	8.7
	Three	9	2.5
	Four	4	1.1
	Five	3	0.8
	Six	3	0.8
	Seven	2	0.6
	More than seven times	2	0.6

Source: Field survey, Hackman (2016)(*n*=356)

From Table 1, out of the 356 College of Education Studies students who were involved in the study, 229 (64.3%) were males, while 127 (35.7%) were females. So a greater number of respondents in the study area were males. Again, with respect to the age of the respondents, the majority of the students 293(82.3%) were between 21-25 years whilst 1 (0.3%) were between 36-40 years. In line with the department of the students in the study area, it is clear that most of the respondents were from DASSE 178 (50%), this is

followed by DSME 57 (16.0%) and HYPER 12 (3.4%) having the least number. It is also evident from Table 1 that the majority of the respondents were Level 200 students. This is because 127 (35.7%) were in level 200, 120 (33.7%) were in level 300, and 109 (30.6%) were in level 400. As to whether the students were aware of academic advising as a student personnel service in the College of Education Studies, 224 (62.9%) responded 'yes' whereas 132 (37.1%) responded 'no'. Therefore, the majority of the students in the study area were aware of academic advising as a student personnel service in the College of Education Studies. Concerning academic advising sessions attended, 231 (64.9%) had never attended any academic advising session, 71 (19.9%) had attended only one session, with only 2 (0.6%) who had attended more than seven academic advising sessions throughout their period of study in the University of Cape Coast. This indicates that the majority of the students had never attended any academic advising session throughout their period of study in the University of Cape Coast. Therefore, the remaining 125 students representing 35.1.0% who indicated that they had at least attended one or more academic advising sessions were asked to proceed to respond to the remaining of the items in the questionnaire in order to answer the research questions guiding the study whereas the remaining 231 (64.9%) who indicated that they had never attended academic advising sessions before did not respond to the remaining of the items since they did not have any idea about what academic advising in UCC entails. This finding confirms that of Habley (2004) who indicated that, research evidence suggests that many post-secondary institutions are underutilizing and poorly administering their academic advising programmes. Many colleges and universities have been

reported to have failed to capitalize on the benefits of quality advising, particularly, in relation to helping students stay in school or college.

### **Characteristics of Academic Advisors**

The background characteristics of academic advisors who were involved in the study are illustrated in Table 2. The reason was to determine the calibre of academic advisor used for the study in order to make a fair assessment on their views on academic advising services rendered at College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast.

Table 2

#### *Characteristics of Sampled Academic Advisors*

Variable	Subscale	No.	%
Gender	Male	23	85.2
	Female	4	14.8
Age	31-35 years	5	18.5
	36-40 yrs	1	3.7
	41- 45 yrs	3	11.1
	46-50 yrs	2	7.4
	Above 50 yrs	16	59.3

Table 2, continued

Variable	Subscale	No.	%
Department	HYPER	4	14.8
	Educational	5	18.5
	Foundations		14.8
	DASSE	4	29.7
	DSME	8	11.1
	Basic Education	3	3.7
	IEPA	1	7.4
	VOTEC	2	
Years worked in the	1-5 year	3	11.1
	6-10 years	5	18.5
Institution	11-15 years	12	44.5
	16-20 years	5	18.5
	21 years and above	2	7.4
Highest Qualification	M.Phil	7	25.9
	PhD	17	63.0
	Professor	3	11.1

Source: Field survey, Hackman (2016)( $n=27$ )

From Table 2, out of the 27 academic advisors who were involved in the study, 23 (85.2%) were males representing a greater percentage, while 4 (14.8%) were females. With respect to the age of the respondents, 16 (59.3%) were above 50 years, 5 (18.5%) were between 31-35 years, whilst 1 (3.7%) were between 36-40 years. Therefore, the majority of the academic advisors

were above 50 years. In line with the departments of the academic advisors, 5 (18.5%) were from Educational Foundations, 8 (29.7%) being the majority were from the Science and Mathematics Education (DSME), with the least of 1 (3.7%) from Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA). It is also evident from Table 2 that the majority of the academic advisors 12 (44.5%), had worked between 11-15 years whilst 2 (7.4%) had worked for 21 years and above. Regarding the highest qualification of the academic advisors, 7 (25.9%) had M.Phil, 17 (63.0%) had PhD, and 3 (11.1%) were Professors. Therefore, the majority of the academic advisors had PhD as their highest qualification.

This section presents the results and discussions of data collected to answer the four research questions and the hypothesis formulated to guide the study. It comprised data from the questionnaire.

### **Models/Styles of Academic Advising Used in the College of Education Studies**

Research Question One: What models/styles of academic advising are adopted in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast?

This research question sought to find out the models/styles of academic advising used in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. It was important to ascertain the models/styles of academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast because the model(s)/style(s) of academic advising adopted determines the type of relationship that would exist between advisors and advisees, and this goes a long way to determine whether or not students are satisfied with the overall

academic advising in the College of Education Studies. The responses given by the students to this question are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

*Views of Students concerning the Models/Styles of Academic Advising adopted in the University of Cape Coast*

Statement	Agree N(%)	Disagree N(%)	Uncertain N(%)
My advisor tells me what needs to be done in order to graduate.	70(56.0)	32 (25.6)	23 (18.4)
My advisor collaborates together with me to ensure that I graduate on time.	58(46.4)	36(28.8)	31 (24.8)
My advisor allows me to make my own choices in the direction of my education.	72(57.6)	29(23.2)	24 (19.2)
I am assigned to a lecturer in the department as my advisor.	51(40.8)	46(36.8)	28 (22.4)
There is an advising centre for a designated group of students as well as all other students assigned to academic departments.	69(55.2)	30(24.0)	26 (20.8)
I am assigned to an academic advisor once I have begun the degree programme.	52(41.6)	48(38.4)	25 (20.0)
The academic advisors advise all students for a particular period of time and then transfer them to their various departments.	48(38.4)	38 (30.4)	39 (31.2)



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Each academic unit/department is responsible for their own advising, but advising is conducted across the campus. 67(53.6) 29 (23.2) 29 (23.2)

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Source: Field survey, Hackman (2016)(*n*=125)

On whether advisors tell them what needs to be done in order to graduate, Table 3 shows that, a significant majority of the students agreed to the statement. Thus 70 (56.0%) agreed, with 32 (25.6%) disagreeing, and 23 (18.4%) being uncertain. A prescriptive advisor does not allow students to make their own choices in the direction of their education. The relationship between a student and advisor who uses prescriptive advising is very “impersonal and authority-based, answering only specific questions and not taking individual development into consideration” Jordan (as cited in Hale, et al., 2009). Also, the majority of the students agreed to the statement, “My advisor collaborates with me to ensure that I graduate on time”. With this, 58 (46.6%) agreed, 36 (28.8%) disagreed, and 31 (24.8%) were uncertain. As to whether advisors allow students to make their own choices in the direction of their education, 72 (57.6%) agreed, 29 (23.2%) disagreed, and 24 (19.2%) were uncertain. Therefore, the majority of the students agreed that their advisors allow them to make their own choices in the direction of their education. On the other hand, a developmental advisor allows the students to make all choices in their education, resulting in the students feeling as if they have chosen their own path rather than being told what they should do. “A developer extends the kinds of support provided through a mentoring relationship. However, in addition to career and psychosocial support, a

developer engages in knowledge development, information sharing, and support as students set and achieve goals” (Baker & Griffin, 2010, p. 5). Allowing the students to choose their own direction will leave them feeling more satisfied with the career path they desire and take an interest in their own education. Developmental advising “stimulates and supports students in their quest for an enriched quality of life” and it focuses on identifying and accomplishing life goals” (Hale et al., 2009).

In a study conducted at a Mid-South University, 429 students were surveyed to determine the style of advising used by their current advisor and also the advising style that the student preferred. Results indicated that nearly all 410 (95.5%) students preferred the developmental advising style and 335 (78%) out of all students were actually receiving developmental advising (Hale et al., 2009). In connection with the statement; “I am assigned to a lecturer in the department as my advisor”, the majority of the students agreed to the statement. Here, 51 (40.8%) agreed, 46 (36.8%) disagreed, and 28 (22.4%) were uncertain. In line with the statement, “There is an advising centre for a designated group of students as well as all other students assigned to academic departments”, 69 (55.2%) agreed, 30 (24.0%) disagreed, and 26 (20.8%) were uncertain. This indicates that, to a large extent, the students agreed to the statement. In line with this, Tuttle (2000) indicates that, one reason the split model has become so popular is because it suits the needs of a certain group of students. “The popularity of the split model, which includes an advising centre for a designated group of students, such as those with undeclared majors, with all other students assigned to academic departments has grown in recent years” (p. 16).

This study has pointed out that 52 (41.6%) of the students agreed that, students are assigned to academic advisors once they have began the degree programme with 48 (38.4%) disagreeing and 25 (20.0%) were uncertain. The finding is in line with Tuttle (2000) who purported that, the faculty model, where a student is assigned to a faculty member in their department, is still the most popular and widely used among all campuses. However, this model has recently been declining and is now only used in 15 percent of public, four year public institutions. Concerning whether academic advisors advise all students for a particular period of time and then transfer them to their various departments, 48 (38.4%) agreed, 38 (30.4%) disagreed, and 39 (31.2%) were uncertain. Thus, the majority of the students agreed their academic advisors advise all students for a particular period of time and then transfer them to their various departments. In relation to this, Tuttle (2000) indicated that, the total intake model is used in community and junior colleges. This model “involves staff advising all students for a particular period of time and then transferring them to departments” (p. 16). On the issue of whether each academic unit/department is responsible for their own advising, but advising is conducted across the campus, greater number of the respondents 67 representing (53.6%) agreed to the statement with 29 (23.2%) who were uncertain. This finding is in contradiction to Tuttle (2000) that, the satellite model allows each academic unit responsible for their own advising, but conduct advising across the campus. This model has become more popular with the increase in distance education (p. 16).

The views of academic advisors concerning the models/styles of academic advising adopted in the University of Cape Coast are illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4

*Views of Academic Advisors concerning the Models/Styles of Academic Advising adopted in the University of Cape Coast*

Statement	M	SD
I tell the student what needs to be done in order to graduate.	1.61	.50
The student and I collaborate to ensure that the students graduate on time.	2.16	.64
I allow the students to make their own choices in the direction of their education.	1.77	.50
Each student is assigned to a lecturer in the department.	2.23	1.28
There is an advising centre for a designated group of students as well as all other students assigned to academic departments.	2.00	1.37
Each student is assigned to academic advisor once the student has begun degree programme.	1.93	1.09
During orientation sections, all academic advisors advise all students in the college for a period of time and then transfer them to their various departments.	2.00	1.04
Each academic unit is responsible for their own advising, but advising is conducted across the campus.	1.90	.65

Source: Field survey, Hackman (2016)

Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree,  
3 = Uncertain, 4 = Disagree  
5 = Strongly Disagree

Mean of means = 1.95

Mean of Standard Deviation = .88

(*n*=27)

Table 4 shows that the academic advisors agreed to most of the statements posed to them to find out the models/styles of academic advising adopted in the University of Cape Coast. In line with this, a mean of means of 1.95 and a mean of standard deviation of .88 were achieved for the items designed which clearly indicates that the academic advisors agreed to a lot of the statements posed to them in that direction. The following individual items attest to that fact.

From Table 4, a mean of 1.61 and 0.50 standard deviation was attained meaning that majority of the academic advisors agreed that they tell the student what needs to be done in order to graduate. A prescriptive advisor does not allow the students to make their own choices in the direction of their education. The relationship between a student and advisor who uses prescriptive advising is very “impersonal and authority-based, answering only specific questions and not taking individual development into consideration” Jordan (as cited in Hale et.al., 2009). It is evident from Table 4 that majority of the academic advisors collaborate with the students to ensure that the students graduate on time. With this item, a mean of 2.16 and a standard deviation of .64 which indicate that the mean falls on the scale 2 (Agree) looking at the scale under Table 4. The plausible conclusion that could be

drawn is that a significant majority of the academic advisors support this view. It is obvious from Table 4 that the academic advisors in the College of Education in the University of Cape Coast allow the students to make their own choices in the direction of their education. Concerning this, 1.77 mean and standard deviation of .50 was achieved for this statement. The mean which falls on scale 2 (agree) affirms the position that majority of the academic advisors support this view. On the other hand, a developmental advisor allows the student to make all choices in their education, resulting in the student feeling as if they have chosen their own path rather than being told what they should do. “A developer extends the kinds of support provided through a mentoring relationship; however, in addition to career and psychosocial support, a developer engages in knowledge development, information sharing, and support as students set and achieve goals” (Baker & Griffin, 2010, p. 5). Allowing the student to choose their own direction will leave them feeling more satisfied with the career path they desire and take an interest in their own education. Developmental advising “stimulates and supports students in their quest for an enriched quality of life” and it focuses on identifying and accomplishing life goals” (Hale et. al., 2009). In relation to the statement, “Each student is assigned to a lecturer in the department”, the majority of the academic advisors agreed to it. A mean of 2.23 and a standard deviation of 1.28 were obtained for this item. The mean when converted to the nearest whole number falls on scale 2 which represents the option agree. The finding is in line with Tuttle (2000) who purported that, the faculty model, where a student is assigned to a faculty member in their department, is still the most popular and widely used among all campuses. However, this model has

recently been declining and is now only used in 15 percent of four year public institutions.

In line with the statement “There is an advising centre for a designated group of students as well as all other students assigned to academic departments”, 2.00 was attained as mean and 1.37 as standard deviation. Therefore, the majority of the academic advisors agreed to the statement since the mean falls on scale 2 (agree). Tuttle (2000) indicates that, one reason the split model has become so popular is because it suits the needs of a certain group of students. “The popularity of the split model, which includes an advising centre for a designated group of students, such as those with undeclared majors, with all other students assigned to academic departments has grown in recent years” (p. 16). From Table 4, the majority of the academic advisors agreed to the statement: “Each student is assigned to academic advisor once the student has begun degree programme”. In connection with this, 1.93 was obtained as a mean and 1.09 as the standard deviation. It could be seen from the scale under Table 4 that the mean could be placed on the scale 2 (agree) when approximated to the nearest whole number. The supplementary model uses advising centres like the split model, but students are also assigned to a faculty advisor once the student has declared a degree of study. Pertaining to the statement “During orientation sections, all academic advisors advise all students in the college for a period of time and then transfer them to their various departments”, 2.00 was recorded as mean and 1.04 was attained as standard deviation. From the forgoing, it is obvious that the academic advisors agreed to the statement since the mean falls on the scale 2 (agree). In relation to this, Tuttle (2000) indicated that, the total intake model

is used in community and junior colleges. This model “involves staff advising all students for a particular period of time and then transferring them to departments” (p. 16). Again, the majority of the academic advisors agreed that each academic unit is responsible for their own advising, but advising is conducted across the campus. A mean of 1.90 and standard deviation of .65 were recorded for this item justifying that the academic advisors agree with the statement. The satellite model allows each academic unit to be responsible for their own advising, but conduct advising across the campus. This model has become more popular with the increase in distance education (Tuttle, 2000, p. 16).

From the above, it can be concluded that, both the students and the academic advisors agreed that advisors tell students what needs to be done in order to graduate (prescriptive model); advisors collaborate with students to ensure that they graduate on time (developmental model); advisors allow students to make their own choices in the direction of their education (developmental model); each student is assigned to a lecturer in the department as their advisor (faculty model); that there is an advising centre for a designated group of students as well as all other students assigned to academic departments (split model); that students are assigned to an academic advisor once they have begun the degree programme (supplementary model); that during orientation sections, the academic advisors advise all students for a particular period of time and then transfer them to their various departments (total intake model); and each academic unit/department is responsible for their own advising, but advising is conducted across the campus (satellite model).



## Aspects of Quality Academic Advising in the College of Education Studies

Research Question 2: What are the aspects of quality academic advising offered by advisors in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast?

This research question was posed to find out aspects of quality academic advising in the University of Cape Coast. There has been significant debate recently regarding what constitutes quality academic advising, and what specifically students should learn in relation to academic advising. In relation to this, the global community for academic advising has published a concept of academic advising which claims advising as having its own pedagogy, learning outcomes, and curriculum (NACADA, 2006). The responses given by both the students and the academic advisors to this question are shown in Table 5 and Table 6 respectively.

Table 5

*Views of Students concerning the Aspects of Quality Academic Advising offered to them*

Statement	Agree N(%)	Disagree N(%)	Uncertain N(%)
My advisor focuses on my academic learning as well as my interpersonal growth and development.	67(53.6)	30 (24.0)	28 (22.4)
My advisor engages me in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements.	68(54.4)	30 (24.0)	27 (21.6)

Table 5, continued

Statement	Agree N(%)	Disagree N(%)	Uncertain N(%)
My advisor provides me with accurate information about degree requirements as well as helps me understand how things work, particularly with policies and procedures in the University.	56(44.8)	37(29.6)	32 (25.6)
My advisor assists me in connecting my curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career, and life goals.	51(40.8)	42(33.6)	32 (25.6)
My advisor focuses on knowing me as an individual, based on my skills, interests, and abilities.	45(36.0)	49(39.2)	31 (24.8)
My advisor helps me to problem-solve, plan and improve decision-making skills.	68(54.4)	34 (27.2)	23 (18.4)
My advisor allows me to take greater responsibility for my success and progress in higher education.	69(55.2)	30 (24.0)	26 (20.8)
My advisor provides me with accurate information about degree requirements.	55(44.0)	36(28.8)	34 (27.2)
My advisor has interest in knowing where I work, what my hobbies and interests are, and even some family information.	36(28.8)	57(45.6)	32 (25.6)

Source: Field survey, Hackman (2016)(*n*=125)

Academic advising as one of the student personnel services offered in schools is viewed as the process of assisting students to realize the maximum educational benefits to them by helping them to better understand themselves and to learn to use the resources of the institution to meet their special educational needs and aspirations. Therefore, the students who are at the receiving end of this service are in a better position to give information regarding the aspects of these academic advising services they are offered within the university. From Table 5, when the students were asked whether their advisor focuses on their academic learning as well as their interpersonal growth and development, it was found out that a significant majority of the students agreed to the statement. This is because, 67 (53.6%) agreed, 30 (24.0%) disagreed, and 28 (22.4%) were uncertain. This is in contradiction with the view expressed by Lowenstein (2005) who has provided the most descriptive account of learning-centred advising noting that advisors should be focusing on student academic learning and not be concerned with student interpersonal growth and development. The “logic” of the curriculum becomes the primary focus and discussion point in an advising session (Lowenstein, 2000, p. 2). Advisors help students make sense of the curriculum and guide students through a process of active learning, identifying key relationships between courses and disciplines with a focus on logical reasoning. However, the finding is in line with Marques (2005) who indicated that, advisors should be involved in and knowledgeable of the student’s position and program and attuned to the student’s personal well-being in the learning environment. Also, the majority of the students agreed to the statement, “My advisor engages me in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of the course requirement”. With

this, 68 (54.4%) agreed, 30 (24.0%) disagreed, and 27 (21.6%) were uncertain. This is in agreement with what Hemwall and Trachte (2005) opined when addressing the concept of praxis with academic advising believe that, advisors should be engaging students in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements and that ultimately these discussions should prompt changes in goals and values; making meaning of the world to transform it rather than focusing on student self-development. As to whether advisors provide students with accurate information about degree requirements as well as help students understand how things work, particularly with policies and procedures in the university, the result from the Table 5 shows that, 56 (44.8%) being majority of the students agreed to the statement with 37 (29.6%) disagreeing, and 32 (25.6%) being uncertain. Interestingly, the specific domain that students uniformly believe is to be the most important is the *information* domain, which is prescriptive in nature (Smith & Allen, 2006). Students across institutional type indicated that receiving accurate information from advisors about degree requirements was more important than any of the other 11 functions (Allen et al., 2012).

In connection with the statement; “My advisor assists me in connecting my curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career, and life goals”, the majority of the students agreed to the statement. 51 (40.8%) agreed, 42 (33.6%) disagreed, and 32 (25.6%) were uncertain. This is in congruence to the views shared by Smith and Allen (2006) and Allen and Smith (2008) who describe the *integration* domain, the first of five domains of academic advising, as one involving holistic advising which assists students in connecting their curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career, and

life goals. When students were asked to indicate whether advisor focuses on knowing them as an individual, based on their skills, interests, and abilities”, response from the Table 5 indicates that 49 (39.2%) disagreed, with 45 (36.0%) agreeing and 31 (24.8%) were uncertain. This indicates that, to a large extent, the students disagreed to the statement. This resonates with the idea that, there seem to be a paradigm shift in contemporary times as the focus of academic advising has shifted from the advisor who acts as a repository of knowledge and provides the student with the needed information to student-centeredness where students’ needs, interests and aspirations are encouraged (Frost, 1990). In line with this, Smith and Allen (2006) and Allen and Smith (2008) indicate that, the *individuation* domain focuses on knowing the student as in individual, based on the student’s skills, interests, and abilities. In order to make the student feel free to air his concerns or ask questions, there is the need for a cordial relationship between the student and the advisor which is necessary for effective academic advising. With respect to whether advisors help students to problem-solve, plan, and improve decision-making skills, the majority of the students agreed to the statement where 68 (54.4%) agreed, 34 (27.2%) disagreed, and 23 (18.4%) were uncertain. This is in agreement with what Smith and Allen (2006) and Allen and Smith (2008) opine that, the *shared responsibility* domain involves helping students to problem-solve, plan, and improve decision-making skills. Concerning whether advisors allow students to take greater responsibility for their success and progress in higher education, 69 (55.2%) of the students agreed, 30 (24.0%) disagreed, and 26 (20.8%) were uncertain. Thus, the majority of the students agreed that, their advisor allows them to take greater responsibility for their success and

progress in higher education. This is in congruence with the views shared by Allen and Smith (2008) that, the *shared responsibility* domain involves allowing students to take greater responsibility for their success and progress in higher education. On the issue of whether advisors provide students with accurate information about degree requirements, greater number of the respondents totalling 55 (44.0%) agreed, 36 (28.8%) disagreed, and 34 (27.2%) were uncertain. The *information* domain relates to advisors providing students with accurate information about degree requirements as well as helping students understand how things work, particularly with policies and procedures at a given institution (Smith & Allen, 2006; Allen & Smith, 2008). Again, from Table 5, it is obvious that students disagreed to the statement that, their advisors have interest in knowing where they work, what their hobbies and interests are, and even some family information. With this, 36 (28.8%) agreed, 57 (45.6%) disagreed, and 32 (25.6%) were uncertain. In line with this, Marques (2005) indicated that advisors should develop and maintain a peer-to-peer relationship with the adult learner.

The views of academic advisors concerning the aspects of quality academic advising offered to students are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

*Views of Academic Advisors concerning the Aspects of Quality Academic Advising offered to Students*

Statement	M	SD
I focus on knowing the student as an individual, based on the student's skills, interests and abilities.	1.68	.75
I engage students in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements.	1.81	.40
I focus on students' academic learning.	1.68	.60
I also focus on students' interpersonal growth and development.	1.97	.80
I assist students in connecting their curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career and life goals.	2.10	.87
I help students understand how things work, particularly, with policies and procedures in the University.	1.84	.64
I help students to problem-solve, plan and improve decision-making skills.	2.03	.61
I provide students with accurate information about degree requirements.	1.61	.72
I allow students to take greater responsibility for their success and progress in higher education.	1.68	.48

Table 6, continued

Statement	M	SD
I have interest in knowing where the students work, what their hobbies and interests are, and even some family information.	2.06	.89

Source: Field survey, Hackman (2016)

Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree,  
 3 = Uncertain, 4 = Disagree  
 5 = Strongly Disagree

Mean of means = 1.85

Mean of Standard Deviation = 0.68

(*n*=27)

Generally, a careful look at Table 6 shows that the academic advisors to a large extent apply a multidimensional approach in the academic advising they render to students in terms of the five main domains (integration, referral, information, individuation, and shared responsibility) as indicated by Smith and Allen (2006) and Allen and Smith (2008). In line with this, a mean of means of 1.85 and a mean of standard deviation of 0.68 were achieved for the items designed which clearly indicates that the academic advisors agreed to a lot of the statements which were meant to identify the aspects of academic advising offered to students.

From Table 6, a mean of 1.68 and 0.75 standard deviation was attained meaning that majority of the respondents agree that, they focus on knowing the student as an individual, based on the student's skills, interest and abilities. This is in contradiction with the view expressed by Lowenstein (2005) who



has provided the most descriptive account of learning-centred advising noting that advisors should be focusing on student academic learning and not be concerned with student interpersonal growth and development. The “logic” of the curriculum becomes the primary focus and discussion point in an advising session (Lowenstein, 2000, p. 2). Advisors help students make sense of the curriculum and guide students through a process of active learning, identifying key relationships between courses and disciplines with a focus on logical reasoning. However, the finding is in line with Marques (2005) who indicated that, advisors should be involved in and knowledgeable of the student’s position and program and attuned to the student’s personal well-being in the learning environment. It is clearly noticeable from Table 6 that majority of the academic advisors support the view that, they engage students in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements. With this item, a mean of 1.81 and a standard deviation of .40 which indicate that the mean falls on the scale 2 (Agree) looking at the scale under Table 6. The plausible conclusion that could be drawn is that a significant majority of the academic advisors support this view. This is in agreement with what Hemwall and Trachte (2005) opined when addressing the concept of praxis with academic advising believing that, advisors should be engaging students in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements and that ultimately these discussions should prompt changes in goals and values; making meaning of the world to transform it rather than focusing on student self-development. It is obvious from Table 6 that the academic advisors in the College of Education in the University of Cape Coast focus on students’ academic learning. Concerning this, 1.68 mean and standard deviation of .60 was

achieved for this statement. The mean which falls on scale 2 (agree) affirms the position that majority of the academic advisors support this view. In relation to the statement, “I also focus on students’ interpersonal growth and development”, the majority of the academic advisors agreed to it. A mean of 1.97 and a standard deviation of .80 were obtained for this item. The mean when converted to the nearest whole number falls on scale 2 which represents the option agree. In response to the statement “I assist students in connecting their curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career and life goals”, 2.10 was attained as mean and 0.87 as standard deviation. Therefore, the majority of the academic advisors agreed to the statement since the mean falls on scale 2 (agree).

From Table 6, the majority of the academic advisors agreed to the statement which sought to find out whether advisors help students understand how things work, particularly, with policies and procedures in the university. From the analysis, 1.84 was obtained as a mean and .64 as the standard deviation. It could be seen from the scale under Table 6 that the mean could be placed on the scale 2 (agree). Pertaining to the statement “I help students to problem-solve, plan and improve decision-making skills”, 2.03 was recorded as mean and .61 was attained as standard deviation. From the forgoing, it is obvious that the academic advisors agreed to the statement since the mean falls on the scale 2 (agree). Again, the majority of the respondents agreed that they provide students with accurate information about degree requirements. A mean of 1.61 and standard deviation of .72 were recorded for this item justifying that the academic advisors agree with the statement. A mean of 1.68 and standard deviation of .48 was obtained for the statement: “I allow students

to take greater responsibility for their success and progress in higher education". This means that majority of the respondents agreed to the statement. When the mean is converted to the nearest whole number, it falls on the scale 2 (agree) supporting this position. Regarding whether the academic advisors have interest in knowing where the students work, what their hobbies and interests are, and even some family information, it was found out that a significant majority of the academic advisors agreed to the fact. A mean of 2.06 and a standard deviation of .89 were attained. An approximation of the mean to the nearest whole number falls on scale 2 (agree). The high standard deviation indicates variations in the responses given but it still stands that the majority of the respondents agreed to this view.

From the findings, it can be concluded that, both the students and the academic advisors agreed that the academic advisors engage students in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements; advisors focus on students' academic learning; advisors focus on students' interpersonal growth and development; advisors assist students in connecting their curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career and life goals; advisors help students understand how things work, particularly, with policies and procedures in the university; advisors help students to problem-solve, plan, and improve decision-making skills; advisors provide students with accurate information about degree requirements; as well as advisors allow students to take greater responsibility for their success and progress in higher education. On the other hand, the students were of the opinion that, academic advisors do not focus on knowing the students as an individual, based on their skills, interest, and abilities; and advisors do not have interest in knowing

where students work, what their hobbies and interests are, and even some family information because the students disagreed to these statements when they were posed to them.

**Resources Available for Effective and Efficient Academic Advising at the College of Education Studies**

Research Question Two: What are Resources Available for Effective and Efficient Academic Advising Carried out in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast?

The import of this research question was to find out whether the resources available for effective and efficient academic advising to be carried out were sufficient in the College of Education Studies. This research question was necessary because the success or otherwise of academic advising as well as the impact of academic advising on students in general can be influenced by the extent to which resources are available for effective and efficient academic advising to take place. The responses given by the academic advisors to this question are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

*Views of Academic Advisors concerning the Availability of Resources for Effective and Efficient Advising in the University of Cape Coast*

Statement	M	SD
There is an available enclosed environment/office which makes my academic advising sessions very effective.	1.55	.72
The chairs in my office make students feel at home when they come for advising sessions.	2.23	1.06
I am able to serve my advisees with drinks and water and that enhances the rapport needed for effective academic advising.	3.87	.99
There are refrigerator, television, etc. to make my advisees feel at home in my office.	4.00	1.15
The College allocates funds needed for the acquisition of infrastructure for enhancing academic advising.	4.06	.93
Classes are not too large and that enhances academic advising.	3.58	1.26

Table 7, continued

Statement	M	SD
The availability of communication tools (telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax, internet access, etc.) makes my advisees able to access me each time they need me.	2.00	1.29
Enough resources available enable me to follow-up on each of my advisees until they graduate.	3.87	.96
The advising programme is responsive to client's needs due to resource availability.	3.52	.93

Source: Field survey, Hackman (2016)

Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree,  
 3 = Uncertain, 4 = Disagree  
 5 = Strongly Disagree

Mean of means = 3.19

Mean of Standard Deviation = 1.03

(*n*=27)

Table 7 depicts that the resource availability for effective and efficient academic advising is inadequate. This is because, the academic advisors disagreed to most of the statements posed to them to find out their views on the availability of resources for effective and efficient advising. In line with this, a mean of means of 3.19 and a mean of standard deviation of 1.03 were achieved for the items designed which indicates that the academic advisors disagreed to a lot of the statements posed to them in that direction.

From Table 7, a mean of 1.55 and 0.72 standard deviation was attained meaning that majority of the academic advisors agreed, there is an available enclosed environment/office which makes academic advising sessions very effective. It is evident from Table 7 that majority of the academic advisors support the view that, the chairs in their office make students feel at home when they come for advising sessions. With this item, a mean of 2.23 and a standard deviation of 1.06 which indicate that the mean falls on the scale 2 (Agree) looking at the scale under Table 7. The plausible conclusion that could be drawn is that a significant majority of the academic advisors support this view. It is obvious from Table 7 that the academic advisors in the College of Education in the University of Cape Coast are not able to serve their advisees with drinks and water needed to enhance the rapport needed for effective academic advising. Concerning this, 3.87 mean and standard deviation of .99 was achieved for this statement. The mean which falls on scale 4 (disagree) affirms the position that majority of the academic advisors did not support this view. In relation to the statement, “There are refrigerator, television, etc. to make my advisees feel at home in my office”, the majority of the academic advisors disagreed to it. A mean of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 1.15 were obtained for this item. The mean when converted to the nearest whole number falls on scale 4 which represents the option disagree. In line with the statement “The college allocates funds needed for the acquisition of infrastructure for enhancing academic advising”, 4.06 was attained as mean and 0.93 as standard deviation. Therefore, the majority of the academic advisors disagreed to the statement since the mean falls on scale 4 (disagree).

From Table 7, the majority of the academic advisors disagreed to the statement: “Classes are not large and that enhances academic advising”. In connection with this, 3.58 was obtained as a mean and 1.26 as the standard deviation. It could be seen from the scale under Table 7 that the mean could be placed on the scale 4 (disagree) when approximated to the nearest whole number. This finding is in line with Abelman (2007) who opined that, although research tends to show that there is a growing need for academic advising in institutions of learning, the programme may be hindered by a number of factors. In situations where advisors carry a heavy student-to-advisor load, the success of the programme may be limited. Institutional factors that affect the type of advising offered include large enrolment, type of programme, religious affiliation, institutional mission, and private or public status. Pertaining to the statement “The availability of communication tools (telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax, internet access, etc.) makes my advisees able to access me each time they need me”, 2.00 was recorded as mean and 1.29 was attained as standard deviation. From the findings, it is obvious that the academic advisors agreed to the statement since the mean falls on the scale 2 (agree). This finding is in congruence with Marques (2005) who opined that, as part of the top five best practices for faculty advising, advisors should be available to the student in a multiple of ways (in person and by telephone, e-mail, and fax). Again, the majority of the academic advisors disagreed that enough resources available enables them to follow-up on each of their advisees until they graduate. A mean of 3.87 and standard deviation of .96 were recorded for this item justifying that the academic advisors disagree with the statement. A mean of 3.52 and standard deviation of .93 was obtained



for the statement: “The advising programme is responsive to client’s needs due to resource availability”. This means that majority of the respondents disagreed to the statement. When the mean is converted to the nearest whole number, it falls on the scale 4 (disagree) supporting this position.

From the above, in terms of resource availability for effective and efficient academic advising, it can be concluded that, the academic advisors agreed that; there is an available enclosed environment/office which makes academic advising sessions very effective; that the chairs in their office make students feel at home when they come for advising sessions; and the availability of communication tools (telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax, internet access, etc.) makes advisees able to access them (advisors) each time they need them (advisors). However, the academic advisors responded that; they are not able to serve their advisees with drinks and water which are needed to enhance the rapport for effective academic advising. Also, there are no refrigerator, television, etc. to make advisees feel at home. The college does not allocate funds needed for the acquisition of infrastructure for enhancing academic advising; classes are too large and that does not enhance academic advising; enough resources are not available to enable advisors follow-up on each of their advisees until they graduate; and the advising programme is not responsive to client’s needs due to unavailability of resources.

**Students' Level of Satisfaction regarding Academic Advising Services  
Rendered to them in the College of Education Studies**

Research Question Four: What is the Level of Satisfaction of Students Regarding Academic Advising Services Rendered to them in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast?

This research question was meant to find out students' level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered to them in the College of Education Studies. The overall satisfaction that students derive from academic advising services rendered to them in the College of Education Studies determines the success/otherwise of the academic advising which may affect the rate at which students either patronize or reject the academic advising services rendered to them. The responses given by the students to this question are shown in Table 8.

Table 8

*Views of Students concerning their Level of Satisfaction regarding Academic Advising Services rendered to them*

Statement	Agree N(%)	Disagree N(%)	Uncertain N(%)
I am satisfied in general with the academic advising I receive.	60(48.0)	35(28.0)	30(24.0)
I have received accurate information about courses, programmes, and requirements through academic advising.	59(47.2)	37(29.6)	29(23.2)

Table 8, continued

Statement	Agree N(%)	Disagree N(%)	Uncertain N(%)
Sufficient prior notice has been provided about deadlines related to institutional policies and procedures.	51(40.8)	35(28.0)	39(31.2)
Advising has been available when I needed it.	61(48.8)	34 (27.2)	30 (24.0)
My advisor is attuned to my personal well-being in the learning environment and that makes me satisfied.	56(44.8)	42(33.6)	27 (21.6)
My advisor is available to me in multiples of ways (in person and by telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax, etc.) and that makes me satisfied.	50(40.0)	41(32.8)	34 (27.2)
Sufficient time has been available during advising sessions.	55(44.0)	42 (33.6)	28 (22.4)
My advisor allows me to choose my own direction which makes me feel more satisfied with the career path I desire and take an interest in my own education.	56(44.8)	34 (27.2)	35 (28.0)

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Source: Field survey, Hackman (2016)(*n*=125)

Table 8 sought to find out the views of students concerning their level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered to them. It is evident from Table 8 that, the majority of the students are satisfied in general

with the academic advising they receive. This is because, 60 (48.0%) agreed, 35 (28.0%) disagreed, and 30 (24.0%) were uncertain when the students were asked whether they were satisfied in general with the academic advising they received. Also, the majority of the students agreed to have received accurate information about courses, programmes, and requirements through academic advising. With this, 57 (47.2%) agreed, 37 (29.6%) disagreed, and 29 (23.2%) were uncertain. As to whether students are provided with sufficient prior notice about deadlines related to institutional policies and procedures, 51 (40.8%) agreed, 35 (28.0%) disagreed, and 39 (31.2%) were uncertain. Thus, the majority of the students agreed that they are provided with sufficient prior notice about deadlines related to institutional policies and procedures. In line with the statement; “Advising has been available when I needed it”, the majority of the students agreed to the statement. With this, 61 (48.8%) agreed, 34 (27.2%) disagreed, and 30 (24.0%) were uncertain. Regarding the statement; “My advisor is attuned to my personal well-being in the learning environment and that makes me satisfied”, 61 (44.8%) agreed, 42 (33.6%) disagreed, and 27 (21.6%) were uncertain. So it goes that, the majority of the students agreed that, their advisor is attuned to their personal well-being in the learning environment and that makes them satisfied. On the issue of the availability of advisors to students in a multitude of ways (in person and by telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax, etc.), 50 (40.0%) agreed, 41 (32.8%) disagreed, and 34 (27.2%) were uncertain. Therefore, the majority of the students agreed that their advisor is available to them in a multitude of ways (in person and by telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax, etc.) and that makes them satisfied. In line with this, King (2003) indicated that, the

availability of academic advisors is crucial for the success of the student-advisory programme, especially in colleges and universities. At the university, students may fail to make contact with their faculty advisors due to their own tendency to leave immediately after class, lack of extracurricular involvement, the lack of on-campus residence, lack of on-campus employment, and the large number of adjunct instructors that do not have office hours. Also, 55 (44.0%) of the students agreed, 42 (33.6%) disagreed, and 28 (22.4%) were uncertain when the statement; “Sufficient time has been available during advising sessions”. Thus, the majority of the students agreed that, sufficient time has been available during advising sessions. As to whether advisors allow students to choose their own direction which makes them feel more satisfied with the career path they desire and take an interest in their own education, 56 (44.8%) agreed, 34 (27.2%) disagreed, and 35 (28.0%) were uncertain. Therefore, the majority of the students agreed that, their advisor allows them to choose their own direction which makes them feel more satisfied with the career path they desire and take an interest in their own education.

From the foregoing, the researcher concludes that the students are very satisfied with academic advising services rendered to them in the University of Cape Coast because they agreed to most of the statements posed to them to find out their level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered to them in the University of Cape Coast. In attestation to this fact, the students agreed that; they are satisfied in general with the academic advising they receive; they have received accurate information about courses, programmes, and requirement through academic advising; they have been provided with sufficient prior notice about deadlines related to institutional

policies and procedures; advising has been available when they needed it; advisors are attuned to their personal well-being in the learning environment and that makes them satisfied; sufficient time has been available during advising sessions; and advisors allow them to choose their own direction which makes them feel more satisfied with the career paths they desire and take an interest in their own education.

### **Hypotheses**

#### **The Rate of Patronage of Academic Advising by Male and Female Students in the College of Education Studies**

**Ho:** There is no significant difference between the rate of patronage of academic advising by male students and that of female students in the College of Education Studies.

This hypothesis sought to test whether there was a significant difference between the rate of patronage of academic advising by male students and that of female students in the College of Education Studies. The objective of this hypothesis was to confirm the findings of various literature on the subject which suggested that males have been less willing to seek help in dealing with academic difficulties as compared with their female counterparts. The results from the independent sampled t-test are shown in Table 9.

Table 9

*Independent Samples t-test Analysis on Rate of Patronage of Academic Advising by Male and Female Students in the University of Cape Coast*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	t-value	p-value	$\eta^2$
Rate of Patronage of Academic Advising	Male	81	1.69	1.36	292.68	.423	.588	0.0015
	Female	44	1.63	1.16				

Source: Field survey, Hackman (2016) \*\* significant at  $p=0.05$  (2-tailed)( $n=125$ )

Table 9 shows the results of the independent sample t-test on whether the variance between the rate of patronage of academic advising by male and female students in the University of Cape Coast was significant. From Table 9, it was realized that male students had a mean score of  $M=1.69(SD=1.36)$  while the female students had a mean score of  $M=1.63(SD=1.16)$ . This shows that the male students had more positive attitude towards patronising academic advising as compared with their female counterparts. Again, the standard deviation ( $SD=1.36$ ) of the male students indicates that the individual male scores on the rate of patronage of academic advising varied more than that of their female counterparts ( $SD=1.16$ ). However, when the mean scores of the two groups were tested using the independent samples t-test at .05 significant level, two-tailed, the results revealed that there was statistically no significant difference between the rate of patronage of academic advising by male students and that by female students in the University of Cape Coast ( $t(292.68)=.423, p = 0.588$ ).

Based on Cohen (as cited in Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007) the guidelines on the interpretation of eta square( $\eta^2$ ), the magnitude of the differences between the mean values of the rate of patronage of academic advising by male students and that by female students in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast was very small (eta squared ( $\eta^2$ ) = 0.0015). This shows that only 0.15 percent of variance in the rate of patronage of academic advising could be explained by gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between the rate of patronage of academic advising by male students and that by female students in the University of Cape Coast fails to be rejected.

This finding is in contradiction to the studies that identified gender as a factor affecting students' tendency to seek academic advising. Generally and traditionally, males have been less willing to seek help in dealing with academic difficulties (Daubman & Lehman, 1993; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997) and career counselling (Di Fabio & Bernaud, 2008). Such lower rates of help seeking among males transcend racial and national limits (Neighbors & Howard, 1987; Oliver, 2005 as cited in Muola et al., 2012).

It is not because men do not have problems that is why they do not seek help, but because Social norms of traditional masculinity frowns on help seeking by men (Kessler et al., 1981; Lee, 1997; Möller-Leimkühler, 2002; Wisch, 1995 as cited in Muola et al., 2012) hence men's failure to seek help. Kennedy-Dudley (2007) found that women were more likely than men to have been advised professionally. In a study by the National Science Foundation (2008), it was found that female respondents at the bachelor, master's and doctoral degree programme levels considered all types of



mentoring roles to be significantly more important than male respondents. The exception to this trend was the Academic/Career factor, which showed no significant differences in gender for the masters' level respondents. These findings imply that gender is likely to influence perceptions on academic advising and the tendency to seek the service. In another study of 238 students (Clark, 2005), it was reported that females had a higher perception of being mentored. Male students have less social support in university settings and are less likely to reach out for educational support (Hernandez, 2004). These findings imply that gender should be one of the factors to consider when planning for academic advising with the possibility of instituting an "intrusive" form of mentoring (Redmond, 1990) for male students.

**Male Students and Female Students' Level of Satisfaction regarding Academic Advising Services rendered to them in the College of Education Studies**

**H0:** There is no significant difference between male and female students' level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered in the College of Education Studies.

This hypothesis was sought to test whether there was a significant difference between male students and female students' level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered in the College of Education Studies. The results from the independent sampled t-test are shown in Table 10.

Table 10

*Independent Samples T-test Analysis on Male and Female Students' Level of Satisfaction regarding Academic Advising Services rendered in the University of Cape Coast*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	t-value	p-value	$\eta^2$
Level of Satisfaction	Male	81	21.54	8.13	266.085	-2.73	.338	0.06
	Female	44	23.95	7.84				

Source: Field survey, Hackman (2016) \*\* significant at  $p=0.05$  (2-tailed)( $n=125$ )

Table 10 shows the results of the independent sample t-test on whether the variance between the level of satisfaction of academic advising services by male students and that by female students in the University of Cape Coast was significant. From Table 10, it was realized that male students had a mean score of  $M=21.54(SD=8.13)$  while the female students had a mean score of  $M=23.95(SD=7.84)$ . This shows that the female students had more satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered in the University of Cape Coast as compared with their male counterparts. Again, the standard deviation ( $SD=8.13$ ) of the male students indicates that the individual male scores on the level of satisfaction of academic advising services rendered in the University of Cape Coast varied more than that of their female counterparts ( $SD=7.84$ ). However, when the means scores of the two groups were tested using the independent samples t-test at 5% significant level, two-tailed, the results revealed that there was statistically no significant difference

between the level of satisfaction of academic advising services by male and female students in the University of Cape Coast ( $t(266.085)=-2.73, p = 0.338$ ).

Based on Cohen (as cited in Cohen et. al.,2007) the guidelines on the interpretation of eta square( $\eta^2$ ), the magnitude of the differences between the mean values of the level of satisfaction regarding academic advising by male students and that by female students in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast was moderate (eta squared ( $\eta^2$ ) = 0.06). This shows that only 0.6 percent of variance in level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services could be explained by gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between male students' and female students' level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast fails to be rejected.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter marks the concluding part of the study. It aims at highlighting the main findings. It also presents a summary of the research process, the conclusions and offers the implications for future research.

#### **Summary**

When students join university for the first time, they are exposed to a lot of freedom which is a big contrast to the strict discipline and restriction that characterize many secondary schools and homes in Ghana. It is assumed that these students are above the age of 18 and therefore mature enough to make decisions independently. Consequently, they might engage themselves in behaviours that may interfere with their studies. Peer influence sometimes entices students into antisocial behaviour like drug abuse and irresponsible sexual behaviour which eventually interrupt their studies. Some students might not have been admitted into programmes of their choice and therefore may find it difficult to create interest and concentrate on their current programmes. This makes the role of the academic advisor very essential in ensuring that, students' academic needs are addressed, pass their examinations or graduate from college and benefit largely from the tuition and resources spent and thus increase their chances of employment (Brower, 1992; Habley & McClanahan, 2004). Hence, academic advising is essential in ensuring the total development of the student. However, academic advising in institutions have for a long time not been given the needed attention. Many students go to school without knowing what they are supposed to do and leave school without any idea of what they are supposed to do and careers they should

follow. They have little understanding of themselves and their socio-economic and political environment since the needs of students are not fully met. It seems imperative therefore that the necessary structures and conditions are put in place for implementing a comprehensive and effective Academic advising programme in our schools so that the Ghanaian educational system would produce people with enough skills to avoid increases in unrest and crime rate to which the youth are most vulnerable. Therefore, this research sought to evaluate academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast.

In order to find answers to the research questions and hypotheses that were formulated to guide the study, the descriptive research design was employed. The study covered all academic advisors and levels 200, 300 and 400 regular students in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. In all, 387 respondents comprising of 356 students and 31 academic advisors in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast were involved in the study. The census sampling, cluster and the proportional allocation of sample size were used to select the academic advisors and students respectively to serve as respondents.

The questionnaire was the instrument used in collecting data to address the research questions. Two sets of questionnaires (for academic advisors and students) consisting of both closed-ended and open-ended items were used to gather the requisite data for the study. It is worthy to note that, these instruments were subjected to reliability and validity test. The data gathered was analyzed using the computation of frequencies, percentages, mean of

means distributions, as well as independent T-test. The following are the main findings of the study.

### **Key findings**

1. It was found out that, both the students and the academic advisors agreed that; advisors tell students what needs to be done in order to graduate (prescriptive model); advisors collaborate with students to ensure that they graduate on time (developmental model); advisors allow students to make their own choices in the direction of their education (developmental model); each student is assigned to a lecturer in the department as their advisor (faculty model); that there is an advising centre for a designated group of students as well as all other students assigned to academic departments (split model); that students are assigned to academic advisor once they have began the degree programme (supplementary model); that during orientation sections, the academic advisors advise all students for a particular period of time and then transfer them to their various departments (total intake model); and each academic unit/department is responsible for their own advising, but advising is conducted across the campus (satellite model).
2. Concerning the aspects of academic advising offered by advisors in the University of Cape Coast, it was found out that academic advisors to a large extent, apply a multidimensional approach in the academic advising they render to students in terms of the five main domains (integration, referral, information, individuation, and shared responsibility) as indicated by Smith and Allen (2006) and Allen and

Smith (2008). This is because, both students and advisors agreed that, the academic advisors engage students in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements; advisors focus on students' academic learning; advisors focus on students' interpersonal growth and development; advisors assist students in connecting their curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career and life goals; advisors help students understand how things work, particularly, with policies and procedures in the university; advisors help students to problem-solve, plan, and improve decision-making skills; and advisors provide students with accurate information about degree requirements. On the other hand, the students were of the opinion that, academic advisors do not focus on knowing the students as an individual, based on their skills, interest, and abilities; and advisors do not have interest in knowing where students work, what their hobbies and interests are, and even some family information because the students disagreed to these statements when they were posed to them.

3. The findings of the study showed that, the majority of the academic advisors agreed that; there is an available enclosed environment/office which makes academic advising sessions very effective; that the chairs in their office make students feel at home when they come for advising sessions; and the availability of communication tools (telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax, internet access, etc.) makes advisees able to access them (advisors) each time they need them (advisors). However, the academic advisors responded that; they are not able to serve their advisees with drinks and water which are needed to enhance

the rapport for effective academic advising. Also there are no refrigerator, television, etc. to make advisees feel at home. The college does not allocate funds needed for the acquisition of infrastructure for enhancing academic advising; classes are too large and that does not enhance academic advising; enough resources are not available to enable advisors follow-up on each of their advisees until they graduate; and the advising programme is not responsive to client's needs due to unavailability of resources.

4. In line with the level of satisfaction of students regarding academic advising services rendered to them in the University of Cape Coast, it was realized that, the students are very satisfied with academic advising services rendered to them in the University of Cape Coast because they agreed to most of the statements posed to them to find out their level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered to them in the University of Cape Coast. In attestation to this fact, the students agreed that; they are satisfied in general with the academic advising they receive; they have received accurate information about courses, programmes, and requirement through academic advising; they have been provided with sufficient prior notice about deadlines related to institutional policies and procedures; advising has been available when they needed it; advisors are attuned to their personal well-being in the learning environment and that makes them satisfied; sufficient time has been available during advising sessions; and advisors allow them to choose their own direction which



makes them feel more satisfied with the career paths they desire and take an interest in their own education.

5. It was also shown that, there is no significant difference between the rate of patronage of academic advising by male and female students at the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between the rate of patronage of academic advising by male students and that of female students in the University of Cape Coast failed to be rejected.
6. It was also found out that, there is no significant difference between the level of satisfaction of academic advising services by male students and that of female students at the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between male and female students' level of satisfaction regarding academic advising services rendered in the University of Cape Coast fails to be rejected.

### **Conclusions**

The following conclusions could be drawn from the findings of the study. In relation to the models/styles of academic advising adopted at the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast, it can be concluded that a multidimensional approach to academic advising was adopted in order to ensure a comprehensive academic advising in the College of Education Studies. Also, the findings of the study depicted that, the aspects of academic advising services rendered to students covers the five main domains (integration, referral, information, individuation, and shared

responsibility) as indicated by Smith and Allen (2006) and Allen and Smith (2008). However, the fact that students responded that, academic advisors do not focus on knowing the students as an individual, based on their skills, interest, and abilities raises a lot of questions. Perhaps, academic advisors do not recognize the need to focus on knowing each student as an individual, based on their skills, interests, and abilities. It may also be due to lack of resources (human or material) or that, the academic advisors do not recognize the need to establish a close rapport/ peer-to-peer relationship so that students feel free to divulge personal information that would enable advisors have a clearer background knowledge of their clients in order to better assist them in the advising process.

Regarding resource availability for effective and efficient academic advising, it can be concluded that, the resources available for academic advising were not adequate to ensure a comprehensive and smooth running of the programme at the College of Education Studies. With the exception of an available enclosed environment/office; chairs; and the availability of communication tools (telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax, internet access, etc.), basic resources such as refrigerator, television, and adequate financial resources were lacking and this affects advisor ability to follow-up comprehensively on an advisee until he/she graduates. This may be due to the fact that the College does not allocate funds needed for the acquisition of infrastructure for enhancing the smooth running of the programme.

Again, it can be concluded that, the students were very satisfied with academic advising services rendered to them at the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. This raises a lot of questions. Can

students be really satisfied with the academic advising at the College of Education despite the lack of resources to run the programme as indicated by the advisors? If students are really satisfied with the academic advising in the university, then why the low patronage of academic advising by students? This is because, the findings of the study depicted that, the majority of the students do not patronize academic advising services although they claim to be aware of the availability of the service. Perhaps, students lack the motivation to patronize academic services or simply do not recognize the need for academic advising and the benefits associated with academic advising services.

Once more, there was no difference between the rate of patronage of academic advising by male students and female students at the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. This presupposes that, there is the need for a concerted effort to be directed to both male students and female students alike in the University, in encouraging them (male students and female students) to patronize academic advising services in the university.

It can also be concluded that, there was no difference between the level of satisfaction of academic advising services by male students and that of female students at the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations have been made.

1. It is commendable that, the College of Education Studies advisors at UCC use a multidimensional approaches to academic advising such including; prescriptive advising model; developmental model; faculty

model; split model; supplementary model; total intake model; as well as the satellite model in their advising process. However, it is recommended that, advisors use more of developmental advising model since research results indicate that students preferred the developing advising style because, it tends to allow the student to make all choices in their education, resulting in the student feeling as if they have chosen their own path rather than being told what they should do. Allowing the student to choose their own direction will leave them feeling more satisfied with the career path they desire and take an interest in their own education. The academic advisor using this approach serves as a facilitator who stimulates and supports students in their quest for an enriched quality of life and it focuses on identifying and accomplishing life goals.

2. It is recommended that, the College of Education Studies advisors at UCC should focus on knowing the students as an individual, based, based on their skills, interest, and abilities; and advisors should have interest in knowing where students work, what their hobbies and interests are, and even some family information. This would make clients feel free to divulge personal information that would enable advisors have clearer background knowledge of their clients in order to better assist them in the advising process.
3. Again, the College of Education Studies at UCC should make available resources so that, academic advisors may be able to operate to the fullness of their capacity. When this is done, academic advisors would be able to create a congenial atmosphere for academic advising by

serving their advisees with drinks and water. Also, refrigerators, televisions, etc. should be provided in the offices of advisors to make advisees feel at home. Again, the number of students to advisors should be reduced by recruiting more academic advisors so that the workload on advisors will reduce. Regular training of advisors should be organised to equip them current skills and knowledge needed. This will enable advisors to be able to attend to students' individual needs, interests and abilities; follow-up on each of their advisees until they graduate; and make the advising programme responsive to client's needs.

4. It is therefore suggested that, the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast encourage students to partake in academic advising session by making students aware of the need for academic advising and the benefits associated with academic advising in order to increase the patronage of academic advising among students. Perhaps, the university authorities may consider making academic advising compulsory for all students at least once in a year, a requirement all students would have to fulfil for the award of their degrees in order to increase patronage.

#### **Suggestions for Further Research**

This study sought to evaluate academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. The study could be replicated in other colleges in the University of Cape Coast to find out what persists there. Also, the study was conducted using the questionnaire as the only instrument for data collection. Future studies may incorporate the use of

interview guide to make the study more interactive. Again, future studies may consider investigating the effect of academic advising on student's GPA.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### Questionnaire for Students

This questionnaire seeks to evaluate academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. The exercise is purely for academic work. I therefore ask for your maximum co-operation and assure you that information provided here will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please respond to each of the following items by ticking (✓) the appropriate response box.

#### SECTION A

1. Gender:

a. Male [ ]

b. Female [ ]

2. Age

a. Below 20 years [ ]

b. 21-25 years [ ]

c. 26-30 years [ ]

d. 31-35 years [ ]

e. 36-40 years [ ]

f. 41-45 years [ ]

g. 46-50 years [ ]

h. Above 50 years [ ]

3. Level

a. Level 200 [ ]

b. Level 300 [ ]

c. Level 400 [ ]

4. Department

Please indicate

.....

5. I am aware of academic advising as a student personnel service in the College of Education Studies. Yes No

6. How many academic advising sessions have you had this academic year?

a. none [ ]

b. one [ ]

c. two [ ]

d. three [ ]

e. four [ ]

f. five [ ]

g. six [ ]

h. seven [ ]

i. more than seven times [ ]

### SECTION –B

#### ASPECTS OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on these statements (key: Agree (A); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D)):

STATEMENT	A	U	D
7. My advisor focuses on my academic learning as well as my interpersonal growth and development.			
8. My advisor engages me in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements.			
9. My advisor provides me with accurate			

information about degree requirements as well as helps me understand how things work, particularly with policies and procedures in the University.			
10. My advisor assists me in connecting my curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career, and life goals.			
11. My advisor focuses on knowing me as an individual, based on my skills, interests, and abilities.			
12. My advisor helps me to problem-solve, plan, and improve decision-making skills.			

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>
13. My advisor allows me to take greater responsibility for my success and progress in higher education.			
14. My advisor provides me with accurate information about degree requirements.			
15. My advisor has interest in knowing where I work, what my hobbies and interests are, and even some family information. .			

**SECTION –C**

**ACADEMIC ADVISING MODELS**

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on these statements (key: Agree (A); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D) ):

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>
16. My advisor tells me what needs to be done in order to graduate.			
17. My advisor collaborates with me to ensure that I graduate on time			
18. My advisor allows me to make my own choices in the direction of my education.			
19. I am assigned to a lecturer in the department as my advisor.			

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>
20. There is an advising centre for a designated group of students as well as all other students assigned to academic departments.			
21. I am assigned to academic advisor once I have begun the degree programme.			
22. The academic advisors advise all students for a particular period of time and then transfer them to departments.			
23. Each academic unit is responsible for their own advising, but advising is conducted across the campus.			

**SECTION –D**

**STUDENTS’ LEVEL OF SATISFACTION REGARDING ACADEMIC  
ADVISING SERVICES RENDERED TO THEM**

Please tick (√) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on these statements (key: Agree (A); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D)):

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>
24. I am satisfied in general with the academic advising I receive.			
25. I have received accurate information about courses, programmes, and requirements through academic advising.			
26. Sufficient prior notice has been provided about deadlines related to institutional policies and procedures.			

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>
27. Advising has been available when I need it.			
28. My advisor is attuned to my personal well-being in the learning environment and that makes me satisfied.			
29. My advisor is available to me in a multitude of ways (in person and by telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax etc.) and that makes me satisfied.			
30. Sufficient time has been available during advising sessions			
31. My advisor allows me to choose my own direction which makes me feel more satisfied with the career path I desire and take an interest in my own education.			

## Appendix B

### Questionnaire for Academic Advisors

This questionnaire seeks to evaluate academic advising in the College of Education Studies in the University of Cape Coast. The exercise is purely for academic work. I therefore ask for your maximum co-operation and assure you that information provided here will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please respond to each of the following items by ticking (✓) the appropriate response box.

#### SECTION A

1. Gender:

c. Male

d. Female

2. Age

a. Below 30 years

b. 31-35 years

c. 36-40 years

d. 41-45 years

e. 46-50 years

f. Above 50 years

3. Department/Section/Unit.

Please indicate.....

4. How long have you worked in this institution?

a. 1-5 years

b. 6-10 years

- c. 11-15 years [ ]
- d. 16-20 years [ ]
- e. 21 years and above [ ]

5. Highest qualification attained

- a. Specialist [ ]
- b. Diploma [ ]
- c. B.A/B.Ed [ ]
- d. M.A/M.Ed./M..Sc [ ]
- e. M.Phil [ ]
- f. Ph.D [ ]
- g. Other, please specify.....

**SECTION –B**

**ASPECTS OF ACADEMIC ADVISING**

Please tick (√) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on the following statements (key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD)):

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
6. I focus on knowing the student as an individual, based on the student’s skills, interests and abilities.					
7. I engage students in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements.					
8. I focus on students’ academic learning and					



also on students' interpersonal growth and development.					
9. I assist students in connecting their curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career and life goals.					
10. I help students understand how things work, particularly, with policies and procedures in the University.					
11. I help students to problem-solve, plan, and improve decision-making skills.					

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
12. I provide students with accurate information about degree requirements.					
13. I allow students to take greater responsibility for their success and progress in higher education.					
14. I have interest in knowing where the students work, what their hobbies and interests are, and even some family information.					

**SECTION –C**

**RESOURCE AVAILABILITY FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING**

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on the following statements (key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD)):

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
15. There is an available enclosed environment/ office which makes my academic advising sessions very effective.					
16. The chairs in my office make students feel at home when they come for advising sessions.					

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
17. I am able to serve my advisees with drinks and water and that enhances the rapport needed for effective academic advising.					
18. There are refrigerator, television, etc. to make my advisees feel at home in my office.					
19. The college allocates funds needed for the acquisition of infrastructure for enhancing academic advising.					
20. Classes are not too large and that enhances					

academic advising.					
21. The availability of communication tools (telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax, internet access, etc.) makes my advisees able to access me each time they need me.					
22. Enough resources available enable me to follow-up on each of my advisees until they graduate.					
23. The advising programme is responsive to client's needs due to resource availability.					

### SECTION –D

#### ACADEMIC ADVISING MODELS

Please tick (√) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on the following statements (key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD)):

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
24. I tell the student what needs to be done in order to graduate.					
25. I and the student collaborate to ensure that the student graduates on time.					
26. I allow the students to make their own choices in the direction of their education.					
27. Each student is assigned to a lecturer in the					

department.					
28. There is an advising centre for a designated group of students as well as all other students assigned to academic departments.					
29. Each student is assigned to academic advisor once the student has begun degree programme.					
30. During orientation sections, all academic advisors advise all students in the college for a period of time and then transfer them to their various departments.					
31. Each academic unit is responsible for their own advising, but advising is conducted across the campus.					

**Appendix C**  
**Reliability Coefficient for Advisors Questionnaire**

**Scale: ALL VARIABLES**

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	31	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	31	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.790	31

**Reliability for Section A**

**Background Characteristics of Advisors**  
**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.70	5

**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. Gender	82.8723	173.114	.168	.810
2. Age	81.9149	169.080	.180	.812
3. Department/Section/Unit	81.7021	152.170	.599	.790
4.How long have you worked in this institution	81.6170	164.459	.340	.804
5.Highest educational qualification attained	82.3830	171.981	.163	.810

**Reliability for Section B**

**Aspects of Academic Advising  
Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.86	9

**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
6. I focus on students' academic learning and students' interpersonal growth and development	81.7872	165.432	.347	.804
7. I engage students in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements.	82.2766	167.813	.347	.804

8.I provide students with accurate information about degree requirement as well as help students understand how things work particularly with policies and procedures in the University	82.5106	166.212	.406	.802
9. I assist students in connecting their curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career, and life goals.	80.9362	164.278	.360	.803
10.I focus on knowing the student as an individual, based on the student's skills, interest, and abilities	80.1064	168.184	.248	.808
11. I help students to problem-solve, plan and improve decision-making skills	79.8085	166.202	.455	.801
12. I allow students to take greater responsibility for their success and progress in higher education.	82.0851	170.123	.161	.812
13. I provide students with accurate information about degree requirements.	81.4255	163.337	.350	.804
14. I have interest in knowing where the student works, what their hobbies and interests are, and even some family information.	79.9362	166.583	.415	.802

**Reliability for Section C**

**Resource Availability for Academic Advising  
Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.86	9

**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
15. There is an available enclosed environment/office which makes my academic advising sessions very effective.	80.7234	167.465	.291	.806
16. The chairs in my office make student feel at home when they come for advising sessions	81.7234	160.465	.477	.798
17. I am able to serve my advisees with drinks and water and that enhances the rapport needed for effective academic advising	82.2766	165.944	.414	.802
18. There is a refrigerator, television, etc. to make my advisees feel at home in my office	82.1489	166.260	.343	.804



19. The college allocates funds needed for the acquisition of infrastructure for enhancing academic advising.	82.2128	171.389	.192	.809
20. Classes are not too large and that enhances academic advising.	82.1702	172.536	.139	.811
21. The availability of communication tools (telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax, internet access, etc.) makes my advisees able to access me each time they need me	82.6383	166.801	.411	.802
22. Enough resources available enable me to follow-up on each of my advisees until they graduate	81.8723	156.418	.574	.793
23. The advising programme is responsive to client's needs due to resource availability.	81.1489	161.390	.435	.800

**Reliability for Section D**

**Academic Advising Models  
Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.70	8

**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
24. I tell the student what needs to be done in order to graduate	46.0000	197.500	.974	.964
25. I and the student collaborate to ensure that the student graduates on time	45.8000	195.200	.846	.966
26. I allow the students to make their own choices in the direction of their education	46.0000	197.500	.974	.964
27. Each student is assigned to a lecturer in the department	45.6000	212.800	.976	.966
28. There is an advising centre for a designated group of students as well as all other students assigned to academic departments	45.0000	197.500	.974	.964
29. Each student is assigned to academic advisor once the student has begun degree programme	45.6000	206.800	.521	.971
30. During orientation sections, all academic advisors advise all students in the college for a period of time and then transfer them to their various departments	46.0000	219.000	.262	.973

31. Each academic unit is responsible for their own advising, but advising is conducted across the campus	45.4000	182.800	.972	.965
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### Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
84.3191	177.309	13.31574	30

### Item-Total Statistics

**Appendix D**  
**Reliability Coefficient for Students Questionnaire**

**Scale: ALL VARIABLES**

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	31	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	31	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.91	31

**Reliability for Section A**

**Background Characteristics of Advisors**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.70	4

**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. Gender	82.8723	173.114	.168	.810
2. Age	81.9149	169.080	.180	.812
3. Level	81.7021	152.170	.599	.790
4. Department	81.6170	164.459	.340	.804

5. I am aware of academic advising as a student personnel service in the College of Education Studies	82.3830	171.981	.163	.810
6. How many academic advising sessions have you had this academic year?	46.0000	197.500	.974	.964

## Reliability for Section B

### Aspects of Academic Advising

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.93	9

#### Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
7. My advisor focuses on my academic learning as well as my interpersonal growth and development	46.0000	197.500	.974	.964
8. My advisor engages me in a dialogue about the purpose and meaning of course requirements	45.8000	195.200	.846	.966
9. My advisor provides me with accurate information about degree requirements as well as helps me understand how things work, particularly with policies and procedures in the University	46.0000	197.500	.974	.964

10. My advisor assists me in connecting my curricular and co-curricular choices to academic, career, and life goals	45.6000	212.800	.976	.966
11. My advisors focuses on knowing me as an individual, based on my skills, interests, and abilities	45.0000	197.500	.974	.964
12. My advisor helps me to problem-solve, plan, and improve decision-making skills.	45.6000	206.800	.521	.971
13. My advisor allows me to take greater responsibility for my success and progress in higher education	46.0000	219.000	.262	.973
14. My advisor provides me with accurate information about degree requirements	45.4000	182.800	.972	.965
15. My advisor has interest in knowing where I work, what my hobbies and interests are, and even some family information	46.6000	212.800	.976	.966

## Reliability for Section C

### Academic Advising Models

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.83	8

#### Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted

16. My advise tells me what needs to be done in order to graduate	82.8723	173.114	.168	.810
17. My advisor collaborates with me to ensure that I graduate on time	81.9149	169.080	.180	.812
18. My advisor allows me to make my own choices in the direction of my education	81.7021	152.170	.599	.790
19. I am assigned to a lecturer in the department as my advisor	81.6170	164.459	.340	.804
20. There is an advising centre for a designated group of students as well as all other students assigned to academic departments	82.3830	171.981	.163	.810
21. I am assigned to academic advisor once I have begun the degree programme	81.7872	165.432	.347	.804
22. The academic advisors advise all students for a particular period of time and then transfer them to departments.	82.5106	173.168	.167	.810
23. Each academic unit is responsible for their own advising, but advising is conducted across the campus.	82.2766	167.813	.347	.804

## Reliability for Section D

**Students' Level of Satisfaction Regarding Academic Advising Services Rendered to Them**

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.89	8



**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
24. I am satisfied in general with the academic advising I receive	79.8085	166.202	.455	.801
25. I have received accurate information about courses, programmes, and requirements through academic advising.	82.0851	170.123	.161	.812
26. Sufficient prior notice has been provided about deadlines related to institutional policies and procedures	81.4255	163.337	.350	.804
27. Advising has been available when I need it	79.9362	166.583	.415	.802
28. My advisor is attuned to my personal well-being in the learning environment and that makes me satisfied	79.8723	168.244	.341	.804
29. My advisor is available to me in a multitude of ways (in person and by telephone, e-mail, whatsapp, facebook, fax etc.) and that makes me satisfied.	80.4894	167.168	.274	.807
30. Sufficient time has been available during advising sessions.	80.4255	172.902	.113	.813
31. My advisor allows me to choose my own direction which makes me feel more satisfied with the career path I desire and take an interest in my own education.	80.2766	171.639	.178	.810

AppendixE

Letter of Introduction



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES  
INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

Tel. No. : 03321-30571  
Fax No. : 03321-30588  
E-mail : [iepa@ucc.edu.gh](mailto:iepa@ucc.edu.gh)

University Post Office  
Cape Coast  
Ghana

15<sup>th</sup> February, 2016

Our Ref.: EP/90.3/Vol.2

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**LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

The bearer of this letter, **Ms. Martha Bosua Hackman**, is an M.Phil student of the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast. She requires some information from you/your outfit for the purpose of writing her thesis titled, "**Academic Advising in the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast**" as a requirement for M.Phil Degree.

Kindly give the necessary assistance that **Ms. Hackman** requires to enable her collect the information.

While anticipating your co-operation, we thank you for any help that you may be able to give her.

Evelyn Nyan (Mrs.)  
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR  
For: DIRECTOR  
INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL  
PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST  
CAPE COAST