

# Mentoring Relationships' Facilitators and Inhibitors: A Comparative Study of Public and Private High Schools of Bahawalpur Region

Nosheen Nawaz<sup>1\*</sup> Ayesha Jahanian<sup>1</sup> Syeda Farzana Manzoor<sup>2</sup>

1. Department of Management sciences, the Islamia university of Bahawalpur, Pakistan
2. Phd Scholar, Huazhong university of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China

\* E-mail of the corresponding author: [nisha4741@hotmail.com](mailto:nisha4741@hotmail.com)

## Abstract

**Purpose:** The Purpose of this article is to find the presence of effective informal faculty to faculty mentoring relationship either in private high schools or is public high schools and also to investigate the facilitating and hindering factors for this relationship.

**Design/Methodology:** Simple random sampling technique is being used to choose sample. Structured questionnaire and unstructured interviews are used for surveying and findings.

**Findings:** Public sector educational institutions are found to have more effective and strong faculty to faculty mentoring relationships. Availability of time, trust, supportive culture and permanent jobs are facilitating factors for public sector schools. Work load, generation gap, ego problem, fair of failure and lack of trust hinders the prevalence of mentoring relationship in private sector schools.

**Research limitations and implications:** Time constraint and uneasy access to all faculty members are the limitations of this research. The results of this study can be used to guide ongoing research in the field of mentoring relationships.

**Paper type:** Empirical paper

**Keywords:** Mentioning relationship, facilitating factors, hindering factors

## 1. Introduction

Education is a critical and most important constituent of struggle towards achieving an economic growth of a country. Countries which want to excel in this competing and dynamic world focus primarily on the structure of education and the culture of educational institutions which prevail in a country. According to Perkin (1969) academics is one of the most important professions of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Educationalists hence are the focal point for regulatory bodies as well as researchers. A proper guidance mechanism should be present in educational institutions for their skills and career development. Mentoring is a term that substitutes guidance. Mentoring is a relationship of trust in which non-experienced people seeks support, guidance, encouragement from experienced persons which show concern in enhancing their competencies and character (Rhodes 2002). Mentoring is a dyadic relationship in which a person who offer guidance is referred as mentor and the one who is provided with guidance is referred as mentee or protégé's. Location for mentoring is not specific it may take at various setting such as at workplaces, non-profit organizations, educational institutions or even at virtual communities for which e-mentoring is done (Rhodes 2002). Mentoring can be both formal and informal. Formal mentoring is one which is designed & managed by organizations whereas informal mentoring is usually unplanned and it is not designed and managed by organizations.

The objectives of this research are to identify

- Where an effective informal faculty to faculty mentoring relationship exist, either in private educational institutions or in public educational institutions.
- The facilitating and hindering factors in the effectiveness of this relationship.

## 2. Literature Review

Environmental changes, organizational changes and the urge for career development in order to upgrade the living standards exert great pressure on the individual to seek developmental support and guidance from their peers or colleagues who are more with informed, knowledgeable and skillful. Recent researches on the increased need for mentoring determined that informal mentoring has large impact on mentee than formal mentoring as informal relationships are developed naturally.

Some researchers focus on the importance of the relationship as both mentor and mentee engage in the

relationship as a result of their own willingness and in consideration of the benefits they will get from that relationship. (Ellinger2002.), reveals the extent to which the mentoring relationships is proved as a supportive tool for career advancement and job attitudes of an individual “people who are blessed with mentors who satisfy their counseling and developmental needs effectively show appreciable work related behaviors that eventually help them achieve their professional objectives and organizational goals (Ismail 2007). Profit as well as non-profit institutions do not work in isolation rather they are affected by their surroundings. They reflect the changing phenomena and uncertainty which prevails in the world around them and so is the reason that mentoring program in such organizations are true reflection of the society and therefore the people on work are continually mentored and managed in accordance with the dynamic world (Hansman2002.)

Many studies have been conducted on audio mentoring that exists within the educational string. Educational researchers found that initial period for newly recruited teachers is very critical in their career path as they are not well informed about the work place culture and are not well equipped with skills and knowledge so in that point of time they need a mentor that guide them(Ellinger 2002.).A skillful and knowledgeable mentor helps increase the mentees association with projects by modeling class room routines, more organized and effective expression of instruction narrated by the departmental heads, and gaining the students increased level of commitment towards their careers (Smith 2002).

**Facilitating Factors for Mentoring Relationship:** Researchers have investigated a lot of facilitating factors while conducting studies on various aspects of mentoring. Organizations play a key role in finding the effective mentoring relationship among effective staff. Organizations provisions for foreruns which encourage the open discussions among the academic staffs like morning meetings with heads, informal meetings in which all senior and junior teachers get a chance to sit together, these provisions help the junior teachers to gain guidance from the senior teachers on the issues they are facing at work place. Mentoring is taken as a long term aspect to retain teachers in the academia by the organization (Skinner 2004). Senior teachers who believe that guiding the new teachers is their professional responsibility also foster this relationship, as the view that this is their obligation and they must have to fulfill make them more enthusiastic towards guiding others (Skinner 2004). When the senior teachers experience benefits from mentoring in past then they are more motivated towards mentoring their juniors in future (Kiggin 2002). Some researchers termed this as cascade mentoring; here the one who is being benefited by any eventually provides the culture of mentoring at workplace. Organization which wants to build culture of mentoring in their organizations must plan mentoring programs and should provide appropriate training to existing stage (Thompson 2004). In educational institutions old faculty should be trained how to welcome new faculty and how to guide and support them. A teacher who is trained to guide the newcomers will definitely be proved as a good mentor. Organizational role in initiating and strengthening the mentoring relationship can never be denied. Organizations can facilitate mentoring if rightly communicated the benefits of mentorship to mentors as well as mentees who will then motivate them to engage in mentoring (Ellinger 2002). Some researchers also suggest that not only benefits rather roles, functions and responsibilities should also be communicated. An aware mentor or protégé may prove to be good contribution in effectiveness of this relationship, in initiating of mentoring relationship. Sometimes it may happen that mentees try to approach with the persons of some sex as they feel more comfortable with them (Sands Et al 1991). Made protégé will be more comfortable to seek guidance from make mentor and some is the case with female protégé. She will be more comfortable in sharing problem with its female college. Belonging of protégé and mentor to same sex may sometimes facilitate the relationship. Aside from belonging to same gender, mentors are more motivated to guide and help those with similar professions interests and personalities (Sands et al 1991). Mentors welcome those protégé who are similar to them and a term clone is used by researchers in this regard. Recognition of need for mentoring in both organizations and mentee, facilitate the mentoring process. Organizations when recognize the need to implement and support mentoring practices will promote the prevalence of mentoring culture at their work place (Skinner et al 2004) and when mentees recognize the need for guidance and support they will become more enthusiastic towards making this relationship.

**Hindering Factors for Mentoring Relationships:** Research has been made to identify the inhibitors of mentoring relationship. Different researchers find out inhibiting factors from different perspective. Some relate to organization itself and some relate to mentor and mentee. Protégé who seek guidance from their peer are in vulnerable state (Sands et al 1991). As these colleague may be in some future time making decisions regarding their careers. So mentees feel that if they share their problems with their senior colleagues then they might expose their weaknesses and this may become an obstacle in their career development when these mentors will get promoted and will become decision makers of the organizations. Despite the findings that mentors are reluctant for seeking guidance from their peers, supervisor-protégé mentoring is also been criticized by some researchers. Sometimes mentors exercising more power may very wrongly use this (Ellinger 2002), like creating unfavorable work conditions or making hurdles in promotion of mentee. Supervisors can be considered superior as they posses more knowledge and their duty is to pass on their knowledge to their mentees (Hansman 2002)

but sometimes this possession of power can be hurtful as mentees became replica's of their mentors who believe that they must support and guide but should not produce clones power issue thus greatly influence the effectiveness of mentoring relationship.

Buddy mentors sometimes may not welcome the new working style and resist change and may not be good role models themselves (Ellinger 2002). Such people neither bear criticism nor want to criticize other they want the things to be done in the way as it was done so far. Furthermore, some mentors may sometimes cannot satisfy their protégé' either by not counseling them properly or by not actually recognizing the area where mentee wants guidance or want to be helped out by the mentor (Eby et al 2008). When mentees needs are not satisfied he will be reluctant to seek guidance from any other mentor who may guide him better than the first one. When a fresh professional degree holder enters the organization and is equipped with more recent knowledge he feels uncomfortable with the mentor who possesses old knowledge. A state of conflict arises when such mentors expect from their mentees to perform only what they are interested in (Williams et al 2001) or force the mentee to provide desired outcomes. When mentee expertise surpasses the mentor, mentors feels insecure. They instead of collaborating with their young colleagues start competing with them (Skinner 2004). They have a fair of failure that new comers may both take over their position as they are more competent than them.

Researchers added that mentoring relationships often went awry when organizations expand internationally like joint ventures, licensing and virtual business (Ismail et al 2007). In such organizational structures mentees do not find appropriate mentor who can guide their professional needs and they look outside and search mentors from other organizations of some category. This requires a lot of time for mentors to search the right professional assistant thus expansion of organizations internationally inhibits the fostering of effective mentoring relationship, organizations when bombarded its employees with work load, both mentor and mentee does not find time from their work to interact with each other and enjoy a healthy mentoring relationship (Williams et al 2001). Everyone is busy in accomplishing their task and achieving the target which is given by the organizations and hence no free time to interact with others. With such work load it might happen that there is no recognition from administration for mentoring efforts made by mentors in their busy schedules (skinner 2004). This disappoints mentors and stops them from further engaging in mentoring relationship.

### 3. Research Methodology

The purpose of this study is to explore the extent of faculty to faculty mentoring existence in public and private sector educational institutions and to compare which sector is having more effective faculty to faculty mentoring and to identify factors that are contributing or inhibiting these mentoring relationships. As this is a comparative study between public and private high schools mentoring relationships and the researcher intended to identify the group differences and reasons behind those differences, the target population was public and private high schools of Bahawalpur City. The total number of private and public high schools in Bahawalpur city are 66 and 19 respectively. The researcher selected 5 institutions from each category using simple random technique. Using convenience sampling technique 5 teachers were approached from each selected school. The total sample consisted of 50 teachers, 25 from each category. Structured questionnaire and unstructured interventions were used for surveying and finding the mentoring relationship and identifying the hindering and facilitating factors in each category. Data was analyzed using two approaches. Data collected from unstructured questionnaires was analyzed and put into categories to identify the hindering and facilitating factors. Data collected through structured questionnaire is converted into information using nominal scale. The study is cross sectional and paper type is empirical.

### 4. Discussion

Mentoring relationships are hard to develop but comparatively easier successfully according to one of the informant. As one of the respondent private school it is very difficult to develop a mentoring relationship among people who have relatively large differences in their personalities. Teachers are very often recruited in private schools and young people are more encouraged so newly recruited teachers have vast personality differences with senior faculty with whom they can seek guidance. Another respondent identified the same thing but he use the terminology generation gap.

Most of the respondents from private schools viewed that work load & time constraint is the basic factor that hinders them to communicate their problem and issues with their seniors. They told that in their schools a lot of co-curricular activities take place along with the academics and hence they have to spend their free time in designing and conducting those have a lot of work load as well as no time to have sittings with their seniors teachers. Whereas when inquired from the teachers of public schools they told that they don't have burden of co-curricular activities as such and at the teaching faculty sit together in the break interval and have tea.

Some junior teachers from the private school viewed internal politics as the factor that hinders the mentoring they believe that some of the faculty members have created their own lobbies and only members of

those lobbies are benefited from the guidance of experienced teachers expressed the same view and termed it as favoritism.

Informants from private sector believe that senior faculty has fear of failure that juniors may leave them behind in the path of development and is the reason they are reluctant to mentor their protégé. No such factor is found in public school as teachers present there are privileged and honored more on the basis of experience and time they have served the institution.

Senior teachers from private high schools provide very positive response when asked from them when they helper their juniors they ever get appreciated from the super ordinates? They replied gently and assured yes wherever they found time to guide their juniors and resolve their issues they are appreciated by their heads. How are some of senior teachers from public school total that they seldom felt that they are being appreciated by their super ordinates?

When interviews were conducted with the junior teachers it was observed that one factor that hinders the mentoring in the private institutes is the ego problem in the junior teachers. Junior teachers have the superiority complex and think they know better than the senior teachers as they came from fast world and have more recent knowledge, so why they should seek guidance from those who have knowledge that has been obsolete now they consider themselves better situation handler and problem solves and also think that senior teachers are living with their prior beliefs. Which are not compatible with the existing environment and students need? One teacher in this regard total that senior teachers belief in maintaining distance with students while they don't agree to this because students of this era are more comfortable and interested to learn from those teachers with which they have less communication gap and more friendly relationship.

It was observed in private schools that less experienced teachers lack trust as these teachers are serving for many years in the school hence they have very good relations with the heads of schools so they feel whatever problems they with share with them relating to either school, heads, curriculum or students will be communicated to school administration. On the other side in public schools it was seen among faculty that they maintain the relationship of trust up to great extent and when asked from senior teachers the element behind that support and prevails trust among the faculty was fond to be the recruitment of teachers as permanent faculty these teachers will remain with them in the institute as long as they serve the institute, thus they have to guide, support and build trust in order maintain long term relations with them. In contrast to public schools teachers in private schools have job of temporary nature. They are recruited on contract basic and teachers very often leave the jobs and switch to better opportunities' so motivated to build long term relationships.

Organizations itself play a very important role in fostering the mentoring culture. Private schools do not have supportive culture as school administration have bombarded the teachers with lot of work load; hence they are promoting individualism in their institutes. Every one there is busy is completing is own task to strengthen its position in the school and have no concern with others. Teachers in public schools are not assigned that much work and in result they have some free time to help out their colleges. In this way public schools promotes collectivism and maintain a supportive culture for the promotion of faculty to faculty mentoring relationship.

## 5. Findings

From the above discussion numerous factors that facilitate and hinder the faculty to faculty mentoring relationship in public & private high schools are found. Most commonly observed facilitating factors in educational institutes are supportive culture, permanent job, trust, appreciation from heads, internal satisfaction and availability of time factors that hinders the effective mentoring are found to be work load, generation and non-supportive culture. Appreciation from heads internal motivator and generation gap, word load, ego problem fear of failure, lack of trust are found to be facilitating and hindering factors respectively in private high schools where as availability of time, supportive culture, trust, permanent jobs and lack of appreciation from heads, favoritism are found to be facilitating and hindering factors respectively in public high schools. The following table shows the place these factors hold in private and public sector schools and put a gloss on where mentoring relationship is stronger.

**Table 1**

## 6. Conclusion

The research suggests that strong and effective faculty to faculty mentoring relationship exists in public school as compare to private high schools of Bahawalpur. Findings of research conclude that availability of times, trust, supportive culture and permanent nature of jobs are the factors which prevail and strengthen the informal faculty to faculty mentoring relationship. This study also investigates the factors which hinder the private schools to develop and sustain effective mentoring relationships, the hindering factors in this regard are found to be work load and ego problem. When skilled and knowledgeable teachers are present in educational institutions, the students of those institutions are very likely to have quality education. It can be assumed from this study that

students of public schools are getting quality education as teachers over there are seeking guidance from their senior colleagues along with their own knowledge.

### 7. Limitations and Implications

Due to time constraint very small sample size is chosen to conduct the study. If time was sufficient then probably large sample would be chosen which lead to more precise results. Another factor that could add more precision to the findings was the easy access to all the teachers in the school premises. Information in this research is collected from only those teachers made available to the researcher by school administration. The research can be used by the government bodies & the private entities to refine & boost the culture of mentoring in their educational organizations by overcoming the hurdles or hindering factors & creating the facilitating factors. The research can also be used by the researchers to replicate the study by taking other geographical areas or larger sample to assure or validate the reliability of this research or to refine it by adding some more spice of knowledge to it.

### References

- Eby, L. T., Allen, T. D., Evans, S. C., Ng, T., & DuBois, D. L. (2008). Does mentoring matter? A multidisciplinary meta-analysis comparing mentored and non-mentored individuals. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 72(2), 254-254.
- Ellinger, A. D. (2002). Mentoring in contexts: The workplace and educational institutions. In C. A. Hansman (Ed.), *Critical perspectives on mentoring: Trends and issues* (Information Series No. 388; pp. 17-26). Columbus, OH: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education.
- Hansman, C. A. (Ed.). (2002). *Critical perspectives on mentoring: Trends & issues*. ERIC Information series No. 388, ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, Vocational Education.
- Ismail, A., Abu Bakar, R., Abg Abdullah, S.N.M., Maja, A., Guatleng, C.O., & Abdullah, M.M. (2007). Peranan Program Mentoring Dalam Pembangunan Pelajar: Satu Kajian Di Sebuah Universiti Awam Di Malaysia Timur. This paper was published in the proceeding of ASEMAL5, 18-19 August 2007, The Legend Hotel, Kuala Lumpur
- Kiggins, J. (2002). Understanding and exploring the relationships of a knowledge building community in teacher education Retrieved February 9, 2012, from <http://www.aare.edu.au/02pap/kig02280.htm>
- Perkin, H.J. (1969), *Key profession: the history of the association of university teachers*, A.M Kelley.
- Rhodes, J. E., Roffman, J., & Grossman, J. B., (2002) "The rhetoric and reality of youth mentoring," In Rhodes, J. E. (Ed.). *New directions for youth development: Theory, practice, and research—A critical view of youth mentoring*. No. 93, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Sands, R. G., Parson, L. A., & Duane, J. (1991). Faculty mentoring faculty in a public university. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 62(2) 174-192.
- Skinner, C. H. (2004). Single-subject designs for school psychologists. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*.
- Smith, R. E., & Smoll, F. L. (2002). Youth sports as a behavior setting for psychosocial interventions. In J. L. Van Raalte & B. W. Brewer (Eds.), *Exploring sport and exercise psychology* (2nd ed. pp. 341–371). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Thompson M., (2004). *Organizational Climate Perception and Job Element Satisfaction: A Multi-frame Application in a Higher Education Setting*.
- Williams, E.A., Scandura, T.A., & Hamilton, B.A.. (2001). *Dysfunctional Mentoring Relationships and Negative Social Exchange: Uncovering Some Unpleasant Realities in Mentoring Relationships*. Southern Management Association Proceedings (pp. 62-66). New Orleans: Southern Management Association Meeting.

**Table 1**

	Public Schools No.	Private Schools No.	Public Schools %	Private Schools %
%age & No. of respondents getting benefit from the experience of their senior colleges.	20	13	92%	56%
%age & No. of respondents getting appreciation from doing mentoring of juniors.	14	21	56%	84%
%age & no. of respondents having trust in their seniors.	22	10	88%	40%
No. & %age of respondent who feel comfortable talking with their seniors about how to overcome problematic issues & areas.	19	12	84%	68%
No. & %age of respondents gets time to sit, discuss and overcome problems.	15	12	60%	40%
No. & %age of respondents who think they should share their experiences with younger's in their work vicinity.	23	24	92%	96%
%age of respondents who think generation gap is the reason that hinders the good relationship building between seniors & juniors.	6	20	48%	88%