



# Mentoring As a Critical Factor in Employees Job Performance

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Date of Submission: 20-07-2022

Date of Acceptance: 03-08-2022

## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to highlight on the effect of mentoring on employee's job performance. The rate at which organizations are losing more knowledgeable, experienced and skilled workforce through retirement of older employees and its effect on the performance, career growth of new employees in a fast occupational changing business climate, the increasing rate of staff disillusionment and disorientation has made this study become very necessary. Mentoring therefore becomes a veritable tool to provide for knowledge transfer, knowledge orientation, strengthen organizational culture and promote organizational wellness in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The study adopts a survey of literature from past scholars for information sourced through classified publications, journals and majority through internet surfing as secondary data that are relevant for qualitative analysis. A tailored mentoring program in any organization with the current globalised economy in the form of motivation, learning and inspiration among others to a great extent is expected to close the talent, skill, knowledge and experience gap among employees bringing about speed and efficiency, trust and consistency, quality work performance etc. among employees of those organizations hence, the roles of mentoring is commonly associated with induction, career and personal development and personal change. The study recommends amongst other things that mutual respect amongst mentors and mentees during a mentoring process be maintained, concern for growth of the organization and skill development of the employees should form the basis of mentoring relations and to that effect organization should also create an environment where people will be empowered to achieve their full potentials in the consciousness of sustainable well being.

**Keywords:** Mentoring, Employee, Job Performance, Knowledge.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The traditional perspective of mentoring involves a process that bring the less experience individuals together with the highly experienced and talented ones in attempt to enable the former gain knowledge, self-confidence, skills and additional advantages from the latter as they move through the mentoring process.

Mentoring stands as one of the few tools needed to prepare future organizational leaders, managers, new employees with adequate skills, talents and experiences capable of providing modern organisations with sustainable growth. Mentoring covers the activities often designed and encouraged by Management to develop its personnel and ensure that they improve and maintain the organization's competitive advantage (Ocurame, 2013).

Mentors serve as role models and teach their inexperience counterparts. The mentees ways that yield superior results through learning, motivation and inspiration.

Considering knowledge transfer as a key mechanism for organizations success according to Delong (2004), it is therefore very important to recognize mentoring role which involve exchange of wisdom, learning and development of skills and knowledge of what the organization does to help mentors advance their careers (Akinbobola, 2013).

Taking a closer examination of the situation in most organization nowadays, one will observe that most retired employees are called back to continue in the performance of their task/roles since none among the new employees are experienced enough to carry out those functions. Whether such organisations are profit oriented or not, private or public, there is an urgent need to bridge the gap between the highly experienced workers and the less or average experienced performing employees in order to meet up with the



standards of a highly technological, globalised and competitive environment.

Organizations where management and workers do not fully appreciate mentoring programs may experience losing physical and psychological effect like issues of loyalty, dependence etc. through mentoring may also be appreciated by other organizations but might fail as a result of ineffective mentoring knowledge experience empathy and not realizing the severity of mentorship.

For mentoring process to be very effective and successful, both mentors and mentees need to possess certain characteristics, attributes and understanding of coaching and its technique. (Yokwana 2015). To avoid bias, professionals involved in the mentoring process should be attentive about each other's attitudes and refrain from letting personal convictions influence their decisions.

Mutual respect and decorum, concern for growth and development should form the basis for mentoring relationship.

Personality issues which are concerned with the differences in behaviours and disposition to matters are some of the challenges of mentoring considered in this study. Moreso, attitudes of the mentees dictate and affect behaviour of mentors and vice-versa.

However, due to various challenges, Wong and Perukuma (2007), noted that mentoring has expanded ineffective and rarely practiced as expected. The challenges faced in mentoring relationship according to Nkomo and LixThwala (2014) can become dysfunctional and eventually lead to overdependence, deception, resentment or harassment and therefore capable of affecting employees job performance in an organisation negatively.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Most organisations are caught sleeping in recent years while their employees are retiring without realising that the knowledge, skills, talents and experiences of those retiring employees have not been captured to the new and less experience employees in any form. That has led those organisations to face a continuous problem of huge staff turnover, loss of talents, knowledge, and talent in the process.

Despite the numerous challenges associated with mentoring process, grandwell-ward (2004:21) pointed that mentoring is an excellent development initiative to help address those challenges that are brought up during mentoring processes and ensuring that knowledge lost when staff members retire from

the organisation are replaced. Organisations therefore should be managed to guarantee knowledge is retained all the time within the organisation and not lost to the world even more seriously to competitors. There are evidences from previous research on similar studies that mentoring in organisations allow senior managers to share their experiences with junior staff (Bollinge and Smith, 2001).

The transition of mentoring practices from informal form to a formal method has also brought a lot of positive changes to the benefit of both individuals and organisations. It has helped in transformation of employee's job engagement to high performance and productive organisations.

Developing adequate skills, competences by workers and the ability to apply such in the achievement of organisational goals consists the most important asset in any organisation (Soosay, 2005). Mentoring remains among the most crucial instrument for the progression of any professional in training and managers in any organisation play a prominent role in developing employees (Coleman, Power, Williams, Carpentieri & Schulkin 2005).

Various options are available for managers to effect mentoring functions in a workplace though under this framework, it is determined to highlight on the relationship between the dimensions of mentoring via motivation, learning and inspiration which serves as the independent variable in this study and dependent variable which is employees job performance with its measures as – efficacy and rapidity, reliability and consistency, quality work.

Indeed, Lahaie (2005) the efficient transfer of knowledge and management within the organisation are fundamental for ongoing organisational effectiveness. Most organisations that recognizes the challenges of shifting workforce demographics have resorted to utilize knowledge from the aging members to the new generation employees.

### LEARNING:

Workplace learning is defined as a process in which individuals, teams and organizations obtain knowledge skills and attitude according to their continuous interactions with each other or within the setting of solving business challenges and to enhance performance S-y moon and S-1 Na.2009 p328).

The most ambitious and successful people have a growth mindset and consistently look for opportunities to develop skills. Many people learn various skills through education and taking



certification class but there are also several skills that earn on the job.

Organisations that provide opportunities for learning skills to staff that shows initiative and commitment overcomes the challenges of calling back retiring staff to back their task after retirement due to lack of personnel who are proficient to perform those task and many challenges.

#### **INSPIRATION:**

Inspiration of work force considers that the behaviour of leaders in an organisation must inspire other employees to act quite similarly. A mentor or manager who wants to inspire other employees will not only do it by spoken words but demonstrating it and others will follow. He needs to be able to drive people to reach greater heights in their job performance.

Inspiration according to Merriam-Webster dictionary is "something that inspires someone to take action or provides them with a creative idea. It is an act of influencing people mentally and emotionally to take action creature. Business leaders must possess the unique ability to inspire productivity among their entire staff. People leave their jobs not living behind their skills, talents and knowledge for various reasons to which work environment that doesn't inspire workers can just be one or working under a manager that lacks and inspiration skill.

#### **Motivation in workplaces**

If an employee feels motivated at work, they will more inclined to committed to work hard and stay longer in such organization and will stagnate and contribute less when they are not motivated. Motivation helps to bridge the gap between the ability and willingness to work in a workplace as they put their maximum effort to work when they are motivated than when they are not. The forces inside a person that influence their direction, intensity, and persistence of voluntary behavior are known as their motivations (Mcshane et al, 2000). Further arguing that motivation is the "process that accounts for an individual willingness to accept higher level of effort to fulfill organizational goals conditioned by the efforts ability to satisfy some particular need," Robbins and Coulter (2005).

Motivation is important in workplaces nowadays as it implies arousal and maintenance of interest in doing an activity.

#### **Employee Performance**

This is the study's dependent variable which is determined by consistent improvement of workers in performing their task by the day, month, quarterly and yearly. It is the way he/she fulfils the duties of their role, completes the required task and behaves in the workplace.

Businesses need to discover strategies to keep their staff performing at their best in order to succeed in today's market. Employees are without a doubt the engine that propels a business ahead. It is also very important to note that when employees are under-performing, customers too may be dissatisfied and the entire business may be affected by poor performance and achievement of goals.

Employee performance is the consistent demonstration of the type of behaviour and results that is deemed necessary to support organizations strategic objective and desired corporate culture (John Sheild, 2007).

No employee has the capacity to be excellent at every evaluation point, but with the right mentoring process and programs in place, they will have the opportunity to improve on a gradual process. For organizations to realize their purpose and meet their goals, employees' activities are heavily dependent on doing their work satisfactorily with speed and efficiency, trust and consistency, and producing high-quality results.:

Motivation, learning and inspiration serve as the basic instruments/tools used by a mentor to transfer talents, skill and knowledge to equip and improve work performance of mentees in the work places. This is made possible through imitation and implementation of programs that will accommodate those qualities necessary to provide opportunities for career growth and development.

Transferable skills help to create value in the career life of mentees, enhance organizational growth, productivity and profitability as well. The managers (mentors) who are highly experience in these organizations and capable of transferring their expertise skills, talents and knowledge to the less and average experienced employees are therefore expected not being the managers that plan, organize and coordinate the workforce by their role models, career counselors, guidance, supporters etc.

#### **Speed and efficiency**

Speed and efficiency are build in task performances of employees in workplace where they are motivated and inspired by their high experienced performing employees (mentors). This determines how much they are capable to



accomplish an average week, month or quarter if it matches their expectations, meet deadlines or not. Efficiency is the outcome of maximum output at least cost.

### **Trust and consistency**

Employees that are perfectly mentored, motivated and inspired are also given much trust in doing their work to a high standard and delivering one time. They independently and consistently put in their time, displaying company values with reliability and constancy.

### **Mentoring and Employee performance**

The goal of mentoring is to a workplace is to connect an employee with a high experience performance, more knowledgeable and more talented to someone who has not gained such knowledge, experience and talents.

Having a mentor with necessary attributes to motivate, advise, inspire, guide and counsel in a workplace is very crucial not only for growth and development in one's career life but also to enhance growth and development of the organization as a result of increased performance, productivity and profitability.

Mentoring helps an individual employee to grow as a subject and become the best version of him/herself, achieve his career goals and be introduced to a new way of thinking. Mentors therefore must be able to build trusting relationship, understand personal bias and assist in mentee's effectively. Recent studies and workforce research indicates that mentorship is mostly needed to increase employee productivity and decrease the time needed to produce quality work. A study performed by the American society of Trading and development found that while training alone increased employers by 24% productivity was increased by 88% when training was combined with mentoring support strategies (Sweeny, 2003).

### **Mentoring and Career Development**

According to Wikipedia, career development refers to the process a person may go through to change their occupational status. It is the process of deciding on long-term learning to balance individual demands for psychological or physical fulfillment with prospects for career progress. Career development is a systematic planning method used to link employee career objectives with corporate career needs in an organization (kakai&Gachunga 2016).

Robbin (2010) contends that career development is a key strategic consideration for all

organization regardless of size, sector, market or profits.

Organization which aspire to be successful in today competitive markets need employed with the right competencies to assist in obtaining a competitive in the industries, Mwaje (2010) posits that career development of employees has a fundamental impact on the efficiency, effectiveness, moral and profitability of the organization. It is the basis for employee confidence and competence (Robbins 2010). It also aids organizations in bridging the gap between current performance and expected future performance. Although career development can take place on an individual or corporate and organizational level, it is a comprehensive process that encompasses all of a person's work-related experiences and results in a potential occupational function within an organization.

Mentors are very critical and help in providing guidance in individual's life and form an essential as a component of their personal growth and professional or career development.

Higher levels of employee engagement, retention, and knowledge sharing are benefits for organizations that value mentoring that means such organizations is capable of building<sup>4</sup>a stronger workforce. That will lead the organization on the success and achievement of goals.

The mentor acts as a trusted advisor to the mentee, supports them in developing new skills, navigating political environments, challenging ideas, and encouraging career development. Most executives and other top-level professionals credit mentoring as a key factor in their success.

In a number of ways, mentors help mentees succeed in their careers ways which include

1. Development of communication skills
2. Growing mentee's professional network
3. The mentors assist mentees in overcoming career obstacles
4. They help in identification of mentee's developmental objectives
5. They help mentees to hone and develop their leadership philosophy etc.

### **Mentoring as an instrument for knowledge transfer and replacement plan.**

While few organizations may be aspiring to be successful in today's competitive markets by acquiring, maintaining and retaining employees with the right competencies and also embracing mentoring which is rewarded with a highly qualified worker engagement, retention and knowledge sharing that helps to build a stronger workforce and





a stronger organization, others may best be described to be sleeping over time for ignoring mentoring strategies as they keep losing capacity and competitiveness at the retirement of highly performing employees.

Organizations may have successfully prevented replacement failure, loss of competitiveness, brain drain, capacity failure etc when they fully adopt mentoring in their workplaces. Knowledge transfers mentoring should focus on application of job skills of both technical skills of both technical skills and relationships needed to get the job done.

According to Aldape (2005) and Beham (2007), it is prudent to prepare for emergencies when talented people leave due to the organization's unforeseen circumstances. Early organizations made this mistake more rapidly. Presently, succession planning is not anymore about replacing the key executives but also entails strategic talent management that ensures organizations at all times should make available a competent labour force that can help the business to continuously adapt, respond and succeed in dynamic business environment (Nwosu 2014).

Mentoring as a tool for knowledge, skill and talent sharing allows flow of effective communication between more experienced employees and the less experienced ones. Mentoring allows individual to pair with experts as needed to acquire new skills and partner with specialists when necessary to acquire new knowledge and develop skills.

Bukowitz and Williams (2000:98) states that knowledge management is the process by which the organization generates wealth from its knowledge or intellectual capital as knowledge situated in a person's can be transferred into the intellectual capital to benefit the whole organization.

For any organization to be competitively stable, it requires people with existing knowledge, the ability to create more knowledge and the willingness to share that knowledge Brink (2001).

### III. THEORETICAL REVIEW

#### The social exchange theory:

The social exchange theory was propagated by George Homans in 1958 according to the social-psychological social and philosophical views on human relations (Allen & Ebby, 2011). These views are derived from behaviorism and utilitarianism which are still evident in the relationship between individual today. This is due to humans engage in many exchange daily as they participate in activities with groups, organizations, networks and

institutions that are inhabit: the intellectual foundations for comprehending the process by which mentoring is started and maintained are provided by the social exchange theory. According to the notion, people have exchange relationships that are enhanced to the extent that both sides are willing to satisfy one another's needs. Psychological contracts, or an employee's impression of what they expect from their employer in exchange for their perceived contributions to it, have a significant impact on their conduct. Ofobruku and Nwakoby (2015) cited Rousseau 1995 and Robinson 1996.

Homans focus was on distributive justice, reward and punishment. Homans defined social exchange as the tangible or intangible activity that there are two participants considered rewarding. This theory explains the bond between the mentor and the protégé, why they choose to enter relationship (Herman, Huang, Lam, 2013). The two individuals are bound to benefit from the connection eventually with the mentee expecting career success and the mentor recognition for his success. Consequently, a mentoring relationship is one that both parties can benefit from Halvorsen-Ganepola, Colquitt, Baer and Long (2014).

According to the psychological contract theory of interpersonal exchange relationships, completing the explicit contract or even just a partner's view that the other party can and is willing to fulfill its duties motivates the other to lend a hand (Eisenberger & Aselage 2003 cited by Ofobruku & Nwakoby, 2015).

In light of this, the social context approach sees mentoring as an exchange relationship in which the partners trade benefits that deepen their bond. People in a dynamic relationship are compelled to act favorably in response to the other party's conversion fulfillment (Rousseau, 1989; 1990 cited in Ofobruku & Nwakoby, 2015).

### IV. CONCLUSION

The study looked at how mentorship affected employees' performance inside a business. The functions of mentoring including learning, motivation and inspiration as independent variable were found to significantly determine employee's performance (quickness and effectiveness, reliability and constancy, quality work, employee's proficiency etc.) being the dependent variables.

Mentoring functions to improve career employee capabilities and ensuring knowledge retention in a corporation through a learning process, motivation and inspiration with mentors serving as illustrations, guidance, counselors etc.



They help develop employee's knowledge skills and abilities which consequently transform into efficient and effective employees job performance. As a result, mentoring is crucial to raising employee and organizational performance.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following suggestions are given in light of the study's findings in order to improve employees' career job performance, the performance of the company as a whole, and to address the majority of issues related to staff turnover that contemporary businesses have recently had to deal with.

Although much have been written about mentoring in organizations served as a support in talent/knowledge management the focus on these recommended strategies cannot be ignored.

1. Ensuring that organizations are aware of the advantages of mentoring
2. Organizations should create an environment where people are empowered to achieve their full potential in consciousness of sustainable well being.
3. Ensuring that organizations establish a human resource department (HRD) that should ensure mentoring becomes one of the human resource tools used to develop skills, talents, knowledge and abilities of employees.
4. Human resource managers should make sure they are able to recognize the workers who need mentoring in order to enhance both their performance and their value to the company.
5. Organization should be encouraged to effective mentoring programs that will accommodate all employees.

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