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Challenges of Kwara State University Malete, Nigeria Towards the Attainment of a World-Class University Status

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Abstract

The study examined the challenges of the realisation of a world-class university at Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated for the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 1,078 lecturers out of which 245 lecturers were sampled. Challenges of the Realization of World-class University Questionnaire (CRSWUQ) constructed by the researchers were used for data collection for the study. Percentage was used to answer the research questions while Mann Whitney U-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed among others that: world class status of a university is simply about the international recognition of the university. A world class university has world class departments, diversified sources of income, sound financial base and always benchmarked with top universities world-wide. Lack of physical infrastructure which is obviously the most visible part of the university, the pressure of publish or perish culture which undermines the quality of research and absence of public financial support are some of the challenges that could hinder the world-class status of Kwara State University. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the state government, KWASU management, academic staff and the entire university community should work together to overcome the identified challenges that could hinder the realization of a world class status of KWASU.

Keywords: challenges, realization, world-class university

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the development of competitive capacities in higher education systems has been expanded. Membership of a concise group of a World-Class University (WCU) is not an issue that is announced by the universities but this is done by International University Ranking Institutions based on criteria and global standards. World-class universities, commonly referred to as the most prestigious research universities, are essential in developing a nation's competitiveness in the global knowledge economy. According to Altbach, (2009) universities are at the pinnacle of the higher education hierarchy and they play key roles in creating and disseminating knowledge, educating a highly skilled workforce for technological and intellectual leadership, and serving the needs of society.

The concept of world-class universities, a term adopted largely interchangeably with global research universities or flagship universities has been firmly embedded in governmental and institutional policies to promote national competitiveness in the increasingly globalized world. However, the paradox is that the concept has been widely employed without an explicit, clear definition. In 2004, Altbach argued that "everyone wants one, no one knows what it is, and no one knows how to get one". It is commonly agreed that world-class universities are academic institutions committed to creating and disseminating knowledge in a range of disciplines and fields, delivering of elite education at all levels, serving national needs and furthering the international public good (Altbach, 2009; Liu, 2012). Among scholars, institutional administrators, and policy-makers, one of the common approaches to defining "world-class" is through the creation and ongoing development of league tables, such as the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, the Times Higher Education World University Ranking and the QS World University Rankings.

Despite different methodologies being used in evaluating universities in the international rankings, it is not difficult to observe that these indicators focus heavily on quality of education, internationalization, research

output, prestige and impact (Salmi, 2009). Seeking to define the term, scholars have identified key attributes which world-class universities (WCU) have and which regular universities do not possess, including highly qualified faculty, talented students, excellence in research, quality teaching with international standards, high levels of government and non-government funding, academic freedom, autonomous governance structures and well-equipped facilities for teaching, research, administration and student life (Altbach, 2004). Based on the above elements, Salmi (2009) proposes three complementary sets of factors at play in world-class universities: a high concentration of talent, abundant resources, and favourable and autonomous governance. That is to say, a world-class university will be able to select and attract the best students and the most qualified professors and researchers, to possess abundant and diversified funding sources and offer a rich learning and research environment, and to provide favourable and autonomous governance and encourage strategic vision and innovation, so as to respond effectively to the demands of a fast changing global market.

There is no universal recipe or magic formula for making a world-class university. The transformation of the university system from its inception into world-class status cannot take place without challenges. It requires a long-term vision and the implementation of what should be closely articulated with: (a) the country's overall economic and social development strategy, (b) ongoing changes and planned reforms at the lower levels of the education system, and (c) plans for the development of other types of higher education institutions to build an integrated system of teaching, research, and technology-oriented institutions. Salmi (2009) emphasized that achieving the desired results of a starting high quality, new university is easier said than done, however, as building a world-class university requires more than knee-jerk reactions to the rankings or massive infusion of government money. It is a complex and lengthy process that has only recently begun to receive careful attention. World-class universities face many of the same challenges as higher education generally, although with somewhat different characteristics. The issues discussed here, of course, affect countries and institutions in different ways but will, to some extent, be felt everywhere. Much can be learned from national and comparative experiences in dealing with these and other issues (Timperley, 2010).

Central to the challenges militating against the success of a world class university is adequate and stable funding. World class universities will increasingly be challenged to raise their own funds from potential donors, through the sale of intellectual products and consulting, and increasingly from student tuition and fees. Research universities have more potential to charge higher tuition than do other postsecondary institutions. The world class universities in the United States already do so. However, most public research universities worldwide are not permitted to charge higher fees especially in Nigeria because it is believed that government is to provide services for the masses at lower cost or if possible free even in the light of the higher costs of education and the willingness of students to pay more for a better and more prestigious degree from a world-class university.

In an era of growing accountability, universities are challenged to maintain their management autonomy and to control their vital academic decision making (Codinam & Jiménez, 2008). Universities especially state institutions like Kwara State University are in the uncomfortable position of being subjected to bureaucratic rules and parts of complex bureaucratic academic systems. Although, world class universities require autonomy in charting their own paths to excellence and in managing their resources, accountability pressures to give report and prove relevance to the stakeholders are encroaching on autonomy norms of Kwara State University that has the vision of becoming a world-class university.

State universities like Kwara State University will be increasingly challenged to attract top talent both professors and students in an increasingly competitive global academic marketplace. Universities compete not only with other universities but also with a growing and often well-paid knowledge sector outside the campus, and they find that academic salaries often do not match remuneration outside the universities. Top academics are lured abroad from developing and middle-income countries as well. In recent years, the best students have also been attracted to top universities overseas by scholarships, excellent academic conditions and prestige. Although it is difficult to retain professors, universities that can offer at least modestly competitive salaries and good working conditions can be reasonably successful in keeping superior talent. But it is a constant struggle for every university aspiring to be world-class.

Globalization is both a benefit and a curse to universities (Wildavsky, 2010; Marginson & van der Wende 2009). Universities are at the center of global knowledge communication and networks. They funnel new ideas and knowledge into the higher education system and the country as well, and they permit the academic community to participate in international science and scholarship. In the age of the Internet, individuals anywhere can take advantage of global knowledge, but the resources and academic community of research universities make international participation easier and more effective. In many countries, research universities may be the only institutions adequately linked to global networks. At the same time, for many universities globalization

constitutes a challenge. The global academic marketplace for professors and students means that the best students and staff members can be enticed away. Overreliance on international core journals for promotion and research criteria may place professors in peripheral research universities at a disadvantage. Globalization tends to favour universities at the center over others; it does not necessarily contribute to the democratization of science and scholarship (Vaillant & Rossel, 2012).

Achieving world-class university status historically has been a long and complex process. Not surprisingly, the elite universities tend to be old. For instance, the top ten universities in Academic Ranking of World Universities of 2011 were all founded before 1900, and two are more than 800 years old. As is the case with good wines, academic excellence traditionally has required careful care and a long maturation period. However, this notion has been challenged of late on several counts. First, the regular publication of annual global league tables, led by the Times Higher Education World Universities Ranking and the ARWU, appears to imply that significant progress can be expected from one year to the next. It is clear to see that there is no easy shortcut to achieving the concentration of academic and financial resources needed to claim world-class university status (Wildavsky, 2010). Developing a strong culture of excellence, especially in research, is usually the result of incremental progress and consolidation over decades, sometimes even centuries. However, time is necessary but insufficient: indeed, being an old university is no guarantee of academic excellence. Still Kwara State university needs time to achieve this status but the right step in the right direction is necessary. Also, a variant of overambitious planning is assuming that a new institution can be launched in a matter of months and that high quality teaching and research can be accomplished within a few years of establishing a new university. In reality, rushing through the initial phase of design and implementation can often only lead to hasty decisions that can have an adverse effect on the quality and cost of the project.

To be too ambitious in enrolment targets is one of the major challenges that will undermine KWASU's quest for a world class status. The leaders of new institutions sometimes think that they can rapidly enrol large numbers of students, often in the tens of thousands. This is rarely achieved without sacrificing quality. It is usually a better idea to begin with a small number of programs and student body if quality is a priority.

Another challenge that will militate against Kwara State University's quest for world class status is lack of private endowment support for research activities. In society like Nigeria, it is very rare to see private organization supporting educational activities. Though, this could be achieved from different parts of the world.

Poor lecturer/students ratio is a big challenge. According to Rauhvargers (n.d) lecturer/students ratio makes up the 20% of the scores for the raking of world class universities. This ratio is already poor in KWASU and with the way admissions are going in Kwara State University, one will only expect this lecture/students ratio to get poorer unless serious measures are taken to control the admission process.

Build a magnificent campus; expect magic to happen: The physical infrastructure is obviously the most visible part of a new university. A lot of care is usually given to the design and construction of impressive and state-of-the-art facilities. Good academic infrastructure is certainly an important part of the education experience of students, and researchers need adequate laboratories to carry out cutting-edge scientific inquiries (Salmi, 2009). Without an appropriate governance set-up, a strong leadership team, a well-thought out curriculum, and highly qualified academics, the beautiful campus will remain little more than an empty shell that embodies a waste of valuable resources. Kwara State University is on the right part on this, but this must be sustained.

Paying little attention to long-term financial sustainability: This is what many owners of new universities do. They usually announce with enthusiasm the huge endowment dedicated to the establishment of the new institution, but the initial capital investment is only one part of the total project. It is essential to provide adequately for the first few years of operation and to establish a thoughtful business model that allows the new institution to grow and endure in a financially sustainable manner (Smolentseva, 2010).

Rely exclusively on foreign academics without building up local capacity: Hiring foreign academics is common practice to accelerate the launch of a new university in a country with limited capacity. Indeed, it makes good sense to bring experienced instructors and researchers to help put new programmes in place; it can also be a very effective capacity-building strategy when an important part of the mission of the foreign academics is to train younger and less experienced academics from the host country (Sta, 2010). In addition, the aging of lecturers at Kwara State University constitutes another challenge facing the vision of KWASU and indeed most African countries to become world-class university. Tetty (2006) reported that around 43% of the lecturers at the University of Nairobi and 50% at the University of Ghana were over 50 years of age and nearing retirement. World class status as earlier stated cannot be achieved in few months. Since these lecturers are close to retirement, who are those that will bring about the realization of this world-class status?

Another emerging challenge is non-utilization or that information and communication technologies (ICTs) are applied without educational scrutiny (Jaffer, Ng'ambi & Czerniewicz, 2007). Still in Kwara State University there are lecturers that resist the use of technologies in teaching. A lesson learned from the African context in terms of ICT application is that, rather than posing as a threat to teachers and students, educational technologies should help close the gaps preventing effective teaching such as inadequate and low-quality content delivery, insufficient teacher monitoring of student learning, and the lack of custom and innovative approach to teaching. Despite these challenges, the rise of ICTs represents a legitimate attempt to balance traditional and non-traditional avenues for effective teaching in higher education, particularly concerning the critical shortage of teaching faculty and research scholars in the African higher education institutions (Yizengaw, 2008).

In addition, there are signs that Kwara State University's plans to achieve world-class stature are meeting some other obstacles that are peculiar to the environment it finds itself. First is the concern that Kwara State University is expanding too quickly especially in students' enrolment at the expense of maintaining quality. Second, the academic culture that demands quick results hampers innovative and long-term research efforts. The "publish or perish" culture is too strong which always lead to academic staff putting their papers together without quality. Such pressures should often be balanced with the recognition of the value of creativity and originality. Third, lack of academic freedom is a serious issue in Nigeria. Lecturers and students are not encouraged to question government policies or engage in debates on pressing issues. Others include lack of maintenance, students' limitations with ICT skills, resistance to change. These along with inadequate teaching facilities and socioeconomically irrelevant curricula, point to a typical obstacle developing countries generally face in their quest to achieve world-class status.

To become a member of the exclusive group of world-class university is not something that one achieves by self-declaration. This is an elite status conferred by the outside world on the basis of international recognition. From the forgoing, it therefore becomes necessary to find out the challenges militating against Kwara State University, (KWASU), Malete achieving and sustaining a world-class status. It is hoped that when this study is concluded, the findings will make known to KWASU management what should be done to turn KWASU into a world-class university. The practitioners may benefit from this study by virtue of understanding some of the attendant issues in developing world-class university in a developing nation setting – its origins, what it entails, what benefits are anticipated and at what cost. The findings of this study can serve as a map and guide for designing university system according to international standards.

1.1 Research Questions

1.1.1 What Does World-Class University Mean?

1.1.2 What Are the Problems and Challenges That Could Hinder the World-Class Status of Kwara State University?

1.2 Hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no significant difference between the mean rank of male and female lecturers' responses on the meaning of the concept of world-class university.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference between the mean rank of male and female lecturers' responses on the challenges that could hinder the attainment of the expected world-class status of Kwara State University.

2. Methods

Descriptive survey research design was used for this study. This research design as noted by Olayiwola (2007) is an effective way of gathering data from different sources within short time at a relatively cheaper cost. This research design also focused on people, their beliefs, opinions, altitude and behavior (Nworgu, 2006). Corroborating this view, Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002) opined that survey design permits the gathering of information from a large sample of people relatively quickly and inexpensively.

2.1 Population of the Study

The population of this study comprise all the academic staff of Kwara State University. There were 1,074 academic staff in the institution.

Sample Size and sampling Technique

A total sample of 245 academic staff was selected from the population of the study. The sample was selected using random sampling technique.

2.2 Instrument for Data Collection

The instruments used for data collection was Challenges of the Realization and Sustainability of World-class University Questionnaire (CRSWUQ) designed by the researchers. The questionnaire was divided into five sections A,B,C,D and E. Section A consisted of the personal information of the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions. The questions were grouped into two sections A and B according to the research questions of the study. All the items are placed on a four-point rating scale of measurement. The division varies between: Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA), Indifferent (ID), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The items were not given values but treated as ordinal data. The instrument was duly validated by experts and a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.81 was calculated for the study.

2.3 Methods of Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed using frequency and percentage for the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using Mann Whitney U-test at 0.05 level of significance.

2.4 Decision Rule

The decision for the research question was based on higher percentage between agree and disagree. For the hypotheses, if the observed p-value is equal or less than the fixed p-value of 0.05, the hypothesis was rejected; if otherwise the hypothesis was not rejected.

3. Results

3.1 Research Question One: What Does World-Class University Mean?

Table 1. Percentage of responses on what world class university means

S/N	Items	Agree	Disagree	Remark
1	World class university is important in the development of social, cultural, political and economic systems	198 81.5%	45 18.5%	Agree
2	WCU must not only be relevant locally but also globally.	203 83.5%	40 16.5%	Agree
3	WCU must have the desire to compete in a global tertiary education market place.	187 77.0%	56 23.0%	Agree
4	WCU must be among the foremost in the world	156 64.2%	87 35.8%	Agree
5	WCU is known on the basis of international recognition	216 88.9%	27 11.1%	Agree
6	World-class universities are known by their visibility in terms of publication or citation.	169 69.5%	74 30.5%	Agree
7	WCU attracts world class students and professors	200 82.3%	43 17.7%	Agree
8	World-class indices might be subjective	197 81.1%	46 18.9%	Agree
9	Lecturer and students without borders are found in WCU	149 61.3%	94 38.7%	Agree
10	Every university aspires to be among the best in the world	178 73.3%	65 26.7%	Agree
Average Percentage		**185** **76.3%**	**58** **23.7%**	**Agree**

Source: Field survey, 2018

Table 1 revealed that 198 respondents representing 81.5% agreed that World class university is important in the development of social, cultural, political and economic systems as against 45 respondents representing 18.5% who disagreed with the first item of the Table. Two hundred and three respondents representing 83.5% agreed that WCU must not only be relevant locally but also globally while 40 (16.5%) respondents disagreed with the item. In addition, 187 respondents representing 77.0% agreed that WCU must have the desire to compete in a global tertiary education market place.as against 56(23.0%) respondents who disagreed. Also, 156 respondents representing 64.2% agreed that WCU must be among the foremost in the world while 87 (35.8%) respondents disagreed with the statement. For item five of the Table, 216 respondents representing 88.9% agreed that WCU is known on the basis of international recognition as against 27 respondents representing 11.1% who disagreed. One hundred and sixty nine respondents representing 69.5% agreed that world-class universities are known by their visibility in terms of publication or citation while 74(30.5%) respondents disagreed.

Table 1 also revealed that 200 respondents representing 82.3% agreed that WCU attracts world class students and professors as against 43 respondents representing 17.7% who disagreed with the item. Also, 197 respondents representing 81.1% agreed that World-class indices might be subjective while 46 (18.9%) respondents disagreed with the item. In addition, 149 respondents representing 61.3% agreed that Lecturers and students without borders are found in WCU as against 94(38.7%) respondents who disagreed with the statement. Also, 178 respondents representing 73.3% agreed that every university aspires to be among the best in the world while 65 (26.7%) respondents disagreed with the statement.

On the overall, Table 1 showed that the respondents agreed that all the constructs in the Table best describe a world class university (185; 76.3%) with (58; 23.7%) who disagreed.

3.2 Research Question Two: What Are the Problems and Challenges That Could Hinder the World-Class Status of Kwara State University?

Table 2. Percentage of responses on the problems and challenges that could hinder the world-class status of Kwara State University

S/N	Items	Agree	Disagree	Remark
1	Lack of sound financial base	165 67.9%	78 32.1%	Agree
2	Lack physical infrastructure which is obviously the most visible part of the university	210 86.4%	33 13.6%	Agree
3	Over ambitious in enrolment targets	167 68.7%	76 31.3%	Agree
4	lack of innovative facilities to innovative pedagogical practices e.g pedagogical methods relying heavily on teamwork.	156 64.2%	87 35.8%	Agree
5	Low concentration of talented students	189 77.8%	54 22.2%	Agree
6	Very few top-quality professors	170 70.0%	73 30.0%	Agree
7	Lack of co-authored researches with authors outside Nigeria.	156 64.2%	87 35.8%	Agree
8	Too much workloads for the academics	176 72.4%	67 27.6%	Agree
9	Inadequate office accommodation for academic staff	189 77.8%	54 22.2%	Agree
10	Inadequate funding to support the university's research and teaching	134 55.1%	109 44.9%	Agree
11	Absence of public financial support which is necessary for research universities everywhere	198 81.5%	45 18.5%	Agree
12	Paying for an increasing part of the expenditure through tuition and students' fees.	165 67.9%	78 32.1%	Agree
13	Lack of top private organizations endowments to support research.	178 73.3%	65 26.7%	Agree
14	Absence of tax-free by the government to Kwara State University.	156 64.2%	87 35.8%	Agree
15	Poor lecturer/student ratio which is one of the most effective proxy metric for teaching quality.	158 65.0%	85 35.0%	Agree
16	*Very low citations per lecturer* metric in the world ranking.	187 77.0%	56 23.0%	Agree
17	Low international students' enrolment	154 63.4%	89 36.6%	Agree
18	Kwara state University needs a lot of time to achieve the world class status	189 77.8%	54 22.2%	Agree
19	The pressure of "publish or perish" culture undermines the quality of research which will in turn negatively affects the quest for a world class status.	190 78.2%	53 21.8%	Agree
20	Lack of usage of peer reviewed which is the bedrock of university quality.	148 60.9%	95 39.1%	Agree
Average Percentage		**172** **70.7%**	**71** **29.3%**	**Agree**

Source: Field survey, 2018

Table 2 revealed that the respondents agreed that all the construct in the Table constitute challenges that could hinder the world-class status of Kwara State University: Lack of sound financial base (Agree = 165; 67.9%; Disagree = 78; 32.1%), lack of physical infrastructure which is obviously the most visible part of the university (Agree = 210; 86.4%; Disagree = 33; 13.6%), over ambitious in enrolment targets (Agree = 167; 68.7%; Disagree = 76; 31.3%), lack of innovative facilities to innovative pedagogical practices e.g. pedagogical methods relying heavily on teamwork (Agree = 156; 64.2%; Disagree = 87; 35.8%), low concentration of talented students (Agree = 189; 77.8%; Disagree = 54; 22.2%), very few top-quality professors (Agree = 170; 70.0%; Disagree = 73; 30.0%), lack of co-authored researches with authors outside Nigeria (Agree = 156; 64.2%; Disagree = 87; 35.8%), too much workloads for the academics (Agree = 176; 72.4%; Disagree = 67; 27.6%), inadequate office accommodation for academic staff (Agree = 189; 77.8%; Disagree = 54; 22.2%), inadequate funding to support the university's research and teaching (Agree = 134; 55.1%; Disagree = 109; 44.9%), absence of public financial support which is necessary for research universities everywhere (Agree = 198; 81.5%; Disagree = 45; 18.5%), paying for an increasing part of the expenditure through tuition and students' fees (Agree = 165; 67.9%; Disagree = 78; 32.1%), lack of top private organizations endowments to support research (Agree = 178; 73.3%; Disagree = 65; 26.7%), absence of tax-free by the government to Kwara State University (Agree = 156; 64.2%; Disagree = 87; 35.8%), poor lecturer/student ratio which is one of the most effective proxy metric for teaching quality (Agree = 158; 65.0%; Disagree = 85; 35.0%), very low citations per lecturer metric in the world ranking (Agree = 187; 77.0%; Disagree = 56; 23.0%), low international students' enrolment (Agree = 154; 63.4%; Disagree = 89; 36.6%), Kwara state University needs a lot of time to achieve the world class status (Agree = 189; 77.8%; Disagree = 54; 22.2%), the pressure of "publish or perish" culture undermines the quality of research which will in turn negatively affect the quest for a world class status (Agree = 190; 78.2%; Disagree = 53; 21.8%), lack of usage of peer reviewed which is the bedrock of university quality (Agree = 148; 60.9%; Disagree = 95; 39.1%).

On the overall, the respondents agreed that all the items in Table 4 are challenges that could militate the attainment of world class status of Kwara State University (Agree = 172; 70.3%; Disagree = 71; 29.3%).

3.3 Test of Hypotheses

The null hypotheses of the study were tested using Mann Whitney U-test to find the significant difference between the responses of male and female lecturers since the data were measured on ordinal scale. The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The summary of the test of hypotheses are presented in Tables 5 to 8 as follows:

H_{01}: There is no significant difference between the mean rank of male and female lecturers' responses on the meaning of the concept of world-class university.

Table 3. Summary of Mann Whitney u-test of the difference between the responses of male and female lecturers on the meaning of the concept of world-class university

Lecturers	N	Mean Rank	U-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Male	148	124.67				
			0.476	187	0.634	NS
Female	95	129.29				

Source: Field survey, 2018 P>0.05

The data in Table 3 revealed that there are 148 and 95 male and female lecturers respectively. Male lecturers had a mean rank of 124.67 (mean rank = 124.67) while the female lecturers had a mean rank of 129.29 (mean rank = 129.29). The Table revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean rank of male and female lecturers' responses on the meaning of the concept of world class university (U_{-cal} = 0.476, P=0.634). Therefore, the hypothesis that stated that "there is no significant difference between the mean rank of male and female lecturers' responses on the meaning of the concept of world-class university" was not rejected. This indicated that male and female lecturers did not differ statistically significantly in their responses regarding the meaning of the concept of world-class university.

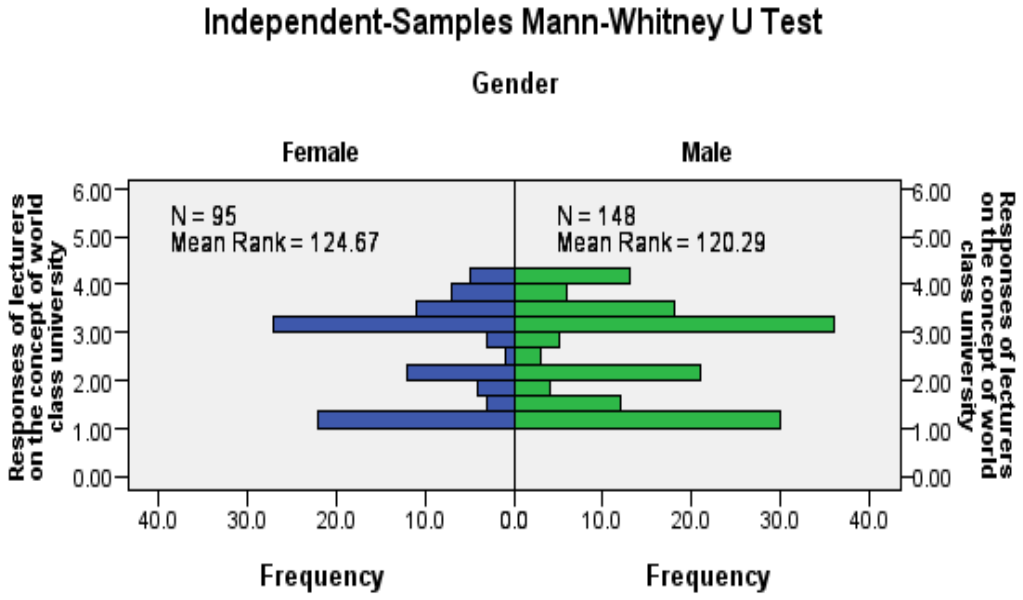


Figure 1

Figure 1 showed the pattern of distribution of the responses of male and female lecturers on the meaning of the concept of world-class university.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference between the mean rank of male and female lecturers' responses on the challenges that could hinder the attainment of the expected world-class status of Kwara State University.

Table 4. Summary of Mann Whitney u-test of the difference between the responses of male and female lecturers on the challenges that could hinder the attainment of the expected world-class status of Kwara State University

Lecturers	N	Mean Rank	U-cal	p-value	Decision
Male	148	127.98			
			1.665	0.96	NS
Female	95	112.68			

Source: Field survey, 2018 P>0.05

The data in Table 8 revealed that there are 148 and 95 male and female lecturers respectively. Male lecturers had a mean rank of 127.98 (mean rank = 127.98) while the female lecturers had a mean rank of 112.68 (mean rank = 112.68). The Table revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean rank of male and female lecturers' responses on the challenges that could hinder the attainment of the expected world-class status of Kwara State University (U_{-cal} = 1.665, P=0.96). Therefore, the hypothesis that stated that "there is no significant difference between the mean rank of male and female lecturers' responses on the challenges that could hinder the attainment of the expected world-class status of Kwara State University" was not rejected. This indicated that male and female lecturers did not differ statistically significantly in their responses regarding the challenges that could hinder the attainment of the expected world-class status of Kwara State University.

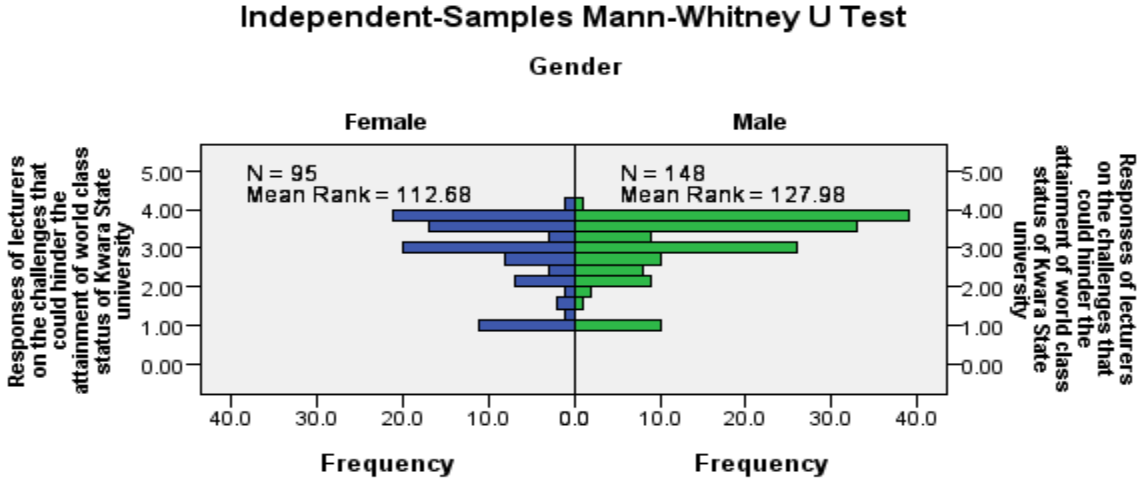


Figure 2

Figure 2 showed the pattern of distribution of the responses of male and female lecturers on the challenges that could hinder the attainment of the expected world-class status of Kwara State University.

3.4 Summary of Major Findings

The following are the major findings of the study:

1. World-class status of a university is simply about the international recognition of the university.

2. Lack of physical infrastructure which is obviously the most visible part of the university, the pressure of publish or perish culture which undermines the quality of research and absence of public financial support are some of the challenges that could hinder the world-class status of Kwara State University.

3. There was no significant difference between the mean rank of male and female lecturers' responses in all the variables used in the study:

- Concept of world-class university (U_{-cal} = 0.476, P=0.634).
- Challenges that could hinder the attainment of a world-class status of Kwara State University (U_{-cal} = 1.665, P=0.96).

4. Discussion of Findings

This study examined the expectation framework for the realisation and sustainability of a world-class university at Kwara State University, Malete. The study found that world-class status of a university is simply about the international recognition of the university. This means that for a university to attain the status, it must be internationally recognized in virtually all its programmes. Its students and lecturers must come from different parst of the world. No university operating locally will be able to attain that status. This finding supports the earlier finding of Salmi (2009) who stated that world-class status is centered on the basis of international recognition. In line with this, Levin, Jeong and Ou, (2006) explained that there is a sense that global reputation is the key in a world-class university. In other words it could be said that the concept of world-class university translates to global relevance. In relation to this finding, the distribution responses of lecturers concerning the concept of a world-class university across the categories of gender is (U_{-cal} = 0.476, P=0.634).

The study also found that lack of physical infrastructure which is obviously the most visible part of the university, the pressure of publish or perish culture which undermines the quality of research and absence of public financial support are some of the challenges that could hinder the world-class status of Kwara State University. This finding means that the expected world-class status of Kwara State University could be hindered by a lot of challenges. This finding supports the earlier findings of Codinam and Jiménez, (2008) who stated that in an era of growing accountability, universities are challenged to maintain their management autonomy and to control their vital academic decision making which is most likely to face a lot problems. Also, Wildavsky (2010) stated that there are lots of hurdles to cross for any university that aspire to be at the top. It was also found that

the distribution of responses of lecturers concerning the challenges that could hinder the expected world-class status of Kwara State university is the same across the categories of gender (U_{-cal} = 1.665, P=0.96) which indicated that both male and female respondents were unanimous in their responses regarding the challenges that could hinder the expected world-class status of Kwara State University.

5. Conclusion

The study revealed that a lot of challenges that could hinder the realisation of the world-class status of Kwara State University have been identified in this study. These factors include lack of physical infrastructure which is obviously the most visible part of the university, the pressure of publish or perish culture which undermines the quality of research and absence of public financial support among others. If these challenges are not overcome, KWASU will not be able to realise its vision of a world- class status and the best it can achieve is to be a local champion.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. There is the need for KWASU management to do more in the area of international recognition.
2. The state government, KWASU management, academic staff and the entire university community should work together to overcome the identified challenges that could hinder the realization and sustainability of a world-class status of KWASU.

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