



MINI-REVIEW article

Review of Mentoring in Higher Education

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Abstract: Mentoring relationships between a senior, experienced faculty member and a junior employee, between a faculty member and an undergraduate or graduate student, or between a senior and a junior student is essential in higher education. The current review aims to emphasize the necessity of establishing organized mentorship programs at national institutions to enhance academic performance, teaching/learning effectiveness, knowledge and skill development, growth and development, research productivity, and community engagement. The mentor and mentee both benefit from the mentoring relationship. Academic advising, preceptor supervision, and supervision of graduation projects are different from the mentoring relationship as they focus on only one aspect of the relationship, whether it is the study plan, the study session, or the project, respectively. Mentoring is a mutually beneficial relationship that calls for integrity, decency, self-assurance, trust, and respect. Educational institutes and colleges should set up a committee to establish a well-organized mentoring program with all the necessary templates for recruiting mentors and mentees, and also for annual evaluation and feedback from all parties involved.

Introduction

A well-designed mentorship program can help junior academicians develop their talents, which will improve the culture of teaching and scholarship and ensure the success of academicians in any higher education institution [1]. In contrast to academic advising, which primarily focuses on the mentee's study plan, mentoring is also distinct from overseeing graduation projects, where the mentor-mentee connection is again constrained and centered on the project. Preceptors, on the other hand, guide students individually or in small groups at the experimental training locations. The only training time, which is far too brief to allow for the assumption of any mentorship responsibilities, is the length of this interaction between preceptors and students [2]. Similar to overseeing a master's or doctoral thesis where the research process, results interpretation and discussion, and thesis writing are the main topics. With the primary goal of developing the knowledge, abilities, and attitude of the mentee, mentoring is a stronger interaction between a senior experienced academic staff member and a junior, likely beginner mentee. It has previously been emphasized that the mentee's goal of personal growth should be



the driving force behind the connection [3]. When the prophet Mohammed, the messenger of Allah, "peace be upon him," declared, "All of you are guardians and are responsible for your wards," mentoring has been regarded as the essence of this Hadeeth as each person has a high obligation to care for and protect his or her juniors [4]. Other definitions of mentoring relationships include "naturally formed, one-on-one, mutual, committed, non-sexual relationships between a junior and senior person designed to promote personal and professional development beyond any particular curricular or institutional goals" [5]. Informal mentoring is probably practiced outside of academia, at any place of employment. However, in many of these circumstances, luck may play a role in matching the mentee with a responsible, considerate, and helpful mentor. A freshly hired academician typically has great expectations and may feel lost in his/her new surroundings.

In every teaching or learning environment, students are constantly on guard, especially during the first few lessons, and they frequently contrast the skills and pedagogical methods of a new hire with those of their former teachers. Therefore, it is imperative to recover focus and confidence, both of which require self-initiative. Teaching is not the only responsibility one should perform successfully; for continued employment, academicians must engage in fruitful, high-quality research, oversee graduation theses, and interact with the local community. A new hire may ask for assistance and be given it in any job or profession, but they may feel embarrassed to do so frequently. Formal, organized mentoring helps to overcome the difficulties encountered in casual mentoring relationships. Mentoring should be an integral part of the academic institution's curriculum. This is especially significant because mentorship is crucial for undergraduate and graduate students. It has been demonstrated that mentoring enhances students' and junior faculty members' personal growth, academic achievement, and productivity [6, 7]. Worldwide, several universities have created their mentoring manuals and guidance [8 - 10]. Additionally, the positive experience of the mentees would reinforce the mentorship spirit and encourage them to take on the position of mentor with others [2].

Mentoring undergraduate and post-graduate students

Academic, and career guidance are covered in mentoring undergraduate or graduate students. A successful relationship in the workplace will endure forever. One of the advantages of mentoring is that it boosts the mentee's self-confidence, which enables them to work hard, set high standards for themselves, and perform well. Improvements in the mentee's performance will be acknowledged as shown by obvious successes in academic courses or programs, as well as by the mentee earning additional competencies and succeeding in research. Mentoring improves the mentee students in the mentee students' understanding of lifelong learning, teamwork, and time management. Moreover, it encourages logical thinking, ethical behavior, decision-making, academic and scientific writing, and leadership, and enhancing professional, and interpersonal skills. Mentoring also enhances reporting, discussion, and interpretation of research and assignment findings. The attitude and perspective of the mentee to assume the position of the mentor with students and peers are nicely reflected by a good mentoring relationship. Additionally, mentoring relationships help mentees better evaluate their skills. It has been stated that a mentor should have mentees evaluate themselves to start a good connection with them [11]. The same author recommended that mentors can draw on their own challenging experiences. The benefits of the mentor-student connection also extend to the mentor, whose assistance and direction are valued as a crucial service taken into account for promotions and contract renewal. In addition to providing the mentor with a sense of personal fulfillment, mentoring helps the mentor develop their talents, as well as his/her personal and professional life.



Mentoring a junior faculty member

A planned, formal mentorship will be extremely beneficial to a junior faculty member. The mentee receives assistance and guidance with research planning and execution, developing a proposal, and choosing an appropriate non-predatory journal for publishing results. Mentoring has also been demonstrated to increase research productivity and activities [12-14]. According to research, among the many functions of mentors are those of coach, confidante, and booster [15]. A senior mentee mentors junior faculty members on how to create their teaching and learning materials, how to use the most cutting-edge teaching and learning techniques, and how to design and administer exams. Additionally, mentors assist in leading their mentees in the right direction for academic guidance. Developing these abilities in a mentee will certainly boost faculty recruitment, retention, and advancement opportunities for faculty and lower attrition rates [16].

To improve the personality, talents, and ethical and professional performance of the mentee, mentoring has correctly been defined as guiding with tremendous enthusiasm to share and care [2]. In addition, the mentee would be more likely to adopt the mentorship role with others after such a pleasant experience. As mentees, faculty members always hold their mentors in high regard and view them as role models. In addition to being happy with their mentee's accomplishment, mentors also gain from the mentoring connection. Their work improves their qualifications, growth, and research output. Through the interaction, the mentor will become aware of his or her shortcomings and limitations. While acknowledging them may be embarrassing, at least the mentor will have the chance to make an effort to address these problems. It has additionally been hypothesized that mentoring, particularly between individuals of different genders and ages, may have some detrimental effects [17]. As a result, a mentor should treat mentees equally while taking these variations into account, and the help he or she provides should not only be focused on academic tasks but also on the mentee's sociocultural and psychological characteristics.

Mentoring amongst students

For students to succeed academically, good mentoring is essential. It can close equity gaps, aid students in navigating complicated campus infrastructure, and lessen roadblocks to a degree [2]. Newly enrolled students must establish friends, learn the system, tour the campus, and become familiar with all the resources accessible to them as well as how to use them. Some senior students might provide their juniors with informal, transient guidance. However, newly enrolled students can undoubtedly profit from systematic mentoring carried out by a senior peer student mentor if an established mentoring program is adopted by the school. Again, this is a voluntary duty, and both the mentor and the mentee can gain from it. The mentee will easily integrate into the system, and learn about the registration procedure, extracurricular activities, and all other important academic components. The difficulties a mentee faces will broaden the mentor's understanding and help him or her develop the finest interventions. A mentee who has benefited from a mentoring connection will be prepared to take on the position of a mentor in later study years because mentoring is a transferable ability. Additionally, the senior student mentor will be open to participating in a mentoring relationship where he or she currently practices their profession. The mentees must be honest, open about their potential and limitations, and willing to accept the guidance of the experienced mentor in all aspects of their academic and sociocultural life for the mentoring relationship with a junior colleague or student to be successful [4]. A mentee should be open to criticism and feedback and feel free to ask questions about any topic, regardless of whether it seems unimportant. The foundation of a successful mentoring relationship is mutual sharing and care.



Planning mentoring program

The majority of international organizations that accredit academic institutions place a strong emphasis on mentoring as a program that enhances academic performance as well as the development and growth of both students and professors. However, it may not be possible in departments with a small number of faculty members. Mentoring inside departments is successful because it promotes interaction between faculty members with comparable specialties or interests [2]. Therefore, starting a mentoring program at the school level is more feasible, especially in light of the integration of courses and academics from adjacent disciplines and collaborative research. Mentoring should be voluntary, but structured by using survey questionnaires (available upon request) to ask faculty members and senior students about their willingness to volunteer as mentors, as well as needs assessments for mentoring. These survey forms must include information about the faculty members' details and credentials, their recruiting status and length of employment at the college, as well as their workload in terms of teaching and other responsibilities. Senior students who are willing to mentor their junior peers can use modified survey forms. Additionally, assessment forms must be produced so that they may be utilized by mentors and mentees to assess every area of the mentoring relationship after the academic year.

Conclusion: Informal mentoring relationships between senior faculty and a junior colleague or between faculty and students may develop spontaneously at the initiative of people who value generosity and compassion. To improve academic performance and achievement, research productivity, and community services, educational institutions must create and maintain an official, well-organized mentorship program.

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