
**MENTORING CENTRIPETAL AND CENTRIFUGAL FORCES: JUNIOR
ACADEMICS MENTORING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY**

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Abstract

Psychosocial factors which could be have centripetal and centrifugal force on mentoring could mar or make the process. Psychosocial centripetal and centrifugal elements in a university milieu are ethnic affiliation, gender, pride, religion, cliques, and accreditation requirements, among others. These grossly regulate, in their various levels, the direction of mentoring among academics. A dysfunctional mentoring produces young academics who are not adequately trained and groomed, and who will be incapable to transmit relevant knowledge and skills to younger academics. Therefore, it was pertinent to understand the sociological prompts that are played in the mentoring relationships. The exploratory design, within the framework of the cross-sectional design, regulated the methodology of the study. The collection of quantitative data involved the participation of 411 respondents to whom questionnaires were administered using the stratified random sampling technique. Qualitative data was obtained from 10 in-depth interviewees, comprising senior academics, were purposively selected. The psychosocial factors at play in academic mentoring such as ethnicity, age, and gender had little discouraging impact on the mentoring process. Mentors' qualities such as friendly, approachable, supportive, and knowledgeable were found to be centripetal forces of mentoring among academics, being friendly and approachable got the highest rating among academic mentees. Social and psychological factors do make or mar mentoring relationships. Irrespective of the gender of the mentor and mentee, a mentoring association can still be formed as far as the parties involved subscribe to the objectives of the mentoring, and regard these objectives as beneficial for career and institutional development. Hence, gender, ethnic group, and age factors do not affect mentoring relationships. Senior academics and mentors alike should ascertain the individual level of

Dr. Jude Akaba

personal motivation of mentees to determine their mentorship need before offering such in order to avoid stifling the productivity of those who do not require close supervision to be effective in their performance.

Keywords: centripetal, centrifugal, mentoring, career development, psychological forces.

Introduction

Mentoring relationships constitute a viable list of measures that management can utilize to facilitate organizational socialization (Payne and Huffman, 2005). As socialization breeds interactions, the major drivers of these social processes are the subjective and objective attitude and values of the social actors. With the displayed attitudes and values galvanizing into psycho-social elements, it becomes inevitable that they can affect the mentoring relationship. Psychosocial elements in the university milieu like ethnic affiliation, gender, pride, religion, cliques, and accreditation requirements, among others, could grossly regulate the direction of mentoring. By virtue of the advancement in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) many senior academics and professors do owe allegiance to fellow senior academic or professors across the country, and beyond, instead of training junior academics at home. Most senior academics show preference for foreign-based interactions and exchange than home-based ones; hence, there is a generation gap between the senior and junior academics (Schneider, 1997; Olowookere, 2012). Consequently, and in the bid to make academic mentoring result-oriented, it makes empirical sense to ascertain those psychosocial factors that make or mar academic mentoring especially when operated on informal basis.

Psychosocial Factors Affecting Mentoring

Psychosocial elements are factors that have not been fully and adequately analysed in mentoring relationship. It is the position of the study that psychosocial factors are significantly crucial factors that can make and mar any mentoring endeavor; and of course they play a function in the all mentoring matrix. Okurame (2008) posits that psychosocial functions are those which address the interpersonal and emotional aspects of the relationship; comprise role modelling, friendship, counselling and acceptance (Okurame, 2008). These functions enhance a protégé's identity, work role effectiveness, career advancement, self-confidence and address other interpersonal concerns of the relationship (Ragins and Cotton, 1999; Okurame, 2008).

Olasupo (2011) notes that several factors are posing a significant threat to successful mentoring within the academic settings. For instance, the advancement in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and its attendant use of e-mails and other web services increasingly make the professors to owe allegiance to fellow professors across the country than to the junior faculty members at home (Olowookere, 2012). Schneider (1997) confirmed that senior faculty members now prefer foreign-based interactions and exchange than home-based one. Invariably, the generation gap between the senior and junior faculty members can be considered as a hindrance to effective mentoring in the academia (Olowookere, 2012).

Also, Rodriguez and Sjostrom (2000) notes that another psychosocial obstacle to successful academic mentoring was found in the models because they perceived themselves as older, wiser, tenured and holding all the powers. This mentoring relationship was argued to be hierarchical and not collaborative or communal. Olasupo (2011) further stated that the challenges of successful mentoring programme in academic setting include inappropriate choice of mentor and protégé, unrealistic expectation by both mentor and mentee and inferiority feeling on the part of the protégée (Olowookere, 2012). These challenges experienced in the mentoring relationship when not properly managed culminates in dysfunctional or negative mentoring which may have adverse consequences on all parties involved in the mentoring programme, that is, the mentor, mentee and the organization or institution. (Olowookere, 2012). The foregoing obstacles talked about are all psychosocial in nature.

Yet another psychosocial element in most mentoring relationships is level of submissiveness. The psychosocial element of submissiveness may lead to over dependence on the mentor, which can create relational difficulties and lead to the termination of a mentorship (Ragins and Scandura, 1997; Scandura, 1998; Olowookere, 2012). It can also contribute to controlling behavior on the part of the mentor, establishing a pattern of relating which does not contribute to protégé growth and individuation from the mentor (Kram, 1985 in Olowookere, 2012).

The feeling of harassment is a psychosocial factor which is a serious dysfunction in mentoring relationships and can be displayed by way of sexual, gender, or ethnic harassment (Scandura, 1998). With such behavior the intention is negative; it is aimed at psychologically harming, putting down, or controlling the target (Eby and McManus, 2004; Olowookere, 2012).

In Jones et al (2005) study the psychosocial elements in mentoring relationships was examined among teachers, nurses, and midwives using the in-depth interview technique. Among nursing mentees it was the desire for mentors to be friendly, approachable,

supportive, and knowledgeable, which is illustrated by the following selected comments (in rank order of frequency of citing):

If I was to select my own mentor, qualities I would look for in a person would be an approachable, friendly person with knowledge and the experience to back up the knowledge.

A genuinely friendly, open-minded motivator who is approachable and able to give constructive feedback. Someone who understands my capabilities as a student and is able to encourage/help build up my confidence in developing the skills I need.

Similarly, in Jones et al (2005) study, midwifery mentees cited friendly, knowledgeable and approachable, supplying the following comments:

A good teacher who will let you do tasks and supervise.

Friendly personality makes you feel at ease. Someone who is genuinely interested in helping you progress and learn.

The mentor would be friendly, approachable, supportive and offer guidance and be knowledgeable in their field of work.

Teaching mentees wished for, in order of importance, a supportive , approachable and friendly mentor who would also act in an advisory capacity (Jones et al, 2005). Supporting comments are:

Someone who was readily available and easy to contact, who is accessible. Someone who truly listens. Someone who gives emotional and practical support when required. Someone who gives detailed, clear advice and guidance.

I would want somebody who was approachable, friendly, would offer support and advice and who I could work with comfortably.

Friendly, approachable, willing to let you make mistakes so that you can learn from them. Not critical – entirely supportive and constructive.

For doctor mentees, they, in order of reference, cited approachable, must be a good adviser, and teacher as the psychosocial element they value in a mentoring relationship (Jones et al, 2005). This supported by their comments below:

Someone who understands me and therefore knows how to get the best out of me.

Able to make me feel enthusiastic and optimistic about future outlook, and give me advice in difficult situation.

Willingness to train, gives good advice and evaluation of work, providing adequate feedback for future placements, approachable.

It is evident from the above information, that there were areas of major similarity as well as dissimilarity obvious across the four professions as well as mentees. With regard to the latter, one commonality bore an element of surprise, namely that of ‘assessor’. With the aim of improving quality of service, the training of teachers, nurses, midwives and doctors has been located firmly within a national standards framework, which serves as reference point for target setting, monitoring of progress and assessment (Jones et al, 2005). In this respect mentors are allocated the role of ‘assessor’; surprisingly, however, this role aspect was consistently allocated low priority by mentees in all four professional disciplines and by mentors in teaching, nursing and midwifery (Jones et al, 2005). What would have completed the findings is the ascertaining of whether the data collected from mentors coincide with this pattern.

Vennapoosa (2010), in his unobtrusive submission of the impact of psychosocial factors in mentoring relationship, posits that the impact of mentoring sessions to the individuals working in an organization is positive with these things:

1. There is a collaborative atmosphere in the workplace wherein professional learning is productive and individuals have the willingness and commitment to develop and improve themselves.
2. The management acknowledges the needs of the employees for professional learning that must be attained in order to raise organizational standards.
3. There are standard processes and sets of procedures for coaching and mentoring programs based on best practice.
4. The work roles of employees are redefined to incorporate coaching and mentoring sessions.
5. The designated coaches and mentors have the appropriate personal and professional attributes and skills required to conduct effective coaching. These experts are also able to provide continuous training and development necessary for the progress of employees.
6. The employees recognize the need and responsibility to attain professional development.
7. There is an evaluation about the impact of coaching and mentoring on the individuals and the organization (Vennapoosa, 2010).

Mentoring Centripetal and Centrifugal Forces: Junior Academics Mentoring and Career Development In the University of Benin, Benin City

Also, Okurame (2008) in his unobtrusive submission of the impact of psychosocial factors in mentoring relationship, ~~posits that an examination of barriers to mentoring among~~ **Dr. Jude Akaba** middle and senior academics in the university revealed eight frequent themes. These themes from analysis are psychosocial in nature. Okurame (2008) found in his study that mentor role status clearly distinguished respondents on the identified themes; hence results show the following mentoring barriers commonly mentioned by academics who are currently mentors: branding of mentors as spearheads of cliques (clique was described by respondents as “network of senior academics who use their power to get advantage for themselves”) and protégés as favoured, lack of funds and laziness of protégés and the unresponsive attitude of protégés. Non-mentors frequently reported lack of formal structures that encourage mentoring, self-withdrawal on the part of junior faculty staff and pressure of administrative duties as barriers to their assumption of mentor roles (Okurame, 2008).

Furthermore, Okurame (2008) found through a content analysis of responses that challenges experienced by protégés exists in six areas in which protégés experience challenges. These are inability to measure up to a mentor’s standard, inadequate attention from mentor, balancing conviction with expectations of a mentor, inadequate opportunity to speak freely about their ideas, fear of being branded as ‘anointed’ and the pressure of deadlines (Okurame, 2008).

In their contribution to the psychosocial impact in mentoring relationships, Detsky & Baerlocher (2007) identified honesty, being explicit about credit for work, and not becoming friends as seemingly psychosocial factors. For honesty, Detsky and Baerlocher ((2007) explain that mentors need to understand that mentees frequently are afraid to tell their supervisors what they want if they feel they will disappoint their mentors. It is important that mentors not promote their own agenda over that of mentees with aspirations of producing academic clones. The following has been stated to help the mentee become more honest, when mentors make this statement: “I am a general internist, health economist, and I perform health care research. I am happy being me. I do not need you to be me to reaffirm that I made the right choice.” (Detsky and Baerlocher, 2007). Once said, the body language of the mentee is often observed to become much more comfortable. It is important that mentees not simply tell mentors what they think mentors wish to hear, but rather what they really think, without wasting time by pursuing unwanted directions (Detsky and Baerlocher, 2007).

Additionally, and at the same time, mentors need to understand that mentees may choose not to follow their advice; mentors should not be disappointed when this happens (Detsky and Baerlocher, 2007). The nature of the relationship is that mentors and mentees should feel free to give honest expressions and advice without insistence from either side

that mentees accept it. On a more formal note, some have suggested that mentoring relationships should undergo regular evaluations for process (clear objectives and regular, purposeful meetings), communication (feedback, mentees being able to challenge mentors), and outcomes (sense of progress and development, improved networks) (Detsky and Baerlocher, 2007). Such periodic evaluations are valuable tools to help ensure ongoing honesty.

Regarding the psychosocial element of not becoming friends, Detsky and Baerlocher (2007) note that in mentoring relationships mentors have power. Hence, the mentor and the mentee can never be equal and therefore should not establish a relationship as friends during the mentorship period. Doing so may result in complications, hurt feelings, and can be destructive; this is not to say that the mentoring relationship cannot be cordial, personal, enjoyable, or fun (Detsky and Baerlocher, 2007). This simply means as Ramani (2006) posits, that the proper professional distance must be maintained and observed to protect the dignity of both parties in the mentoring relationship.

Detsky and Baerlocher (2007) explain the being “explicit about credit for work” psychosocial factor by submitting that at the beginning of the mentoring relationship, the roles are usually very clear: mentors often provide the initial ideas, infrastructure, financial support, and supervision for a project and mentees often perform the day-to-day work. Over time, roles change; for example, original ideas or questions will ultimately be generated by mentees and mentors may increasingly play a more peripheral role (Detsky and Baerlocher, 2007). This may engender the difficulties in determining who gets accolades for the work. The principal objective way of assigning credit is the designation of an individual’s role on a grant application (principal investigator or coinvestigator) and the position of the names on the author list (Detsky and Baerlocher, 2007). The best way to avoid similar episodes, especially as it affects doctors or medical academics, is to be explicit from the beginning of a project about who is going to receive what credit, to acknowledge that the mentor/mentee relationship will change over time, and to follow the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors’ established criteria for authorship, although this may require some subjective judgment (Detsky and Baerlocher, 2007). Generally, mentors should not expect their mentees to include them as honorary authors.

Methodology

The exploratory design, within the framework of the one-shot cross-sectional design, regulated the methodology of the study. The target population of this study was made up of two categories of academic staff. The first category comprised all male and female junior academics in the University of Benin, Benin City (UNIBEN) who had been in the employ of

Dr. Jude Akaba

the institution for at least six months. For the purpose of this study, junior academics are operationalized and conceptualized as academic staff of UNIBEN who occupied categorical ranks of Graduate Assistant, Assistant Lecturer, Lecturer II, and Lecturer I. The stratified random sampling technique was used to administer 411 questionnaires; with the purposive sampling technique, ten interviewees were participated in in-depth interview sessions.

Result and Discussion

Psychological and social factors can have varying degrees of effect on mentoring relationships. Some aspects of these psychological and social factors are the number of mentors a mentee has, and the geographical distance between the mentor and the mentee. The bearing the number of mentors could have on mentoring relationships could be in the form of divided loyalty that a mentee will have to show to his various mentors, and the conflicting ideas that a mentor could receive from various mentors on how to go about certain tasks among others. For geographical distance, its impact on the mentoring relationship could be in the form of a mentee not getting guidance and assistance on time, and a mentor not having hands-on input in the mentoring of the mentee given their residence in different distant locations.

Table 1 Number of mentor(s) possessed and their location

Variables	Frequencies (n = 411)	Percentages
Number of mentors currently have		
None	81	19.7
One	146	35.5
Two	136	33.1
Three	35	8.5
Four	13	3.2

My mentor(s) is from my department

Yes	310	75.4
No	101	24.6

Source: Researcher’s fieldwork, 2016.

Data on the number of mentors had, and the location of mentors were obtained from the respondents. Accordingly, a majority of the respondents (35.5%) had only one mentor (Table 1). Respondents having two mentors were 33.1 percent, respondents having three mentors were 8.5 percent, and 3.2 percent of the respondents claimed they had four mentors. Reasons put forward for having only one mentor was the need to give undivided loyalty to a mentor; the fact that the mentor was the most outstanding in the mentee’s area of research interest; and the inability to reach eligible mentors because of distance. Having more than one mentor was hinged on the desire to be eclectic in the acquisition of training and knowledge, and to give regard to other suitable mentors. By aggregate, a majority of the respondents had more than one mentor; and this was pivoted on the satisfaction of psychosocial needs.

Furthermore, data in Table 1 indicates that respondents who had mentors who were based in the same department with them were preponderant – specifically 75.4 percent of them. The rest of the respondents (24.6%) claimed that their mentors were not based in their respective departments. Expectedly, reasons adduced for having mentors who were from the same department with the respondents were the necessity to have a relevant mentor in their career field, and the yearning for the mentor whom they could easily reach for one-on-one interaction. A majority of the respondents who had their mentors in other department different from theirs’ justified their responses positing that their mentors were their project or thesis supervisors in other universities where they did their postgraduate programmes. The implication of this finding is that junior academics tend to choose senior academics who were/are their project supervisors and remain closer to them as mentors.

Gender is a fundamental part of the daily lives of humans. It forms a critical aspect of individuals’ sense of self-worth and self-identity, it affects how individuals think of themselves, and it prompts individuals to act in normative ways (Obi, 2010a). Gender refers to the personal traits and social positions that members of a society attach to being female and male (Obi, 2010a). Thus, gender is an element of social organization which shapes how people in any social grouping interact with one another as well as how individuals think about themselves. Moreover, gender involves hierarchy, placing men and women in different

Mentoring Centripetal and Centrifugal Forces: Junior Academics Mentoring and Career Development In the University of Benin, Benin City

social positions in terms of power, wealth, knowledge and other resources (Obi, 2010a). Hence, while sociologists endeavour to understand and explain gender stratification and perception of gender in a society at large, industrial sociologists make effort to understand and explain perceptions of gender and gender stratification in the work place, and they influence work place interactions and relationships. By implication, gender could regulate how employers and employees think and act in various situations and industrial process in the work place. How gender could impact on mentoring is of importance to industrial sociologists.

Table 2 Social factors in mentoring

Variables	Frequencies (n = 411)	Percentages
Gender factor affects mentoring relationships		
Yes	91	22.1
No	290	70.6
Don't know	30	7.3
How gender affects mentoring relationships		
Positively	118	28.7
Negatively	53	12.9
Don't know	240	58.4
Ethnic affiliation affects mentoring relationships		
Don't know	41	10.0

<i>Yes Intuition</i>	117	28.5
No	253	61.5
Age factor affects mentoring relationships		
Don't know	34	8.3
Yes	134	32.6
No	243	59.1

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, 2016.

Mentors and mentees are usually very close, and tend to have and show a strong bond for each other. Insinuations and innuendos, in no small measure, are rife in Nigeria societies when there is social closeness between an adult male and an adult female who are not related by blood or marriage. This social perception could exert some influence, through the gender factor, on mentoring relationships. In this wise, data was collected to validate the influence of gender on mentoring relationship among junior academics. The result in Table 2 shows that a majority of the respondents (70.6%) claimed that gender did not have an effect on mentoring relationships. However, 22.1 percent of the respondents submitted that gender factors could influence mentoring relationship, and 7.3 percent of respondents could not say if gender factor plays a role in mentoring relationship. This evidently goes to imply that irrespective of the gender of the mentor and mentee, a mentoring association can still be formed as far as the parties involved subscribe to the objectives of the mentoring relationship, and regard these objectives as beneficial for career and institutional development.

With 22.1 percent of the respondents affirming that gender did play an influential role in mentoring relationships, the entire respondents were further questioned on how gender affected mentoring relationships. In view of that, 58.4 percent representing a majority of the respondents could not discern how gender factors could affect mentoring relationships (Table 2). However, 28.7 percent of the respondents confirmed that gender factors had positive effects on mentoring relationships. That gender factors negatively affected mentoring relationships, was the position of 12.9 percent of the respondents. These results

Dr. Jude Akaba suggest that whether gender factors do affect mentoring relationships, and how gender factors do affect mentoring relationship lack a clear cut evidence.

Nigeria's multi-ethnicity has been both a blessing and a curse to the country herself, and to her peoples. Ethnic consciousness pervades interactions in most forms and levels of social relations. This study held the assertion that ethnicity could be a determining factor for entering into or not entering into a mentoring relationship. Hence, data were collected along this line of thought. Results revealed that based on the confirmation of a majority (61.5%) of the respondents, the ethnic affiliation of either the mentors or the mentees had no effects whatsoever in starting a mentoring relationship. Another 10 percent of the respondents submitted that they had no idea if the ethnic background of either the mentors or mentees determined the commencement of mentoring relationships. However, 28.5 percent of the respondents were of the view that the ethnic affiliation of mentors and mentees could affect mentoring relationship. Reasons tendered for this latter opinion were hinged on the assertions that in departments or institutions where there was overt or covert ethnic rivalry or competition among the academics, prospective mentors would be favourably disposed to mentor junior academics who share similar ethnic background with them, and vice versa. Also, ethnicity could come to bear on initiating a mentoring relationship when stereotypical beliefs, built from personal experience or from social perceptions, are considered. For instance persons from certain ethnic groups may be seen as ingrate or betrayers, hence it amounts to committing professional suicide for a senior academic to mentor a junior academic from such ethnic groups, and vice versa.

Age is another psychosocial element that could be factored in mentoring interactions. Having a mentor who is much older than the mentee is invariably the default pattern in academic circles. This is true because it will take a senior academic not less than twelve years to become a seasoned academic experienced enough to take up a mentee. Results from this study therefore reveal that age did not have any effect on mentoring relationships; this was attested to by 59.1 percent of the respondents which represented a majority of the entire respondents (Table 2). A minority of the respondents (8.3%) had no opinion on the ability of age to affect mentoring relationships among academics. Nevertheless, 32.6 percent of the respondents affirmed that age factor did affect mentoring relationship among academics. This finding implies that age factors in any guise or form do not really influence mentoring interactions among academics as the need to acquire knowledge and skills for career development is paramount in initiating and sustaining mentoring relationships.

Table 3 **How gender affects mentoring relationships according to those who believe it does.**

Variables	Gender factor affects mentoring relationships		
	Don't know	Yes	No
How gender affects mentoring relationships			
Positively	2 (6.7%)	38 (41.8%)	78 (26.9%)
Negatively	-	25 (27.5%)	28 (9.7%)
Don't know	28 (93.3%)	28 (30.8%)	184 (63.4%)
Total	30 (100%)	91 (100%)	290 (100%)

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, 2016.

A previous finding indicated that 91 respondents representing 22.1 percent of the entire respondents affirmed that gender was an influential factor in mentoring relationships. Consequently, the table above crosstabulates responses on whether gender factor affects mentoring relationships, and responses on how gender affects mentoring relationships. A deduction from the crosstabulation is that among the respondents who affirmed that gender factors influenced mentoring relationships, a majority of them (41.8%) qualified the influence as positive (Table 3). For 27.5 percent of respondents, it was a negative influence. Nonetheless, 30.8 percent could not specifically qualify the nature of the influence that they affirmed gender factors could have on mentoring relationships. These findings suggest that more often than not, the influence and effect that gender factors have on mentoring relationship is productive rather than counter-productive.

Table 4 Rating of psychological factors in mentoring

Variables	Frequencies (n = 411)	Percentages
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Rating of the importance of "friendly" quality of a mentor

1 point	23	5.6
2 points	34	8.3
3 points	139	33.8
4 points	215	52.3

Rating of the importance of "approachable" quality of a mentor

1 points	21	5.1
2 points	34	8.3
3 points	140	34.1
4 points	216	52.6

Rating of the importance of "supportive" quality of a mentor

1 points	28	6.8
2 points	37	9.0
3 points	146	35.5
4 points	200	48.7

Rating of the importance of "knowledgeable" quality of a mentor

1 points	30	7.3
2 points	40	9.7

3 points <i>The Intuition</i>	85	20.7
4 points	256	62.3

Source: Researcher’s fieldwork, 2016.

In every mentoring relationship, the mentors tend to exhibit a range of psychological qualities that is the most suitable for them in the relationship, and which have the capacity to regulate the success level of the mentoring. These psychological dispositions of the mentors could be displayed wittingly or unwittingly, and are received by mentees at varying levels of acceptance and likeability. For this reason, the major psychological qualities and dispositions of mentors were subjected to the rating of respondents on a scale of 1 to 4 points.

Table 4 shows that a majority of the respondents (52.3%) rated the importance of a mentor being friendly and pleasant to be with highest rating of 4 points. The importance of a mentor possessing a friendly demeanor got a 3 point rating from 33.8 percent of the respondents. Rating points of 1 and 2 on the importance of a mentor displaying a friendly conduct came from 5.6 percent and 8.3 percent of the respondents respectively. This suggests that a mentor with friendly disposition is one of the fundamental psychological elements of any mentoring relationship.

A majority of the respondents (52.6%) affirmed with the highest point in the rating scale that a mentor possessing an approachable personality is important to them and the success of any mentoring relationship. A rating of 3 points on the same mentors’ psychological quality came from 34.1 percent of the respondents. An implication of this result is that mentees can gain more when they have an approachable mentor because this will ensure that mentees have confidence and are favourably disposed to ask their approachable mentors for relevant assistance and support without being afraid and being held back by doubt and indecision.

It is not enough for mentors to teach and guide their mentees on the right things to do and steps to take. Mentors are supposed to provide support in the form of logistics, finance, and ideas to their mentees for effective development. Along this line of thought, respondents of this study had the opportunity to rate their mentors on the “supportive” quality. Result had it that a majority of the respondents (48.7%) rated their mentors with the highest point of 4. This set of respondents was followed by set of 35.5 percent who rated their mentors with 3 points on their supportive quality.

Dr. Jude Akaba

Being considerably knowledgeable is the basis on which a senior academic can be said to be eligible to provide mentoring. It is one of the psychological factors that are at play in virtually all mentoring relationships that could make for their success or failure. To a large extent, the objective of mentoring is for a more experienced and highly skilled person to bequeath skills, knowledge, information, and technical-know-how to a less experienced and less skilled person. Hence, how important prospective mentees and mentees being mentored rate this psychological factor lends itself to intellectual advancement. In this regard, a majority of the respondents representing 62.3 percent of the entire respondents rate the knowledgeable factor with highest rating of level of importance which is points. This factor was rated 3 points by 20.7 percent of the respondents; and 9.7 percent, and 7.3 percent rate the knowledgeable factor with 2 points and 1 points respectively. This suggests that most prospective academic mentees or those already being mentored place high premium on the volume of knowledge their mentors possess for an effective mentoring.

In summary, a majority of the respondents attached very high level of importance to the various psychological factors that surfaces in virtually all mentoring relationships. However, the particular psychological factors among the "friendly" quality of a mentor, the "approachable" quality of a mentor; the "supportive" quality of a mentor; and the "knowledgeable" quality of a mentor, that the respondents placed the most value on, was determined with the aid of a multilinear regression analysis as presented in the hypotheses section of this chapter.

However, and elaborately, the psychological and social factors that mainly encourage mentoring relationship were assessed through the instrumentality of an in-depth interview. The qualitative data that emanated had the interviewees submitting various psychological and social factors that, from experience and personal observation had encouraged mentoring relationships. They were contained in the following responses:

First of all when you are with your mentor you know nothing, you have every opportunity to ask questions, you believe you want something. The mentor knows how to get it; he may not necessarily get it for you. My mentors have not written any article for me, but anything I wrote and presented to them, no matter how bad, they correct it. They tell me how to embellish, what area to improve on, and at the end of the day the article comes out good. So that is why none of my papers was returned with a comment that relates to bad English or grammatical error.

Respect to your mentors and obedience to their advice are social or psychological factors that encourage mentoring relationships (**Male IDI/60 years/Associate Professor/ 24th January, 2017**).

I think the individual concerned is an issue; for instance as a junior academic you don't know something and you are not willing for somebody to teach you. Maybe because the junior academic staff is proud or is not ready to dedicate time in learning he may not learn, and if the senior ones are not accessible there will be no mentoring. But in a situation where you find a junior academic who is ready to learn, he is always running to a senior academics saying I don't understand what to do and the senior one is accessible, that will make up a good mentor-mentee relationship. But if there is no accessibility on the part of the senior one, or the junior academic is not ready to learn or feels too big to ask, then there will be problems (**Female IDI/53 years/Professor/ 25th January, 2017**).

Well if we talk about the psychological factors that encourage mentoring among academics, I think of it in terms of the need for development, training, and of course social belongingness. The academic environment is like a jungle, and if you delve into it you might be doing so many things at the same time not having focus or direction. So in terms of development of the young academic, psychologically the mind to know that you have and that you need to grow and mentoring ensures this, will encourage mentoring. I have this mindset, hence, the mentoring has helped and equipped me and developed my capacity, my technicality, my competence and of course my sociability (**Male IDI/45 years/Associate Professor/ 23th January, 2017**).

There are several psychological and social factors that can encourage mentoring relationship, but the most important one that I will like to point out is the willingness to learn. When you are willing to learn, when you know that you don't have sufficient knowledge about something you would want to gain more knowledge about it and you seek for a higher source that can teach you, that can train you or that can mentor you to know those things. So willingness to learn is the major psychological factor that can aid mentoring relationship **(Female IDI/57 years/Associate Professor/ 25th January, 2017).**

Well there is this mentor-mentee confidence that is being installed into the mentee; because one your mentor must have had this long time experience on what you are about get into, and his guidance gives you an edge on what to do. Excluding the part of confidence there is this innate attitude in every mentor of "I have achieved" and he is trying to pour it out on the mentee. Little wonder you see some new lecturers, some of our younger colleagues they will say, a fellow colleague will say you are behaving like a particular person; because there is this confidence this attitude, this drive of you want to get it easy you want to achieve success with ease because of the confidence the mentor has poured on you the mentee **(Male IDI/53 years/Senior Lecturer/ 23th January, 2017).**

On the part of mentees, psychological factors that could encourage mentoring relationships were willingness to learn, displaying respect to mentors, obedience to their advice, and display of humility. Furthermore, for the mentees, having the need for development, the desire to be trained, having the need for social belongingness, and mentees displaying the confidence which the mentor had instilled in them, constitute psychological factors that encourage the mentor to remain committed to the mentoring. On the part of mentors, the psychological factors that could encourage mentoring are their availability, the

need to train an heir or their replacement in the department. These factors emanating from mentors can also encourage mentees to place high premium on the mentoring or being mentored.

Conversely, just as certain psychological factors can encourage mentoring, there are also certain psychological factors that can discourage mentoring. Based on this notion, the interviewees were asked to comment on the social or psychological factor that can discourage mentoring relationship. Their responses are presented thus:

Of course there a lot of discouraging factors (1) for you to be my mentor means you are good (2) you must be favourably disposed to me that is on the mentor's side. More importantly it is my own disposition; supposing I am not a serious person or I have this lackadaisical attitude to academics, or I come to work 11am and close by 1 pm to go drink somewhere. All these would put any mentor off. But for somebody to be your mentor you must believe in that person; second you must be hard working and the mentor must see in you that this person wants to succeed in life and trust me, that's what mentoring is all about. If it is a one sided game it cannot work. Even in parenting, when a child is not behaving well you feel discouraged and may not want do the best for him or her. That is how it is in mentoring. So for someone to be your mentor, you must not behave in ways that are discouraging and make you untrustworthy (**Male IDI/60 years/Associate Professor/ 24th January, 2017**).

Yes like I said if the senior is not accessible. You go to a senior colleague, he says come back later, or you go to his office severally and he is always not on sit. You will be discouraged, you won't want to go back again (**Female IDI/53 years/Professor/ 25th January, 2017**).

There are several factors that can discourage mentoring relationships. In the University of Benin for instance one of the major factor that discourages mentoring is this issue of tribalism, ethnicity and nepotism where people want to

Dr. Jude Akaba

associate themselves only with people of their particular tribe, ethnic group or even religious affiliation. These are problems and they should be addressed, otherwise mentees will run away and mentors will not be able to contribute meaningfully to the development of younger colleagues. Outside nepotism, ethnicity and the others I think that the barriers that exist between the senior academics and the junior academics should be broken, it is an invisible barrier but it does exist. The mindset that sometimes the senior academic refers to the junior academics as junior staff and that thing itself is psychological because there is no academic staff that is a junior staff but a junior academic staff. So that thing itself can be a barrier. Again some academic mentors just want to use you and not make contributions in return to your life. So when the mentees have the sense that they want to be used in terms of running errands and they are not developed academically, the mentee themselves will withdraw from the mentor. There are some mentees too who want to benefit but they don't want to work. Every mentee must learn to understudy and serve the mentor. So there is a thin line between service and slavery and once you are able to deal with that thin line, there will be a mutual relationship between the mentee and the mentor. Finally one other thing that can hinder mentoring relationship is when there is no structure on ground for mentoring. I think that every organization should be able to create an internal mechanism that encourages mentoring such that younger colleagues are placed under senior colleague in their area of interest and specialty so that they can be developed. Like they do in medicine for instance each time you go to a teaching hospital you hear them calling themselves Chief. Some call themselves "Reg" and they call themselves consultant or chief consultant, or senior consultant there are junior doctors who come and learn under this people and at the end of the day they have the capacity if you like to

reproduce himself in the lives of other medical doctors. So I think in academics for instance in Sociology where we have several subfields of study in demography for instance we should have mentees attached to the chief professor who is a demographer. In criminology where we have one of the most removed criminologist in the world, Professor Igbinovia, we should have younger colleagues who are his official mentees. And same like for archeology and all the others; by so doing it will encourage and enhance the relationship between the mentees and the mentors **(Male IDI/45 years/Associate Professor/ 23th January, 2017).**

Yes, there are. Like I said willingness to learn encourages mentoring relationship, on the other hand arrogance, pride can discourage it. Most junior academic staff believe they know it all. They don't want to seek for knowledge from those that are already experts in the field. So arrogance can deprive them from getting what they are supposed to get from a mentor
(Female IDI/57 years/Associate Professor/ 25th January, 2017).

Highlights of the psychological factors that can discourage mentoring as extracted from the interviewees' responses are lack of seriousness of a mentee, the display of lackadaisical attitude to academics; arrogance, pride, unavailability and inaccessibility of the mentee, and laziness. The social factors that can discourage mentoring are ethnicity, nepotism, religious biased, and lack of structure for formal mentoring. On the part of the mentor, a discouraging factor is mainly captured in the way some academic mentors use their mentees for personal gains without contribution to the career growth of the mentee.

Dr. Jude Akaba

Table 5 Behavioural factors in mentoring

Variables	Frequencies (n = 411)	Percentages
My mentor has other mentees, and favours one/some above others		
Yes	78	19.0
No	169	41.1
Don't know	164	39.9
See mentor as role model		
Yes	293	71.3
No	54	13.1
Don't know	64	15.6

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, 2016.

Another psychological aspect of mentoring as investigated by this study were the behavioural factors. Specifically, these factors were the obtrusive line of partiality which a mentor shows in giving of favours to his/her mentees; and the whether mentees regard their mentors as their role models. More often than not, a mentor could have more than one mentee. When a mentor gives more mentoring resources such as time, certain ideas, or information to a particular mentee among others mentees, it is bound to cause disaffection in those mentees who are not carried along. How rampant this behavioral factor was among mentors and mentees in the University of Benin was assessed. Accordingly, 41.1 percent representing a majority of the respondents claimed that their mentors had other mentees but they did not favour one or some above others (Table 5). However, the position of 19 percent of the respondents on the issue was that their mentors had other mentees, and they did show more favour to one or some above others. Nevertheless, 39.9 percent of the respondents could not be certain or were not aware if their mentors did favour one or some of their mentees above other mentees. This implies that mentors do not commonly get involved in favoritism in the discharge of their mentoring responsibility to their group of mentees.

Dr. Jude Akaba

Mentoring could be formal or informal as has been explained previously in the study. However, whether organizational arrangement made a mentoring relationship possible or the mentors and the mentees individually formed their mentoring relationship, the objective and process are the same. More so, the mentors, be it formal and informal mentoring, are persons who are already operating in positions that their mentees aspire to operate in the future. Psychologically, it is pertinent to ascertain if junior academics regard their mentors as their role model career-wise. Therefore, when asked if they saw their mentors as their role model, a majority of the respondents (71.3%) answered in the affirmative (Table 5). Conversely, 13.1 of the respondents replied that they did not regard their mentors as their role models. Another set of the respondents (15.6%) were uncertain if they were seeing their mentors as their role model. This suggests that a considerable proportion of junior academics being mentored are aspiring to be like their mentors. This aspiration is could be taken as one the major factors that sustains mentoring relationships.

Table 5 Relationship between mentees’ feeling of being used by their mentors and their commitment to their mentors

		Felt being used by mentor(s)			Total
		Yes	No	Don't know	
Rating of commitment to mentor	1 point	2 6.3%	10 3.2%	11 17.5%	23 5.6%
	2 points	6 18.8%	26 8.2%	8 12.7%	40 9.7%
	3 points	8 25.0%	58 18.4%	18 28.6%	84 20.4%
	4 points	14 43.8%	137 43.4%	17 27.0%	168 40.9%
	5 points	2 6.3%	85 26.9%	9 14.3%	96 23.4%
Total	32 100.0%	316 100.0%	63 100.0%	411 100.0%	
Chi-square = 37.664 df = 8 p-value = 0.00					

Source: Researcher’s fieldwork and SPSS computation, 2017

Table 6 is a contingency table of two variables: “felt being used by mentors” which is the independent variable, and “rating of commitment to mentor” which is the dependent variable. Data from the table indicates that 6.3 percent representing a minority of the respondents who felt being used by their mentors for tasks that benefit the mentors more than them, the mentees, rated very highly (5 points) their commitment to their mentors. However, 26.9 percent and 14.3 percent of the respondents who did not feel being used by their mentors, and those who could not tell if they were being used by their mentors respectively, rated their commitment to their mentors with the maximum 5 points. Therefore, with chi-square value 37.664, and p-value of 0.00 which is less than the benchmark of 0.05, it is inferred that there is a statistically significant relationship between junior academics’ feeling of being used by their mentors and their commitment to their mentors. This finding thus implies that mentees who are being used by their mentors for activities and tasks that are actually not relevant and helpful for their career growth and development, will not show maximum commitment to their mentors and the mentoring arrangement.

Conclusion

Social and psychological factors do make or mar mentoring relationships. Irrespective of the gender of the mentor and mentee, a mentoring association can still be formed as far as the parties involved subscribe to the objectives of the mentoring, and regard these objectives as beneficial for career and institutional development. Hence, gender, ethnic group, and age factors do not affect mentoring relationships. Among academics, the need to acquire knowledge and skills for career development is paramount in initiating and sustaining mentoring relationships. Psychological boosts in mentoring relationships are: on the part of mentees, psychological factors such as humility, respectfulness, willingness to learn, and obedience. On the part of mentors, the psychological factors that could encourage mentoring are their availability, the need to train an heir or their replacement in the department. These factors emanating from mentors can also encourage mentees to place high premium on the mentoring or being mentored. Highlights of the psychological factors that can discourage mentoring are lack of seriousness of a mentee, the display of lackadaisical attitude to academics; arrogance, pride, unavailability and inaccessibility of the mentee, and laziness. The social factors that can discourage mentoring are ethnicity, nepotism, religious bias, and lack of structure for formal mentoring. The encouragement from mentors; the personal desire for growth and development that a mentee has; the desire to avoid pitfalls; and the desire for speed; learning of career improving skills and knowledge are the factors that motivate mentees to be committed to mentoring relationships. For mentors, the dedication and progress of mentees are what mainly give mentors the impetus to be

committed to a mentoring relationship. Mentors' values and those of their mentees have to tally for a smooth mentoring relationship.

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Mentoring Centripetal and Centrifugal Forces: Junior Academics Mentoring and Career Development In the University of Benin, Benin City.

Dr. Jude Akaba

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