CHAPTER ONE

REDEFINING MENTORSHIP DELIVERY MODEL TOWARDS MEETING   CONTEMPORARY REQUIREMENTS FOR   HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY BUILDING IN DIVERSE SETTINGS

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ABSTRACT

Mentorship has been differently practiced as applicable to its settings. The practice of mentorship in diverse areas offer the opportunity to enhance the skills of mentees through the wealth of knowledge, experience and exposure of mentors. This paper presents insights on mentorship in different organizational settings. The paper compares traditional and contemporary mentorship programmes in use by organizations; there is a section on mentorship in selected settings. Furthermore, a segment is devoted to discussion of contemporary workplace mentorship programmes worth consideration. These include Team Mentorship, Peer Mentorship, Reverse Mentorship, Flash Mentorship, Digital Mentorship and AI-Powered Mentoring. These modern-day mentorship practices have the potential to meet emerging issues in workplace mentorship programmes of organizations. Based on the emerging reality in present-day mentorship experience, the paper emphasizes the need for mentorship delivery model to be redefined and effectively structured taking into consideration the changing times, expectations of mentees and the emerging issues, hence embracing new trends that will ensure that mentorship continues to have a meaningful impact on human resource capacity building in different organizations' settings.

KEYWORDS: Mentorship, Human Resource Capacity Building, Rethinking Mentorship Delivery Model, Contemporary Mentoring

INTRODUCTION

Mentoring offers opportunities for established professionals and less experienced professionals to meet and engage with one another, thus providing both parties the chance to succeed, progress and learn new skills. Mentorship has different implications in human relationships and has been employed in diverse sectors in enhancing growth of persons who are in need of assistance and guidance in realizing both career and personal goals (Deepali, Jain .and Chaudhary, 2016). In literature, there appears to be a difficulty in drawing a line between mentorship and coaching. For instance, Mwambi *et al.*, (2021) observed a seeming confusion among individuals in differentiating between mentorship and coaching. According to the authors, mentorship is more developmental, thus helping the mentee to develop in capacity and growth rather than formal results. In the same vein, Audet and Couteret (2012) explained that coaching tended to be more concerned with specific formal results and tended to have a relationship in which coaches are being rewarded financially for the work done. Mentoring is a reflective experience, enabling both mentor and mentee to learn about different practices and cultures which they can then apply to their own organizations.

In recent times, emerging issues such as heightened workforce diversity, changing expectations and general changing realities have fueled the need to redefine mentorship training models to enhance its

success in human resource capacity building in different organizations. Therefore, the practice of mentorship today requires initiatives that can develop shrewd leaders, build a collaborative workforce, and develop a learning culture that facilitates continuous learning and organizational change. In present-day reality, Reeves (2022) holds that the compass of mentorship has shifted. According to the author, mentorship is no longer solely focused on getting a few people ready for leadership roles and instead focuses on four key areas, namely; helping an organization to be more competitive; encouraging leadership development at all levels; fostering a culture of mentorship within the organization and providing employees with opportunities for career growth and development. In some cases, mentors can also to bring about a challenge, offer a different perspective, while simultaneously providing support. Sometimes all a mentee needs include talking to someone and this process in itself makes actions and solutions obvious. In this case, the mentoring process serves as a catalyst for change.
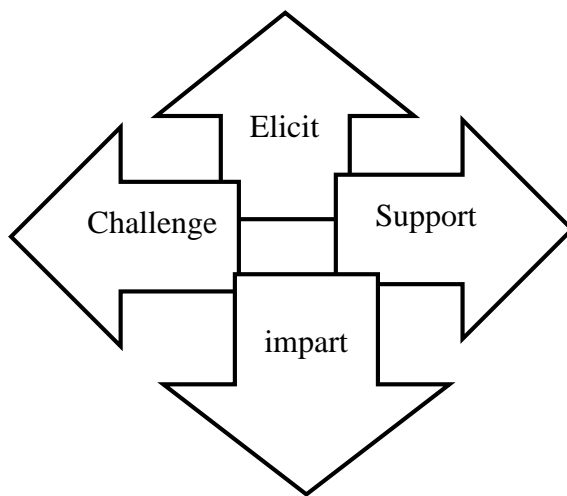

Figure 1: Cornerstones of Mentoring
     Source: Adapted from Abdo, 2023

     As reflected in Figure 1, the four corner stones of mentoring as explained by Abdo (2023), include, elicit – this involves asking questions and listening; Support -this is concerned with encouraging and validating; Impart – these deals with sharing knowledge and experience; Challenge – these deals with providing a different perspective to issues.

COMPARISON OF TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES

Traditional mentorship programmes typically involve experienced and older workers playing the role of mentors, where they teach and advise their mentees. These programmes are still run by different organizations. In this case, the mentees are made to learn in a top-down, one-way transfer of information and knowledge. In traditional mentoring opportunities in organizations, the approach is usually hierarchical, formal, and prescriptive. The old mentorship model is often based on authority and hierarchical relationships. The mentor is typically older and more experienced, and they would take on the role of teacher or advisor. Under that arrangement, the mentee, meanwhile, would be expected to listen and learn from their mentor. Abdo (2023) observed that in the traditional view of mentoring, mentors share their experiences and impart knowledge.

Contemporary mentorship practices are more diverse, collaborative, and asynchronous. In today's work environments that need to be more flexible and agile, new-age mentorship programmes ensure two-way learning and focus on broader goals. These goals include but are not limited to networking, skill-building, and mentees' professional development needs and career goals. In addition, modern-day mentorship programmes help participants get greater organisational exposure, focused training, and expert insights in real-time. While the aim of both traditional and modern mentorship is to provide guidance and support to help employees, the latter's ambit is much wider. In contemporary mentoring, mentors are not supposed to give the answers, their role is to help in guiding the mentee in such a manner that the latter is able to come to their own conclusion. This in turn can often make the mentor reappraise their own thinking around what is right and wrong in the mentorship relationship. The implication of this is that with shifting circumstances, the philosophies and techniques applicable to effective mentoring must also evolve. Therefore, it is necessary to build a solid foundation for mentoring programmes in contemporary settings. To engender the desired effect, current-day mentorship demands by the newer generations requires modern mentoring approaches which are capable of connecting a multi-generational workforce.

Again, Reeves (2022) argue that in modern-day mentoring, different approaches are applied to meet the needs of millennials, Gen Z and their older colleagues through the application of non-traditional mentoring tactics, including reverse mentoring, peer mentoring, group mentoring, and the like. The deployment of this system is about being open to new ways of embedding mentorship in organizations to meet the changing needs of today's workforce. Thus, this philosophy allows mentors and mentees to connect in different ways, creating many possibilities in professional mentoring programmes. In contemporary mentoring, mentors are expected to do a lot more listening than talking. The mentor's job in modern times is to illicit information and ask questions before they offer an opinion or guide.

MENTORSHIP IN SELECTED SETTINGS

Mentorship is possible in different settings. In this section, five settings for which mentorship has been quite prominent are discussed. These include, mentorship in entrepreneurship education, mentorship in nursing, mentorship in leadership development, mentorship in students' academic performance in the University and mentorship in sports.

- ### Mentorship in Entrepreneurship Education
    Mentorship in entrepreneurship education involves a one-on-one relationship in which an experienced entrepreneur (the mentor) assists a new entrepreneur (the mentee), with a view to promoting the

latter's personal growth (St- Jean and Audet, 2012). Mentorship in entrepreneurship education presents the opportunity for individuals with extensive experience and knowledge to assist the young entrepreneurs to build their businesses and make the right decisions, reduce mistakes in business management (Manafe *et al.*, 2023; Zen et al, 2023; Diawati, Ausat and Augustin, 2023). As noted by Raharjo *et al.*, (2023), entrepreneurship education can be instrumental in improving an individual's capacity to bring about innovation, build its business as well as create jobs. However, given that not every individual possesses the ability to be successful in entrepreneurship, it becomes essential to have mentorship programmes to guide intending entrepreneurs to entrepreneurial success; thus making mentorship in entrepreneurship increasingly important (Prastyaninghtyas *et al.*, 2023).

Nabi et al (2016) stated that mentorship in entrepreneurship education provided role models and emotional support. Through mentorship in entrepreneurship education, the learners/mentees are aided to acquire relevant skills that enable them to contribute to national economic development (Mwamba *et al.,* 2021). In addition, mentorship in entrepreneurship education has the capacity to assist in developing entrepreneurial resilience in the mentee, empowering the mentee in the process to overcome adversities, challenges and setbacks in the entrepreneurial career path (Hedner, Abouzeedan and Klofsten, 2011).

• Mentorship in Nursing

For a beginner in nursing practice, the experience of the nursing career or advancing in the profession can be overwhelming. Rather than gaining proficiency through trial and error and lessons learned over the years, nursing mentorship can benefit the nurse mentor, the mentee, and the organization. The significance of mentoring for new nurses cannot be overstated. As they embark on their professional journey, these budding healthcare professionals greatly benefit from the guidance and support experienced mentors and coaches provide. In today's complex healthcare landscape, new nurses face numerous challenges transitioning from academic to clinical environments (Anwah, 2021). They need practical guidance to navigate the intricacies of patient care, develop critical thinking skills, and cultivate their professional identity.

Experienced mentors and coaches play a crucial role in fostering the growth and development of new nurses. They provide a safe and supportive space for nurses to reflect on their experiences, identify improvement areas and set personal and professional growth goals. By offering guidance and support, mentors help new nurses navigate the stresses and uncertainties of their early careers, reducing feelings of isolation and burnout (Cavanaugh et al., 2022).

• Mentorship in Leadership Development

A study reveals that 75% of executives credit their success to mentorship, and organizations with mentorship programmes see a 46% higher retention rate among mentees and improved leadership readiness(Sahni, 2024). Regardless of the industry, part of the responsibility of the executives and company's senior managers is to create a strong line of capable future leaders to take over their roles when the time comes. This explains the need for mentoring in leadership development. Mentorship plays some key roles in leadership development. Through mentoring, guidance and support can be rendered in developing essential leadership skills in mentees by providing targeted advice and real-world insights. Mentors guide mentees through complex decision-making processes, enhance communication strategies, and refine their strategic thinking capacity. This hands-on guidance helps leaders apply these skills effectively in their roles. Mentoring aids in personal and professional growth by increasing self-awareness and confidence. Mentors play a key role in helping leaders understand their strengths and areas for improvement, while also enhancing their emotional intelligence. This personal development is vital for building strong leadership capabilities.

Furthermore, mentoring facilitates the sharing of experiences and insights which provides mentees with valuable lessons and practical examples. This sharing helps mentees understand how to navigate challenges and seize opportunities, enriching their learning process. Again, mentoring is useful in nurturing talents and leaders by identifying and cultivating potential. This nurturing role ensures that future leaders are well-prepared for advanced responsibilities. In addition, mentoring support networking and exposure by introducing mentees to influential contacts and provide access to new opportunities. This role is vital for career advancement and helps mentees leverage their networks for growth. Mentoring is useful in enhancing accountability and feedback as mentors assist mentees in tracking their progress and addressing areas for development. This role is essential for building resilience and sustaining leadership growth.

- **Mentoring in Students' Academic Performance in the University**

Mentoring is an effective strategy aimed at better academic performance among the students of tertiary education. This is to enable the students overcome challenges of poor relationship as a result of inadequate academic mentoring-relationship. Mentoring relationship is a process which aimed at disposing lecturers to strive in order to improve acquisition of adequate proper knowledge and skills by the university students (mentees), through good rapport, trust, respect, objective questioning and constructive feedback. According to Mitchell (2014), mentoring relationship is a process for developing learners, and a mentor should play roles and adopt guidelines that will create an effective academic mentor-relationship which will facilitate learning and practices for proper knowledge and skills acquisition in university. University is a tertiary institution where students study in order to obtain degree certificates. In university education, mentoring is a multi-dimensional process of guiding, teaching, influencing and supporting students. It is normal that a mentor (lecturer) leads, guides and advises students in the same profession with mutual trust and belief. Mentoring in university education is among the greatest force that can be used to bring about positive change.

- **Mentoring in Sports**

Within sports administration, the coach becomes more than just a teacher of technical skills, and develops into a mentor who provides the means by which the mentees attain life skills (Brailsford, 2024; Choi, Park, Jo & Lee, 2015). The authors present insights on key impact of sports mentoring on athletes to include, personal and professional growth on athletes, coaches, sport personnel, and leaders; navigating challenges by providing essential clarity and confidence; source support by offering informational, emotional, social, professional, and career support for athletes at every level; rendering guidance from experience and invaluable insights; fostering a supportive environment thereby enabling athletes to seek advice, express concerns, and learn from their mentor's experiences and character development as mentors avail themselves as role models, instilling important values such as discipline, perseverance, teamwork, and sportsmanship, contributing to athletes' success both on and off the field.

CONTEMPORARY WORKPLACE MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES

Sonali (2024) and Reeves (2022) have suggested a number of contemporary workplace mentorship programmes worth consideration. These include, Team Mentorship, Peer Mentorship, Reverse Mentorship, Flash Mentorship, Digital Mentorship and AI-Powered Mentoring.

- **Team Mentorship**

Team mentoring contrast one-to-one mentorship programmess where there's a solitary mentor and mentee at a team. Team mentorship programmess involve a group of mentors and mentees. Team mentoring

is ideal for a group of mentees with a shared goal or working on a common project. A number of mentors can guide mentees with developmental goals to work together and learn from one another as well as the mentors. This type of mentorship programmes promotes inclusion and diversity as it brings a motley group of employees with different opinions and perspectives together. Team mentorship is effective for teamwork and eliminates any potential of elitism or favouritism that could sometimes become noticeable in one-to-one mentorship programmes. Apart from facilitating diverse ideas, thoughts, and voices, team mentoring creates a broader sense of combined wisdom with a diverse array of opportunities and feedback to develop a stronger team alignment. Team mentoring allows for a more diverse range of perspectives and experiences to be shared between mentors and mentees.

- **Peer Mentorship**

This is where two employees from a similar job level come together in a mentorship programme. Since not all organisations can assign more experienced professionals as mentors, they pick an individual with expertise in a specific area and ask that individual to mentor peers. Peer mentorship programmes can work well as part of a targeted programme. In peer mentorship, participants may take turns acting as 'mentors' and 'mentees' or arrange sessions more fluidly. The goal is to learn together, share experiences and expertise, and hold each other accountable. Employees of similar rank and experience levels pair to help each other grow and develop in their roles. Peer to peer mentoring is effective when wanting to build a peer coaching culture and when an organization doesn't have enough senior employees to act as mentors.

- **Reverse Mentorship**

Reverse mentoring involves a junior employee mentoring a more senior employee on how to use and stay up-to-date with the latest trends, technologies, and digital media topics. It also helps older generations to understand the culture of the younger generation. It is a two-way relationship where the mentor and mentee learn from each other, but the focus is on giving leaders new perspectives. Reverse mentorship programmes recognise the learning opportunities and skill gaps that are present on both sides of a mentoring relationship. By using younger employees for upskilling senior employees, reverse mentoring can help bring more senior and older employees up to speed.

- **Flash Mentorship**

This is a form of mentoring which is designed to meet the need of a workforce who crave for speedy and deep skill acquisition and less of career guidance. These quick one-off mentoring sessions involve employees willing to upskill connect with a mentor for just a single session or two. The idea behind such mentorship programmes is to learn a key skill or piece of information. From providing better organisational exposure and greater networking opportunities to quick insights for solving common challenges, flash mentoring can do them all.

Flash mentorship programmes can be used with other types of mentoring sessions as well, say with team mentoring, thus reaching a larger number of employees and helping them make the most of these sessions. Many flash mentoring sessions develop into longer-term mentoring relationships because both mentors and mentees get so much value from them.

- **Digital Mentorship**

Mentorship can be delivered leveraging several online software platforms and apps that are suitable for modern hybrid and remote workplaces. This approach is ideal where there are employees scattered across branches, states, or countries with different time zones. Through digital mentoring, employees learn from each other, network, share experiences and values, and foster meaningful relationships. These programmes aim to establish deeper connections between mentors and mentees and between employees and the company. Furthermore, these initiatives assist in decreasing anxiety and loneliness. Again, it drives in mentees, a greater sense of purpose, connection, and loyalty to their organization.

- **AI-Powered Mentoring**

Mentoring is achievable using AI. AI has established itself in the mentoring industry. Mentors and mentees can identify skill gaps, suggest valuable resources, and monitor progress over time with the aid of AI-driven technologies. These data-driven insights enable mentors to offer more individualized advice and give mentees the necessary information to make development-related decisions.

CONCLUSION

Mentorship constitute an important element in human resource capacity building and offers significant advantages for individuals' skill enhancement, personal growth, and career progression. In diverse settings, it is possible to leverage mentorship to develop the skillset of mentees. This is achievable by fostering effective mentorship relationships, implementing structured programmes, and addressing emerging issues. In recent times, however, the mentoring demands of newer generations occasioned by the changing times require redefining mentoring delivery model in order to connect diverse workforce and therefore be in good stead to implement mentorship programmes that drive impact. This implies embracing mentorship practices that are more collaborative, diverse and asynchronous in line with the expectations of the newer generations. Embracing new trends and technologies will ensure that mentorship continues to have a meaningful impact on human resource capacity building in different organizations settings.

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