

MENTEE-MENTOR COOPERATION, MENTEE BENEFIT AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Different companies use different techniques to develop talents and highly skilled labour. Mentoring program has been a popular technique amongst organizations in supporting training and development of career among new recruits, potential business managers, and graduates. The aim of this research is to examine the effect of mentoring on organizational performance, and explore the benefits derived by mentees. The current study was based wholly on qualitative analysis, (Document analysis) which centres on scientific manuscripts obtained from databases such as google scholar, WoS, and SCOPUS. The theme for the study was gathered from organizational theories and theories of mentoring. A conceptual framework was deduced from literature to elaborate on the concept of mentoring, organizational performance and mentee benefits. Some practical implications for this study are: (i) organizations should include mentoring as part of regular training and development schemes, and (ii) new employees should be assigned to more experienced employees. This paper is also to broaden the scope of knowledge on mentoring and organizational performance.

Keywords: mentoring, mentee benefits, organizational performance, organizational benefits, cooperation

1 INTRODUCTION

In order to ensure service quality, effectiveness and responsiveness in an organization, there is the need to develop the human resource to face the ever-changing and sophisticated business environment of these organizations. For businesses or organizations to anticipate long term existence, they must focus on practices and strategies to empower their employees by providing proper training and development programs. Mentoring is a type of training considered as a scope of talent management, which is widely based on the premise of the development of special skills that improve on the organization as well as the individual. Moreover, mentoring assist mentees to develop new processes of thinking which aid them to build on their careers by developing a strong relationship with more experienced and knowledgeable individuals (Klasen & Clutterbuck, 2012).

While authors (Garvey, Strokes & Megginson, 2010; Jackson, 2008; Parsloe & Leedham, 2009) have worked on mentoring in the past, there is still the need to uncover the real chemistry especially between mentor and mentee and the benefits derived by the mentee and the organization. This paper, therefore, examines the influence of a mentor on a mentee and the benefits obtained by both the employee and the organization. Various techniques are adopted by different companies to build talents to enhance their workforce. As explained by Crisp and Cruz (2009), mentoring is one of the most popular techniques for supporting the training and development among new recruits, potential business managers and graduates. Clutterbuck (2014) also posits that mentoring symbolizes openness to new ideas, enthusiasm, and willingness to listen and encourage people to become involved in achieving new job experience. Therefore, the schemes of mentoring can be offered at a comparatively low cost making them specifically fitting talent management tools for organizations in current competitive business environment. Nevertheless, lack of understanding of the meaning of mentoring in

organizational context can create difficulties and can affect the development activities of an organization. According to Rekar-Munro (2009), human capital can be equipped with knowledge, skills, and capabilities through mentoring, the individual assigned to perform that particular job can execute it thoroughly, efficiently and effectively. Mentoring helps to improve on performance and the output of the associated employees which leads to increase in quality of service and ultimately enhances the financial circumstances of their organization (Christensen & Rog, 2008). Mentoring can also build organizational staff to enhance employee performance, strengths, satisfaction, and quality of customer services, supervision and overall cost for each employee (Bailey & Kurland, 1999). Therefore, investment in mentoring has significant effect on the performance of the employees and their organizations. According to Armstrong (2009) employees' knowledge, skills, positive attitudes, abilities and confidence enhance their performance. The improvement of performance is becoming obligatory for the organizations to be able to keep pace with the ever-changing business environment and fulfils the gap between existing skills and required knowledge to operate the business.

The main aim of this study is to review mentor-mentee relationship, mentee benefits, organizational benefits and organizational performance in a service-based organization. The remaining sessions of the write-up areas proceeded with; theoretical foundation of the theme under study, definition of mentoring, conceptual model and proposition development, the study method, discussions, limitations and finally, ended with the conclusion and future research direction.

2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Training and development of employees are very important in order to engender a team of outstanding working professionals. For organizations to achieve competitive benefits, by using their resources effectively and efficiently, they have to devise an appropriate strategy to optimize service excellence and innovation in organization (Knight & Cavusgil, 2004). Mentoring is a kind of training and development that focuses on the individual's motivation, morale, and output. Mentoring generally, explains the relationship between less experienced and more experience thus mentor and mentee. According to Kopp and Hinkle (2006), mentoring is viewed as one-on-one bilateral and continuous relationship between supervisory adults and subordinates which help to enhance professional development. The concept of mentoring is a human endeavour focusing on learning and development activities of an individual in an organization (Ehrich, Hansford & Tennent, 2004). Moreover, a systematic and planned function used in modifying employees' behaviour with the help of learning activities is mentoring, which also depends on programs and events that help to achieve abilities, knowledge, competences, and skills for effectiveness and efficiency (Elnaga & Imran, 2013). Mentoring is, therefore, an organized process of evolving professional understanding knowledge and skills of the people which assists them to augment organizational and discrete performance. As asserted by Ulrich (1996), companies can achieve their business objectives, overall organizational values and mission. And finally support culture of innovation through mentoring and enhancement of employees' competences.

2.1 Mentee and organizational benefits

Organizations have benefited from mentor-mentee relationships, and some of them have tried to formalise these relationships as part of planned career development of employees (Ehrich, Hansford & Tennent, 2004; Chao, 2009). Furthermore, most employees expect organizations to provide avenues to meet their career and developmental needs (Lee & Bruvold, 2003). The deep interpersonal exchange that exist amongst mentorship can lead to reward towards mentee and the organization. The benefits of the can be so valuable that identification with a mentor

should be seen as a major developmental task of an early career. Some of these benefits are mentees; learn about different career paths, increase confidence and self-awareness, expand professional and personal networks, improve skill sets and gain support while you study. (Dobrow & Higgins, 2005; Hall, 2004; Brown et al., 2012). Moreover, apart from the above benefits derived by individual mentees, the organization as the main vehicle for mentorship also benefits (Klasen & Clutterbuck, 2012; St-Jean & Audet, 2012). There is enormous evidence via research that suggest that there is a link between mentee-mentoring relationship and organizational performance (Freedman, 2009; Hattingh, Coetzee & Schreuder, 2005), enhanced organizational commitment (Agarwala, 2003), revenue and profitability, market growth, employee retention, team efficiency, and service quality (Yee, Yeung & Cheng, 2010). From organizational point of view, mentoring has become a key career resource for talent management (Davis et al., 2016) and also a mechanism for educating new recruits, regarding the organizational values (Aryee, Budhwar & Chen, 2002).

3 DEFINITION OF MENTORING, CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND PROPOSITION DEVELOPMENT

The process whereby an experienced employee (mentor) helps a young and inexperienced employee (mentee) in building particular skills or knowledge to improve on their personal and professional growth can be termed as mentoring. (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). Mentoring can be one-to-one, known- judgemental associations between a mentor and mentee of which mentor takes time to encourage and support others which normally developed at the transition time in the life of the mentee and sustained for significant period of time. Mentoring contributes, support advocate or provide guidance for the realization of predetermined objectives over a specific period of time.

According to Scardamalia and Bereiter (2006), mentoring is off-line support by one person to another in making important transitions in knowledge or thinking. In other words, mentoring is support attained from one individual (mentor) to another individual (mentee) within a build-up relationship generated from regular contacts over a specific period of time. However, according to Crisp and Cruz (2009), mentoring relates to identification and nurturing of likelihood for an individual which may be long term objectives and can change but are influenced by the mentees or the learners. The learners owe both process and the aims. Feedback comes and from the learners and their mentors provide them with the assistance to have deep insights, thoughtful and intrinsic clarification.

Similarly, as implied by Eraut and Hirsh (2010) mentoring involves supporting people in identifying the needs of their own development and setting their own goals and objectives; encourage self-governing learners; allowing them to talk and advance their difficulties, reflecting back and clarifying intermittently. Helping them to reproduce their thoughts, feelings, behaviours and believes, and to observe difficulties from various perspectives; encouraging and guiding them in independent solution and analysis of their opportunities and problems; supporting the solutions of the issues by embracing an integrated approach; and enable them to become effective in decision making.

Mentoring is generally more focused on assisting the executives to determine the appropriate goals to follow and why it should be followed, and it is usually a long term relationship. It strives to build intelligence, the ability to use knowledge, skills, and experiences to new challenges and experiences to new situations and problems (Neupane, 2015). Mentoring is again an evolving and open agenda that deals with different issues. In summary mentoring is about following a career path in which training is focused on behaviours, professional and personal development. It is, however, interactive and of role modelling.

3.1 Perspectives of mentoring

Building the capabilities and skills of an existing and current employee is the ultimate focus of organizations on their overall cooperate strategy. According to Elnaga and Imran (2013) Organizations can be competitive only if they provide training and development and conducive learning environment by inspiring their staff. Human resource practitioners contribute great deal to the success of their organizations and by extension contribute to their goals of educating and developing their staff. Training and development have become increasingly sophisticated, therefore, it demands the application of internet technologies. Nevertheless, mentoring is seen as an important part of an effective learning strategy for organizations. Evidence abounds of the usefulness of mentoring in improving the capacities of employees, maximize motivation and confidence. Mentoring also helps employees to develop and improve their leadership skills. Employees are able to deal with challenges and complexities such as meeting sales targets, improving relationships, making informed decisions and team building (Stone, 2007). Mentoring can improve on overall communication strategy of the organization, organizations can increase their capacity through the culture of mentoring. The term mentoring is has gained significant prominence in current world of business. Myriad of reasons can be attributed to mentoring terminology, but the net effect is that it pinpoints the tangible significance of the business aspect of the organization. A business becomes more profitable and increases productivity with increase in investment in time and money. The onus lies on the mentor to prepare the mentee to adjust to good morals, attitudes, and essential skills require to perform within the confines of the success parameters instituted by the organization. Therefore, the charge should be made clear within the given timelines to achieve its intended goals. According to Clutterbuck (2014), mentoring focuses on interpersonal and conversations, it surpasses largely on common work life. This presupposes that mentoring can be more focused, more philosophical on attitudes than a particular skill.

3.2 Organizational significance of mentoring

To exchange information amongst experienced and inexperienced employees that can assist in adapting to workplace culture and environment, organizations usually employ mentoring, this enhances the mentees' understanding of organizational goals and objectives (Alred, 2014). Mentors can be used by businesses to develop their employee's specific career paths. The main significances of mentoring are; retention, personal development, and team efficiency.

Retention: In organizational level mentoring provides various forms of advantages, it builds on employee loyalty (Manzoor, 2012). When experienced professionals help in shaping the career path of employees and provide them with opportunities, then they feel a higher sense of loyalty and connection to the business. The employee feels comfortable with their seniors and even management and helps them to be part of the open communication that helps to improve on the positive work experience. That helps to enhance employees' retention within the organization (Sandhya & Kumar, 2011). Organizations therefore, save money on recruitment, selection, and training of new recruits.

Personal improvement: Fewer experienced professionals receive knowledge, skills, and expertise from the more experienced professionals to develop their capacities. Consequently, their professional efficiencies, productivity, and performance are enhanced. Moreover, mentoring helps to provide guidance and direction for the employees along their career path. This helps the individual employees to be well conversant to meet the expectations of their organizations (Chao, 2007). Mentoring basically, helps to reduce frustrations among mentees the border-line of confidential interactions and enhance individual work satisfaction. And improve on ultimate benefits of the organization.

Team competence: According to Mathews (2003) mentoring enhances team efficiency, departmental function, and the entire organizational performance. It serves as the procedure to identify strength and weakness of individual employees. Managers should draw a clear path for employees to follow by articulating main goals and objectives. Managers must also provide feedback to the employees frequently, to aide performances they must also provide support where necessary to enhance teamwork. More experienced professionals provide support to young professionals to develop them to the organizational requirement. The consistent relationship is developed among mentors and mentees generally last for a whole career life of a mentee within an organization and consequently, acquiring skills, knowledge, and opinions, (Terrion & Leonard, 2007). Moreover, mentoring within organization helps to enhance morale and the companionship thereby leading to team building concepts and activities.

3.3 Employee performance management

Periodic performance assessment forms the basis of performance management. Performance management serves as the process of which deals with employees in a way to provide positive effects on their thinking and behaviour in order to achieve expected level of performance. Managers must express positive behaviour related to performance; the utterances or behaviours of employees influence their associates (Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008). The behaviour exhibited by employees within an organization originates from lack of complete understanding and resistance to change of what is projected. The involvement of an employee must be achieved when possible for performance improvement; there is no one better than he who is constantly on the job as far as the inner workings of the organization is concerned (Herzberg, 2008). The employees must be aware of the expectations of their assignments, the assessment and the standard procedure for the assessment of their output. Employee management must be in touch with each and every employee to whip them in line with regular counselling, coaching, regular feedback and training are essential rudiments to put wayward employees in line. According to Osabiya (2015), maintaining effective and efficient performance of an employee depends on the attention of the management. Certain organizations use performance management for their assessment; performance review or performance appraisal or performance evaluation. Finally, the management of performance is the art and science to positively affect the behaviour and thinking to achieve the expected level of performance. It is also a basic technique that is integrated into everyday behaviours of the managers; to evaluate, identifying, and resolving the issues of employee performance.

The present study is based on the assumption that mentoring is a relevant tool for the improvement of employee performance and other benefits derived by the organization. Mentoring helps mentee to acquire certain benefits such as; skills, knowledge, ability, positive behaviours, confidence and personal and professional development. It equally provides certain benefits to the organization as a whole, such as; increase service or product quality, employee retention, team efficiency, high achievement of revenue target, and market growth. By virtue of this review, the present study proposes the following hypotheses and a conceptual model (see Figure 1).

H1: Mentoring has a direct effect on organizational performance in a service-based organization.

H2: Organizational benefits (revenue and profitability, market growth, employee retention team efficiency service quality) positively mediate mentoring and organizational performance in a service based-organization.

H3: Mentee benefits (skills and knowledge, abilities, attitudes, confidence personal development) serves as a mediator between mentoring and organizational performance in a service-based organization.

H4: Organizational benefits (revenue and profitability, market growth, employee retention team efficiency service quality) has a direct influence on organizational performance in a service-based organization.

H5: Mentee benefits (skills and knowledge, abilities, attitudes, confidence personal development) has a direct influence on organizational performance in a service-based organization.

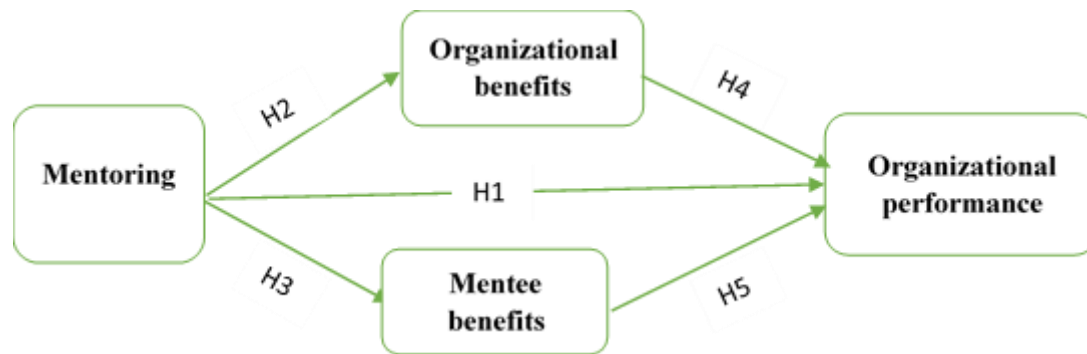


Fig. 1 – A proposed research model. Source: own research

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based wholly on the qualitative investigation; the researcher chose to adopt his methodology with document analysis as a research technique to achieve the main objective of the study. The document analysis centres on knowledge from scientific documents acquired from databases such as SCOPUS, WoS, ProQuest, and Google Scholar via keywords search. Theme analysis was also espoused in identifying associations across different research model, for the purpose of thorough potential relations and designs across the research domain with a realistic aim in mind (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Baskarada, 2014). Base on the understanding of the researcher, together with evidence gathered based on, secondary sources, related areas were identified and linked to the central research theory of mentoring and organizational performance accordingly. Furthermore, given the array of literature in dealing with the wider theme of mentoring, it is practical to adopt document analysis for the research due the sufficient basis it provides for study's phenomena (Ozolina-Ozola, 2014).

The theme of the study, in particular, was frequently gathered from the strategy research pool and more precisely, from theories of mentoring and organization and the research area of mentoring and organizational performance. The ultimate goal of this study was achieved by relatively organized theme(s); of document analysis and relevant content. A conceptual framework was deduced from this understanding (Fig.1). Readers are implored by the researcher to find interest in the scholarly works Fernandez-Alles and Ramos-Rodríguez (2009) and Butler et al. (2011), since they have advocated for the document analysis as a significant tool for conducting a qualitative survey. For an interesting theme analysis readers can read the scholar papers of Huselid and Becker (2011). Under no circumstances does the researcher makes any claim concerning the in-depth documentary inquiry and the various theme there off emerging from this inquiry. However, an attempt has been made to identify closely related themes to increase the current knowledge of the existing study.

5 DISCUSSIONS

Mentoring has commonly been touted as beneficial to organization; much focus has not been placed on the benefits of the individual, being mentored by an experience person (mentee) and the overall benefits derived by the organization that fosters the relationship. The current study attempt to examine the benefits of mentoring at both individual and organizational level. Although, mentors by their deeds derives benefits from mentoring, the main focus of this work is on the benefits of obtained by mentee and the organization. An overview of mentoring suggest that mentoring can significantly influence organizational attraction. Nevertheless, mentoring program may be more attractive to some individuals than others.

The current study is based on the theoretical review, it is however, recommended an empirical study be conducted to ascertain the veracity or otherwise of the deductions made out of this review. For employee retention, more investment must be made to improve on the abilities, skills and broaden the knowledge of the employees. Managers and supervisors should build cordial relationships with their subordinates to grant them the confidence to voice out or discuss with them, their perspectives within the functions of the organization. Furthermore, based on this review, it is recommended that employers should design programs that will include mentoring as part of regular training and development schemes in order to promote future leaders and capable workforce for the future competitive business atmosphere. It is recommended that new recruits should be assigned to more experienced employees to learn the rudiments of the workings of their various organizations. However, limitations of this study should be noted, thus; this research is based wholly on literature review therefore, the extent of generalization is uncertain, nonetheless, further research could be conducted empirically to confirm and reaffirm the validity or otherwise of this study. Despite the above limitations the present study offers support for the conceptual framework developed for comparison for future research. Given the link between mentee benefits and organizational benefits as reflected in the developed hypothesis, it is hoped that the current study has underlined the significance of mentoring in promoting organizational performance. Moreover, it is hoped that the current study will arouse researchers to examine mechanisms which can build on the effectiveness of the relationship existing between mentees, mentors and their organizations.

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