
Perceived Strategies for Enhancing Effective Mentoring In Business Education in Universities

By

P. E. Okoro

Department of Business Education
Delta State University, Abraka.

ABSTRACT

The study assessed the strategies for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education in universities as perceived by students. A research question and two hypotheses were used for the study. The population of the study comprised of 163 final year Business Education students in Delta State University, Abraka and Ambrose All University, Ekpoma. All students were used for the study since the population was small. A 25- item questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire was given to 3 experts in Business Education and 3 experts in measurement and evaluation for content and face validity. The internal consistency of the instrument was obtained using cronbach's alpha which yielded coefficient value of 0.82. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. T-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings are that teachers always provide feedback to students; always listen to the students for silence. They show good examples to students and offer problem solving techniques to students. It was recommended that teachers should make themselves available to students; understand students' behaviour and listen to all categories of students.

Keywords: Strategies, mentoring, business education, universities.

INTRODUCTION

Business Education is one of the branches of vocational education which is education for and about business. Okoye and Umezulike (2014) define Business Education 'as a programme of instruction that is meant to prepare people for jobs requiring specialised training Business education is a programme of study that helps the students to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them set up their own businesses rather than seeking white collar jobs. Business Education is offered at colleges of education and courses taught in the programme are principles of management, office practice, principles of accounting, ICT key boarding shorthand, business law,

marketing, business communication and business mathematics., The goal of Business Education at the tertiary level is to create self-employment for graduates after the completion of their academic pursuit. Entrepreneurs arise from Business Education programme because of the relevant skills and knowledge they have acquired In' the course of their training, Ogben and Amahi (2008) state that Business Education helps to equip students with knowledge and skills that will enable them find a job after schooling across territorial boundaries or which they can use to create their own employment. Obi and Otamiri (2010) in Mshelia (2014) outline the goal of Business Education as to:

1. Produce efficient and effective management, secretarial, accounting and marketing managers;
2. Produce lecturers who will handle business and related courses in our universities and colleges;
3. Propagate the development of the business thought and philosophy in business and management;
4. Prepare people for self-employment in a situation where there is no available paid employment;
5. Expose the students, via the available courses, to the limitless horizon of the business world and prepare them for roles as qualified administrators and managers in business organisation;
6. Develop in the students' requisite skills and expertise in management of both private and public enterprise and arm them with the analytical ability needed to meet the growing challenges of present and future. Nigerian and international environments;
7. Prepare and equip those who pass through the programme to be able to establish and run their own private business ventures as self-employed citizens of the society.

In order to achieve these goals, the services of the teachers are required to guide the students appropriately. This can be achieved through teaching and technical advice of the teacher. The teacher is called the mentor while the student is known as the mentee. The process of guiding the students by the teacher is generally referred to as mentoring. Mentoring is very important in the effective acquisition of skills and knowledge for personal development in the business world. Mentoring is a process that

always involves communication between the mentor (teacher) and mentee (student).

Mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the mentee) (Pompa, 2012, Nwanwezi & Akpomi, 2009). Mentoring is a technical advice of the teacher given to the students to achieve the intended result in the course of training. It is the close relationship between the teacher and students for the purpose of learning new and more things. Mentoring is a guidance given to students by more experienced persons to enhance their personal development. It is a way of assisting less privileged persons to achieve a desirable result in their fields of endeavour. Mentoring is a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social, capital, and the psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development (Allen, Eby & Lentz, 2006). Mentoring is typically defined as a relationship between an experienced and less experienced person in which the mentor provides guidance, advice, support and feedback to the protégé (Haney, 2009) in (Nwaokwa, 2014). It is a way to help new employees learn about organizational culture (Bierema, 2007); to facilitate personal and career growth and development and to expand opportunities for those traditionally hampered by organizational barriers. The attributes of a good mentor include being confident, intelligent, creative, forecasting, accepting, motivating, as well as counselling and facilitating the ideas of students to achieve education goals. Mckimm, Jollie and Hatter (2007) in Ezeani, (2014) mention some

of the organizational skills of a mentor to include planning, contraction, recording, structuring sessions, time management, scheduling, evaluating, assessing, report writing, maintaining boundaries, action planning and prioritizing. Some of the interpersonal skills of a mentor are: negotiating and influencing, listening, giving constructive feedback, intervention- Prescriptive, informative confrontational, cathartic, catalytic, supportive, questioning, motivating and encouraging, self-awareness, coaching/teaching, reflecting, non-judgmental and non prejudicial.

Mckimm, Jollie and Hatter (2007) in Ezeani (2014) identify some qualities of a mentor. According to them, the good interpersonal skills are objectivity, role model, flexibility, peer respect, demonstrable competence, non-threatening attitude, facilitator of learning, initiative and independence, open mindedness, approachability, self-confidence and self-awareness, advocacy, sincerity, warmth, commitment, understanding and aptitude for the role. On the other hand some of the qualities of a mentee (student) are: willing to learn and develop, willing to participate, being intelligent and learning quickly, being ambitious, keen to succeed, able to accept power and risk, being loyal, committed, conscientious, able to develop, flexible and adaptable, having self-awareness, well organized, able to accept a challenge, able to receive constructive feedback, etcetera.

The steps a mentor should adopt to enhance effective mentoring are known as strategies. Zachary (2000) points out that mentor, in addition to their expertise and experience, need to be familiar with specific process skills that can facilitate the mentoring process: namely, asking questions that will

help students to reflect on and articulate their own thinking. Reformulating statements help mentors to clarify their own understanding and encourage students to reflect on what they articulated. Summarizing helps to remind the mentoring partners of what has transpired and allows both parties to check out assumptions in the process, listening for silence and providing feedback that is authentic and suggests future action. In the same vein; Pita, Romiréz, Joacin, Prentice and Clarke (2013) identify the following as effective strategies for mentoring undergraduates. The mentor should make him/herself available, foster community, be attentive, encourage participation in the boarder research community and be understanding. Mentoring strategies according to Amesi and Akpomi (2014) are: aligning instructional-support efforts, partnering with head of department, finding the right colleagues to be mentors, student context, differentiated learning, mentor modeling of practice, mentor articulating of practices, allowing mentee to experience practices, reflection on practices, interactions with other departmental head/staff, link to other technological practices, pre-service lecturers for variability, inclusion task expectations, transitions, language and notion of drawing upon a community of mentors where mentors can allow pre-service lecturers to work with and observe a variety of different lecturers. Unfortunately, many teachers/mentors are not ready to guide the students (mentee) to achieve academic result in the university. Most students are not ready to cooperate with the teacher in fostering effective mentoring. This will have negative effect on the path of realization of educational goals.

Mentoring helps the mentee (students) to acquire relevant knowledge and ideas from the teacher which is generally known as the mentor. Business Education teachers have to guide the students through teaching and advice to enable students acquire some new techniques and innovations in Business Education by adopting some strategies. Unfortunately, the teachers in universities have some challenges as inadequate instructional facilities, personal incompatibility between teacher and student, lack of cooperation from the students, the student unwillingness to take advice and some strategies are not adopted by the teacher as a result of inexperience of the teacher. The problem of study therefore, is, what are the strategies for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education as perceived by students?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to assess the strategies for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education in universities as perceived by students. Specifically, the study was designed to achieve the following purpose.

1. Identify the strategies adopted by the teacher for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education in universities as perceived by the students.

Research Question

The following research question was raised to guide the study.

1. What are the strategies adopted by the teacher for enhancing effective mentoring of Business Education in universities?

Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses are tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students on the strategies adopted by the teachers for enhancing mentoring in Business Education In universities.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of Business Education students In Ambrose All University, Ekpoma and Delta State University, Abraka students on the strategies adopted by the teachers for enhancing mentoring In Business Education in universities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design which investigated strategies for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education as perceived by, students in the universities. The population of the study comprised of 163 final year Business Education students In Delta State University, Abraka and Ambrose All University, Ekpoma. All students were involved for the study since the population was small. A 25- Item questionnaire was the Instrument used for data collection. It has two parts; Part A has 4 items on demographical information of the respondent, while part B contains 21 items on strategies for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education. The questionnaire was given to 3 experts in Business Education and 3 experts in measurement and evaluation from Delta State University, Abraka for content and face validity. The internal consistency of the instrument was ascertained with a questionnaire administered to 58 final students of Business Education of Rivers State University of

Science and Technology Port-Harcourt. The data collected were subjected to cronbach's alpha which yielded coefficient value of 0.82. The data collected were analyzed using mean. The questionnaire was structured on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree 4-points, Agree 3-points, Disagree 2-points, Strongly Disagree 1-point. In discussing the questionnaire items, the mean scores which have 2.50 and above were accepted responses while the mean scores which have below 2.50 were reject responses. T-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Where the calculated value (cv) was less than

table value (tv) the hypothesis was accepted. Where the calculated value (cv) was greater than table value (tv), the hypothesis was rejected.

RESULT

The result of the study is discussed under the following

Research Question

What are the strategies adopted by the teacher for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education in universities as perceived by students?

Table 1: Students mean rating on strategies for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education in universities. N = 163

S/N	Mentoring strategies in Business Education	X	SD	Remark
1.	My lecturer is always available to give me advice	2.50	0.96	Agreed
2.	My lecturer is always attentive to my issues	2.73	0.99	Agreed
3.	My lecturer understands my behaviour	2.50	0.91	Agreed
4.	My lecturer asks me questions	2.60	0.94	Agreed
5.	My lecturer always partner with other heads of departments	2.81	0.90	Agreed
6.	My lecturer uses differential learning method	2.80	0.88	Agreed
7.	My lecturer applies appropriate knowledge to my issues	2.70	0.95	Agreed
8.	My lecturer observes other lecturers for more ideas	2.72	0.97	Agreed
9.	My lecturer expects me to achieve good result	2.68	0.89	Agreed
10.	My lecturer uses instructional facilities to demonstrate examples	2.59	0.97	Agreed
11.	My lecturer allows me to reflect on previous experience	2.60	0.78	Agreed
12.	My lecturer listens to all categories of students in giving advice	2.55	0.85	Agreed
13.	My lecturer has value for my advice	2.82	0.82	Agreed
14.	My lecturer helps to reformulate statements	2.58	0.98	Agreed
15.	My lecturer summarizes issues	2.63	0.92	Agreed
16.	My lecturer always provide feedback	2.67	0.92	Agreed
17.	My lecturer always listens for silence	2.59	0.79	Agreed
18.	My lecturer shows good example	2.71	0.78	Agreed
19.	My lecturer offers problem solving techniques	2.60	0.89	Agreed
20.	My lecturer confronts unprofessional behaviour	2.81	0.91	Agreed
21.	My lecturer offers challenging opportunities	2.90	0.76	Agreed
	Grant Mean	2.66	0.81	Agreed

The table shows that all the items 1-21 are strategies for enhancing effective mentoring of students in universities, hence the mean ranges from 2.50 and above.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students on the strategies adopted by the teacher for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education in universities.

Table 2: T-test analysis of male and female students on the strategies adopted by the teacher for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education in universities

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
Male	88	31.06	9.04	161	1.53	1.960	NS
Female	75	29.30	9.22				

In table 2, the calculated t-value of 1.53 is less than the t-tabulated value of 1.960 at 161 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is retained.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of Business Education students in Ambrose All University, Ekpoma and Delta State University, Abraka students on the strategies adopted by the teachers for enhancing mentoring in business education in universities

Table 2: T-test analysis of Business Education students in Ambrose Ali University and Delta State University students on the strategies adopted by teachers for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education In universities

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
AAU Business Education Students	85	30.86	10.16	161	1.58	1.960	NS
Delsu Business Education students	78	29.04	10.27				

In table 2, the calculated t-value of 1.58 is less than the t-tabulated value of 1.960 at 161 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is retained.

effective mentoring in Business Education: My lecturer is always available to give me advice, always attentive to students' issues, understands students' behaviours, asks students questions, always partners with other heads of department, use differential learning method, applies appropriate knowledge to students' issues, observes other lecturers far more ideas, expects students to achieve good result, uses instructional facilities to demonstrate examples, allows

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study assessed strategies for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education in universities as perceived by students. The result showed that the following are strategies for enhancing

students to reflect on previous experience, listen to all categories of students in giving advice, helps to reformulate statements, summarizes issues, always provides feedback, always listens for silence, shows good example, offers problem solving techniques, confronts unprofessional behaviour and offers challenging opportunities. This study is consistent with the study of Zachary (2000), Pita, Romirez, Joacin, Prentice and Clarke (2013) who earlier identified similar mentoring strategies and Amesi and Akpomi (2014) who earlier identified the following strategies for mentoring in Business Education, namely aligning instructional-support efforts, partnering with heads of departments, finding the right colleagues to be mentors. The result of hypothesis also revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean rating between male and female students on the strategies adopted by the teachers for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education in universities. The result of hypothesis also revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students on the strategies adopted by the teacher for enhancing effective mentoring in Business Education in universities.

CONCLUSION

Mentoring is a good method of transferring knowledge from the most experienced person to the less privileged person in the educational system. It is Important that the teacher (mentor) who is a reservoir of knowledge should be trained and retrained in new academic programmes in order to guide the students (mentee) appropriately to avoid errors and wastages among students In their educational career.

This is to say that mentoring helps to build the students to achieve good result in learning new Ideas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made for the study.

1. I Teachers should make themselves available to students;
2. Teachers should understands students behaviour;
3. Teachers should listen to all categories of students.

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