

THE ROLE OF MENTORING IN HUMAN CAPACITY BUILDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: INSIGHTS FROM UNIVERSITIES IN ENUGU, SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA.

IBEME, NWAMAKA PATRICIA
Department of Public Administration
Faculty of Management Sciences
National Open University of Nigeria, Abuja
emails: nibeme@noun.edu.ng
Mobile: 08033258226

Abstract

This study examined the role of mentoring in human capacity building in higher education with insights from Universities in Enugu, South-East Nigeria. The study was guided by three principal objectives. The study adopted descriptive research survey method in which a set of pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect data from five Faculties in five Universities in Enugu. The Universities included the University of Nigeria Enugu Campus, Caritas University, Amorji-Nike Enugu, ESUT, Enugu, Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu-Nike, Enugu, and Coal City University, Enugu. The combined population of the academic staff of these Faculties as at the time of this research was 5,911. From this population, Cochran's finite population correction statistics was used in determining a sample size of 361 for the study. The said questionnaire that was used by the study consisted of 18 close-ended items (6 on the demography of respondents and 12 on the research constructs of the study) with the latter set on the 5-point Likert-type scale. Results of the reliability test carried out on the said questionnaire showed that it had a Cronbach's Alpha index (CAI) of 0.86. The respondents for the study were selected using purposive sampling technique which used certain pre-determined set of criteria to select those adjudged to possess some good knowledge of the issues involved in mentoring, human resource management, human capacity building. Descriptive statistics that consisted of tables, frequency counts, and percentages was used to analyzed the data collected, while the three hypotheses for the study were tested using Pearson's Chi-square Cross Tabulation Statistics, all with the aid of SPSS. It was the findings of the study that direct mentoring had significant positive effect on the stock of research skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programmes facilitators by their senior colleagues ($X^2=33.44$; $p=0.000<0.05$); that indirect mentoring had no significant positive effect on the stock of pedagogical skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues ($X^2=54.47$; $p=0.000<0.05$); and that Collegial mentoring had no significant positive effect on the stock of administrative skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues ($X^2=38.79$; $p=0.00<0.05$). This study recommended change of attitude on part of senior lecturers towards mentoring their junior colleagues; increase in the retirement age of professors and other senior academics from 65 year to 75 years and putting in place effective mentoring programmes on various university campuses.

Keywords: mentorship, HCB, higher education, insights, Enugu State.

Introduction

Mentoring is widely recognized as an important contributor to building capacity within organizations. Mentoring has been identified as an important influence in professional development in both the public and private sectors. Mentoring relationships can produce positive development and organisational outcomes. Bennis (2014), while discussing his view of the seven stages of leadership, reiterates the importance of having a mentor at various stages of a leader's personal development, from the very first stage through to the mature stage when perhaps, the mentee becomes the mentor.

Mentors may play a number of roles such as coach, friend, and counsellor. Since the late 1970s, there has been considerable debate around the value of individuals in mentoring relationships where the focus of attention is placed on the quality of the mentoring relationship (Higgins & Kram, 2018). This is emphasized by Eby (2019:112) who often refers to mentoring as "an intense developmental relationship".

Stokes (2016) discusses the strongly interpersonal relationship between mentee and mentor in which a safe place exists for the mentee to explore and grow. This is further supported by Alred & Garvey (2017:146):

"A mentor is sensitive to the emotional and intellectual aspects of the mentee's world. Offering empathy is a basis for establishing trust in the mentoring relationship, a condition for learning that goes beyond the routine and the instrumental."

The mentor acts as a confidante and, as Clutterbuck & Megginson (2014:54) put it, will offer 'help ... in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking'. Mentoring relationships can be highly structured or fluid in design allowing the relationship to move in any direction the mentor and mentee agree, but always in support of the mentee's goals. In recent times, mentoring has been identified as an important learning activity in a variety of contexts (Hansford, Tennet & Ehrich, 2018), such as businesses and the more traditional learning environments.

As in all aspects of mentoring, more critical questions are now being asked about the quality and effectiveness of mentoring relationships (Stokes, Garrett & Hunt, 2016). Ragins, Cotton & Miller (2015:9) draw our attention to the dangers of so-called marginal mentors and McAuley (2019) explores what he refers to as the 'ambivalence' of mentoring, employing psychoanalytic constructs such as transferences and counter-transference between mentor and mentee.

A very fundamental product of education, generally, and in particular, higher education, is the development, facilitation and acquisition of lifelong skills for useful living. Lifelong skills that are regularly developed and validated retain their marginal utility and strengths when they can be annexed and directly applied as solution-driven mechanism in bringing hope to global challenges, viz, socially, economically, politically and academically. Skills in Lifelong Education (LE) are, therefore, reliable and positive-oriented weapons of change.

The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) explains its perspective on capacity-based on five core capabilities, namely, "capability to act and self-organize,

capability to generate development results, capability to relate, capability to adapt and self-renew, and the capability to achieve coherence" (Fowler and Ubels, 2018: 18-21). Capacity development is very much related to the ways organizations operate (Fowler and Ubels, 2018). Culture bears an understanding of the way an organization operates, its procedures, beliefs and values; it is usually affected by the people employed in it, the past incidents., present influences, and the type of work it undergoes (Handy,2019). New skills, competencies, and training are important features to be acquired in an organization for capacity development; material resources such as equipment and capital assets are also imperative for this purpose (Fowler and Ubels, 2018). Capacity development and its impacts should be continuously assessed in an organization, so that existing gaps could be filled to ensure constant progress. Disregarding capacity building programs would probably lead to lack of growth and possible failure.

This paper, therefore, examined the role mentoring plays in human capacity building in higher education with special focus on universities in Enugu, South-east Nigeria. In the analyses that follow, mentoring was proxy by direct mentoring, indirect mentoring, and collegial mentoring, while capacity building was proxy by research skills, pedagogical skills, and administrative skills.

Objectives of the Study

The broad goal of this paper was to examine the role mentoring plays in capacity building efforts in higher education in Nigeria with focus on Universities in Enugu South-east Nigeria. This study, however, pursued the following specific objectives:

1. To find out the effect of direct mentoring on the stock of research skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programmes facilitators by their senior colleagues.
2. To ascertain the effect of indirect mentoring on the stock of pedagogical skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues
3. To investigate the effect of collegial mentoring on the stock of administrative skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of direct mentoring on the stock of research skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programmes facilitators by their senior colleagues?
2. What is the effect of indirect mentoring on the stock of pedagogical skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues?
3. What is the effect of collegial mentoring on the stock of administrative skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested by this study:

- i: Direct mentoring had no significant positive effect on the stock of research skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programmes facilitators by their senior colleagues.

- ii: Indirect mentoring had no significant positive effect on the stock of pedagogical skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues
- iii: Collegial mentoring had no significant positive effect on the stock of administrative skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the leadership theory known as Relationship/Transformational Leadership Theory and the Human Capital Theory. The postulates of the two theories are briefly discussed below:

Relationship/Transformational Theory

Relationship Theory also known as Transformational Theory focuses on the connections formed between leaders and followers. In this theory, leadership is the process by which a person engages with others and is able to "create a connection" that results in increased motivation and morality in both followers and leaders, Relationship theory is often compared to charismatic leadership theory in which leaders with certain qualities, such as confidence, extroversion, and clearly stated values are seen as best able to motivate followers (Lamb, 2013). Relationship or transformational leaders motivate and inspire people by helping group members see the importance of higher good of the task. These leaders are focused in the performance of group members, but also on each person fulfilling his or her potential. Leaders of this style often have high, ethical and moral standards (Chatty, 2016).

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory was proposed by Schultz in 1961 and later developed extensively by Becker (1964). Human capital definition is the combination of personality attributes, habits, knowledge, social life, and creativity considered in labour performance to contribute to economic value. This theory was developed by Becker and Mincer and can trace its origin to macroeconomic development theory. Gary Stanley Becker developed Human Capital Theory based on Schultz's research on return-on-investment. Human Capital Theory suggests that education or training increases the productivity of workers by imparting useful knowledge and skills, hence raising workers' future income by increasing their lifetime earnings. Researchers have long understood that human capital, especially one's education and training, plays a key role in both employee and firm performance (Becker, 1993; Mincer, 1974). Much of the contemporary literature on training and development find a positive relationship between individual performance (Schmidt, 2007; Jones, 2012; Bapna, 2013) and firm performance (Hatch and Dyer, 2004; Vidal-Salazar, 2012; Georgiadis and Pittelis, 2016; Nchuchuwe & Etim, 2020; Fatile, Sybert & Etim, 2020).

Human Capital Theory asserts that human capital is a key determinant of economic success in all industries. An organisation is often said to be as good as its staff.

Directors, leaders and employees that make up an organization's human capital are critical to its success. The importance of human capital in an organization is underscored by the fact that among all the three factors that have been identified as being at the core of the management function in an organisation known as the 5ms (man, materials, money, machine and method),

human capital (proxy, of course, by man) plays the lead role as it is the factor that seeks to effectively combine the rest of the other four factors to ensure success of the organization (Stonar, Freeman & Gilbert, 2002; Wilson, Gilling and Pearsia, 1991).

According to Becker and Mincer, human capital is typically managed by an organization's human capital management (HCM) department, which is now commonly referred to as the human resources (HR) department. A HRM department oversees the organization's workforce acquisition, management and optimization. The HRM department's other directives include workforce planning and strategy, recruitment, employee training and development and reporting and analysis. Hence the theory shows the role of human resource management in providing education and training which in turn increases performance of the organization. Human resource management must play its pivotal role in the acquisition, development and retention of human capital for an organization (Fatile, Afegbua & Etim, 2020). The staffing function of human resource management must also be effective in the search, recruitment and acquisition of the employees with the human capital necessary for the organization's needs.

Conceptual Framework

- *The Meaning of Mentoring*

Single and Muller (2017:129) define mentoring as "a relationship that is established between a more senior individual (mentor) and a lesser skilled or experienced individual (protégé), primarily using communications that is intended to develop and grow the skills, knowledge, confidence, and cultural understanding of the protégé to help him or her succeed, whilst also assisting in the development of the mentor" .

Mentoring occurs when a senior person (the mentor) in terms of age and experience undertakes to provide information, advice, and emotional support for a junior person (the protégé) in a relationship lasting over an extended period of time and marked by substantial emotional commitment by both parties" (Kram, 2018:39). Mentoring 'is a teaching-learning process acquired through personal experience within a one-to-one, reciprocal, career development relationship between two individuals diverse in age, personality, life cycle, professional status and/or credentials (Roa, 2015 p3). Mentoring is a "dynamic and non-competitive nurturing 'process' that promotes independence, autonomy, and self-actualisation in the protégé while fostering a sense of pride, fulfilment, support and continuity in the mentor" (Bado & Philip, 2014:8). Mentoring is usually a formal and informal relationship between two people - a senior mentor and a junior protégé (Little, 2017:4).

Mentoring is about systematic learning and mentees look for different things, such as a sounding board, a giver of encouragement, a critical friend, a source of emotional support, a confident and a source of knowledge.

The Meaning of Human Capacity Building

According to the World Bank (2017:42), human capacity building or empowerment is "the process of increasing the capacity of individual or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired outcomes and desires". But then, the outcomes and desires being envisioned should, however, be capable of transforming our individual and collective poverty and, or squalor (i.e. economic and, or knowledge) inclination to actual innovations by every

standards. When individuals are empowered, particularly positively, they are able to initiate and propel the opportunity to exercise personal discretion and or choice that contributes to individual's growth and personal wellbeing in the workplace.

The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) defines its perspective on capacity based on five core capabilities:

- "capability to act and self-organize,
- capability to generate development results,
- capability to relate,
- capability to adapt and self-renew, and
- capability to achieve coherence"

(Fowler and Ubels, 2018: 18-21). Capacity development is very much related to the ways organizations operate (Fowler and Ubels, 2018). Culture bears an understanding of the way an organization operates, its procedures, beliefs and values; it is usually affected by the people employed in it, the past incidents, present influences, and the type of work it undergoes (Handy, 2019). New skills, competencies, and training are important features to be acquired in an organization for capacity development; material resources such as equipment and capital assets are also imperative for this purpose (Fowler and Ubels, 2018). Capacity development and its impacts should be continuously assessed in an organization, so that existing gaps could be filled to ensure constant progress. Disregarding capacity building programs would probably lead to lack of growth and possible failure.

Mentoring and Human Capacity Building in High Educational Institutions (HEIs) in Nigeria

In some of the HEIs in Nigeria, for instance, learners and, or younger colleagues are supposed to be conditioned (otherwise, mentored) in 'a most productive and elegant manner, particularly typifying academic culture of excellence in research, teaching and community services. Paradoxically, however, the rapidly changing landscape of higher education in Africa has led to the unimaginable apathy, so to say, on the part of many senior academics and the management staff of several Nigerian Universities, to embark on the process of meaningful professional initiation of the new entrants into the culture of teaching, research, scholarship and publishing. Adjudged from this perspective, the psycho-social stability and/or emotional preparedness often desired in the quality of performance of the junior and the inexperienced newly recruited lecturers (and sometimes, the learners), who inevitably engage in the process of trial and error, in order to find their feet in academia, with regard to what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and the extent to which what is expected, get married and unfortunately confused from the onset (Braithwaite, Osiki & Makoe, 2015).

Mentoring, typified as part of any institutional responsibilities, is the informal educational and/or organisational process which promotes personal and intellectual (otherwise, management) growth, including professional development through empowerment and confidence building for the achievement of academic, professional, workplace and other organisational competence. In applying the general concept of personnel mentoring, which among others, includes coaching, training discussion, counselling and or supervision of the less experienced scholars in academia and, or personnel' (and students inclusive), it is the basis for the development of a virile, nurtured and well groomed academic of all time, for all

day. Mentoring, with defined specific goal, does not promote gullibility in the mentee; rather, it equips the mentee with independent skills needed for sustainable growth and personal development. The mentor, in HE and or any organisation, would probably, therefore, be someone who had "been there, done that" before and knows 'what' 'when' and 'how', the expected competences that are arranged to facilitate skill acquisition, but without exploitation.

In higher education, however, though the mentor-mentee relationship was expected to exemplify that of symbiotism, especially when empowered. According to Braimoh and Osiki (2018), in academia, for instance, learners are prompted through effective participatory learner-teacher activities (otherwise, that of the teacher-teacher), to initiate and develop the, capacity for independent and collaborative efforts to academic success.

Particularly hinged on the multi-dimensionality of the transformative theme, the empowerment of the stakeholders in higher education institutions (HEIs) in general, recognises the tripod interconnectivity of the mentee, mentor and community paradigm. Within a more dynamic symbiotic cyclical order, individual (i.e. mentee and mentor) change constitutes the basis for community and or national growth, advancement and development (i.e. socio-economically, technologically, politically, mental wellness and, or health, etc); and without equivocation, the relevance of HE in Nigeria. While the paradigm necessarily goads the more experienced academic to purposefully research-driven activities along with the less experienced agues of the learners (mentees), individual change (i.e. personal growth) instigated via continuous and eventful cell-research breakthrough, then becomes the bridge to community and, or national (or continental) connectedness and politico-social and economic changes. According to Wilson (2016:112) to bring about or create change, '*we must be ready to change individually to enable us to become partners in solving the complex issues facing us*'. It was this conceptualisation perhaps, and the synthesis of the recognition of mentee-mentor. " mutual trust and respect, within a diverse perspective and a concomitant developing vision, with individuals striving to collaborate toward facilitating creative and realistic solutions to the myriad of African challenges (otherwise, global challenges) that typifies empowerment (Speer & Hughey, 2015; Wilson, 2016) and, of course, the epitome of capacity building in HE. As encapsulated in one paradigm (Braimoh, 2018:97), therefore, skills enhancement and acquisition flow symbiotically between the mentee and mentor (i.e. irrespective of gender, age, academic status, experience, personality variables, which are all held constant), to impact positively on personal development and growth as well as overall implication for community survival and national development in Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive research survey method in which a set of pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect data from senior and junior academic staff drawn from five Faculties in five Universities in Enugu. The Universities included the University of Nigeria Enugu Campus, Caritas University, Amorji-Nike Enugu, ESUT, Enugu, Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu-Nike, Enugu, and Coal City University, Enugu. The combined population of the academic staff of these Faculties as at the time of this research was 5,911. From this population, Cochran's finite population correction statistics was used in determining a sample size of 361 for the study.

This special formula is given by:

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0 - 1}{N}}$$

Where,

n = adjusted sample size

n_0 = correction factor $n_0 = \left[\frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2} \right]$

N = Population size for the study

To determine the sample size for this study, we assume the following:

z = 1.96 (i.e 95% confidence level)

p = Estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population (estimated at 50% or 0.5)

q = 1-p (the proportion of an attribute that is not present in the population (100% - 50% or 0.5)

e = desired level of precision (estimated at 5% or 0.05).

To obtain n_0 (finite population correction factor), we substitute in $\left[\frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2} \right]$ as follows:

$$n_0 = \frac{1.96 \times 1.96 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.05 \times 0.05}$$

$$= \frac{0.9604}{0.0025}$$

$$= 384.16 = 384$$

Therefore, n_0 (finite population correction factor) is 384.

N is already given as 5,911 above.

$$\text{Substituting in the formula } n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0 - 1}{N}}$$

above, we obtain:

$$= \frac{384}{1 + \frac{384 - 1}{5,911}} = \frac{384}{1.064795}$$

$$= 360.63280 = 361 \text{ (rounded up).}$$

Therefore, the sample size for the study was 361.

The said questionnaire that was used by the study consisted of 18 close-ended items (6 on the demography of respondents and 12 on the research constructs of the study) with the latter set on the 5-point Likert- type scale. Results of the reliability test carried out on the said questionnaire showed that it has a Cronbach's Alpha index (CAI) of 0.81, which was considered appropriate for the study. The respondents for the study were selected using purposive sampling technique which used certain pre-determined set of criteria to select those adjudged to possess some good knowledge of the issues involved in mentoring, human resource management, human capacity building and entrepreneurship. Descriptive statistics that consisted of tables, frequency counts and percentages was used to analyze the data collected, while the three hypotheses for the study were tested using Pearson's Chi-square Cross Tabulation Statistics, all with the aid of SPSS.

Results

The results of data analysis showed that out of the 353 questionnaire administered 350 (99.2%) were returned well completed, 3 (0.8%) were returned, but were rejected because they were badly completed, while none was not returned. The results also showed that out of the 350 well completed questionnaires 220 (63.1%) were males, while 33 (37.1%) were female civil/public servants. It was this 350 responses or data that were used throughout the remaining analyses that follow below.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis No. 1

- i: **Direct mentoring had no significant positive effect on the stock of research skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programmes facilitators by their senior colleagues.**

TABLE 1: CHI-SQUARE COMPUTED FROM FREQUENCY CROSS TABULATION

	F-value	Df	Asymp.
Pearson Chi-Square	33.34	8	.0000
Likelihood Ratio	168.203	8	.0000
Linear-by- Linear Association	52.11.0		
N of Valid Cases	350	1	.0000

Source: Field Survey, 2019 at University of Nigeria Enugu Campus, Caritas University, Amorji-Nike Enugu, ESUT, Enugu, Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu-Nike, Enugu, and Coal City University, Enugu; published and unpublished reports from these universities.

Table 1 shows the output of the computed Chi-square values from the Cross Tabulation Statistics of observed and expected frequencies based on the Likert-type scale from the responses of respondents. Pearson Chi-square computed value is $\chi^2 = 33.34$, which is greater than the Chi-square critical value of $\chi^2 = 15.507$ at 8 degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 alpha level: ($\chi^2 = 33.34$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, direct mentoring had significant positive effect on the stock of research skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programmes facilitators by their senior colleagues.

Hypothesis No. 2

- ii: **Indirect mentoring had no significant positive effect on the stock of Pedagogical skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues**

TABLE 2. PEASON'S CHI-SQUARE TEST AS COMPUTED FROM THE FREQUENCY CROSS TABULATION STATISTICS.

	F-value	Df	Asmp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson chi-square	54.47	8	.000
Likelihood Ratio	158.203	8	.000
Linear-by-linear Association	51.110	1	.000
N of valid cases	350		

Source: Field Survey, 2019 at University of Nigeria Enugu Campus, Caritas University, Amorji-Nike Enugu, ESUT, Enugu, Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu-Nike,

Enugu, and Coal City University, Enugu; published and unpublished reports from these universities.

Table 2 shows the output of the computed Chi-square values from the Cross Tabulation Statistics of observed and expected frequencies based on the responses of the target respondents. Pearson's Chi-Square computed value is $\chi^2 = 54.47$, which is greater than the Chi-square critical value of $\chi^2 = 15.507$ at $p < 0.05$, at 8 degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 alpha level: ($\chi^2 = 54.47$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the alternate hypothesis is rejected and its alternate form accepted. That is to say, indirect mentoring had significant positive effect on the stock of pedagogical skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues.

Hypothesis No. 3

iii: **Collegial mentoring had no significant positive effect on the stock of administrative skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues.**

TABLE 3: CHI-SQUARE TEST COMPUTED FROM THE FREQUENCY CROSS-TABULATION STATISTICS.

	F-value	Df	Asymp, Sig (2 sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	38.79	8	.0000
Likelihood Ratio	168.203	8	.0000
Linear-by- Linear Association	52.110	1	.0000
N of Valid Cases	350		

Source: Field Survey, 2019 at University of Nigeria Enugu Campus, Caritas University, Amorji-Nike Enugu, ESUT, Enugu, Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu-Nike, Enugu, and Coal City University, Enugu; published and unpublished reports from these universities.

Table 3 depicts the output of the computed Chi-square values from the cross tabulation statistics of observed and expected frequencies based on the responses of respondents. Pearson Chi-square computed value is $\chi^2 = 38.79$, which is greater than the Chi-square tabulated value of $\chi^2 = 15.507$ at 8 degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 alpha level ($\chi^2 = 38.79$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis stands rejected. This means, therefore, that collegial mentoring had significant positive effect on the stock of administrative skills imparted to younger University lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues.

Implications of this Study

With the findings of this study, policy makers in higher education and many other sectors in Nigeria will have the need to pay attention to the factors that will give pride of place to the issue of mentoring in the administration of universities and management of organizations. This the policy makers can do by incorporating the issue of mentoring into the nation's policy blueprints such as National Policy on Education and National Policy on Industries, among others. Doing so will compel business managers or administrators of universities to entrench the practice of mentoring into their organizational culture. From underscoring the importance of the practice of mentoring in the task of human capacity building in

organizations, another implication of this study is that senior lectures in Universities will have the need to reconsider their negative and reluctant attitude towards the task of providing mentorship to their junior colleagues. In doing so, these senior colleagues will see the need to appreciate their fatherly responsibility and joy in mentoring their junior colleagues to maturity and taking over from the former by the time they retire from service. In fact, these senior colleagues and employees should see mentoring as part of the succession plans of their organisations.

Again, authorities in Nigerian organizations, particularly universities will also have the need to reconsider the retirement age of senior managers in organization or senior academics in our universities which is currently pegged at 60 or 65 years. These authorities will have the need to review upwards the said retirement age up to 75 years. This will offer the said senior managers or senior academics the opportunities to have longer years within which to mentor as many mentees or junior colleagues as possible to stardom. As part of the challenge of incorporating mentoring into the firm's organizational culture, the findings of this study have the implication of also compelling entrepreneurs, managers or University administrators to pay particular attention to implementing sustainable mentoring plans or programmes in their organisations.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have dealt with a very important issue which should serve as a signpost for us in our journey to the 'promised land' of efficient capacity building in our higher institutions of learning, through the mentoring process. It must be borne in mind, however, that mentoring does not only benefit the mentee but in the process of mentoring, even the quality and performance level of the mentor in all ramifications, are also being constantly improved. We must also not see mentoring paradigm as a new phenomenon in our society, as it has a long historical root even with the operation of the apprenticeship training process at the traditional functional education premise.

Suffice it to say that before the advent of modern education system in Africa, there used to be a form of educational encounter, no matter how rudimentary it was, through which character formation, skills training and even traditional literacy used to be imparted to the learners. Such training was holistic and all-embracing but sometimes it might be referred to as dogmatic, repressive, authoritarian and chauvinistic. The problem is that not many people believe or consider mentoring as anything of importance in education, let alone in higher education, through which permanent and flexible learning process could be undertaken for the purpose of attitudinal and behavioural modification as well as in coping with our daily professional challenges. Braimoh (2018) indicated that the *modus operandi* of mentoring may only become more discernible now in the 21st century, nonetheless, mentoring is a useful informal and lifelong educational process which is not only cost-effective, but can also stimulate personal development, increase productivity and improve performance of its trainees. It is the conclusion of this study that mentoring is no doubt, a very useful strategy of capacity building in academia. In line with the foregoing and the findings of this study, we conclude that mentoring has significant positive effect on the stock of research skills, pedagogical skills and administrative skills imparted to younger lecturers and programme facilitators by their senior colleagues.

Recommendations

There is need for change of attitude on the part of those senior lecturers, who are in the habit of shying away from the responsibility of mentoring their younger and less experienced colleagues. It also goes without saying that a good number of senior academics in different tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria who are expected to mentor others selfishly refuse to perform that role of sharing knowledge or experience with their junior inexperienced colleagues for fear of the latter taking up their positions. They have, of course, the belief that the junior and inexperienced staff members should also struggle on their own in "climbing the academic ladder" like they did without any available mentor to show them the way. This is an unfortunate and willful thinking because, it should be a thing of pride for the senior academics that they have been able to replicate themselves through effective mentoring process before they leave the 'academic stage' rather than being parochial to hoard information to themselves.

The present mandatory retirement age of 65 years of our university professors and other senior academic dons should be done away with. The current practice in vogue in some Universities in Southern Africa whereby professors and other senior academics are allowed to stay up to 70 or 75 years in office before retirement should be copied by Nigerian Universities. This practice has the advantage of making greater number of academic staff available for appointment as mentors to their junior colleagues. Some professors may although decide to retire officially in order to collect their retirement benefits by choice, they could nonetheless, be encouraged by the university management to stay further and be offered contract appointments. This will, however, depend on if they are still physically strong and mentally alert to cope with the challenges of the academia. This group of people should be given less of teaching work-load at the undergraduate level but be engaged more on institutional research activities, postgraduate students' supervision including essentially, the mentoring assignment of the new generation academics.

In addition to encouraging informal mentoring practices, authorities of various Universities in Nigeria should ensure that sound formal mentoring programmes are put in place on their University campuses. Such formal mentoring programmes should be made to have clearly defined objectives and measurable outcomes. This being the case such programmes on implementation should be matched with effective monitoring and evaluation with feedback from all stakeholders. Feedback should be triangulated and based on periodic consultations of individuals and representative focus groups.

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