

Academic staff mentoring as a correlate of job performance among new entrants in HEI

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Abstract

This study is motivated primarily by an emerging trend observed in the Nigerian HEIs i.e., the changing workforce demographics, with its attendant consequences on educational standards. Considering the available evidences supporting the influence of mentoring on job performance in other sectors, these researchers found it worthwhile to investigate the mentoring practices in Nigerian HEIs to ascertain the relationship between mentoring and job performance of newly employed academic staff. The objectives of the study are: (1) determine the current mentoring practices in Nigerian HEIs; (2) ascertain the relationship between academic staff mentoring and job performance (proxied by task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behavior) of newly employed academic staffs; and (3) determine the most appealing and effective mentoring strategies for optimizing the job performance of newly employed academic staffs. Given the objective of the study, –to ascertain the relationship between mentoring and job performance of newly employed academic staff– a correlational research design was employed in the study. A sample of 60 academic staff was drawn from a population of 182 newly employed academic staff of the Federal College of Education (Technical) Umunze. Mentoring was found to be significantly (and positively) correlated with task performance and contextual performance of newly employed academic staffs, whereas the relationship between mentoring and counterproductive work behavior was not significant. Other interesting findings from the descriptive statistics tests are also reported. Among the recommendations put forward is the need to establish a formal mentoring programme as part of the integration process of newly employed academic staff in the higher educational institutions in Nigeria.

Key Words: *Mentoring, employee integration, job performance, higher education, academic staff.*

1.0. Introduction

When new employees, especially those with little or no experience join an organization, it is common for them to be perplexed and unsure about how to carry out their jobs. They are usually overwhelmed by the job demands, and feel anxious and insecure in the new work environment. These can adversely impact their work outcomes, career development, job satisfaction, work attitude and commitment, self-esteem, and ability to build social capital at the work place ([Ekpoh and Ukot, 2018](#); [Darcy, 2015](#); [Ojokuku and Sajuyigbe 2015](#); [Ugwueze, Ngwoke, Aniodo, 2015](#); [Ogboju, 2011](#); [Salami, 2010](#); [Okurame, 2008](#)). To address these challenges commonly faced by new entrants in the work place, mentoring programmes are designed and used to facilitate the onboarding and integration of new entrants into the organization. This could be done either through a formal or informal mentoring arrangement. Generally, mentoring has been reported by several studies to have positive impact on new employees' job performance ([Oladimeji and Sowemimo, 2020](#); [Onyemaechi and Ikpeazu, 2019](#); [Ramesh 2015](#); [Peel, 2004](#)), career development ([Kim, Im and Hwang, 2015](#); [Haggard et al., 2011](#); [Ayres, 2006](#)), organizational commitment ([Ragin et al, 2000](#)), job satisfaction ([Payne and Huffman, 2005](#); [Ensher et al., 2001](#);

[Ragins and Cotton, 1999](#)) among others. Some studies have also looked into the impact of formal, and informal mentoring in the workplace. For instance, [Christopher \(2015\)](#) reported that while formal mentoring positively impacts employee attitudes, it does not improve their performance, in the short term. On the other hand, [Allen, \(2004\)](#); [Allen, Poteet, and Russell, \(2000\)](#) found informal mentoring to have stronger influence on newly employed staff than formal mentoring programmes. Similarly, other studies including [Haggard et al., \(2011\)](#); [Fagenson, \(1992\)](#); and [Sosik and Godshalk, \(2000\)](#) showed informal mentoring to have greater impact in reducing employees' turnover intentions than formal mentoring.

In the context of the Nigerian higher educational institutions (HEIs), several studies have reported absence of formal mentoring as well as lack of effective mentoring programmes ([Onyemaechi and Ikpeazu \(2019\)](#); [Sola, 2018](#); [Ekpoh and Ukot, 2018](#); [Peretomode, 2017](#)). Even though [Sola \(2018\)](#) acknowledged the presence of informal mentoring in these institutions, the same study revealed that most of their academic staffs have not benefited from mentoring. This implies that, most of the new entrants join these HEIs and start their careers without the guidance and support of a mentor. This assertion is supported by [Ekpoh and Ukot \(2018\)](#) which attributed the

incompetence in some of the newly employed lecturers (in lesson presentation, application of appropriate teaching method and assessment of student) in Nigerian HEIs, to poor or lack of mentoring. The importance of mentoring generally in the workplace, and especially in HEIs cannot be overstressed. This is because the mandate of HEIs –which include, creating and disseminating valuable knowledge through quality researches, imparting relevant knowledge and skills through effective teaching, and contributing to solving societal problem through important inventions– require certain competencies and experiences, which usually takes years of practice to master. According to the Social Exchange Theory, a mentor provides three forms of support to the mentee, they include -social support, vocational support, and role modeling support ([Scandura, 1992](#)). These forms of support are essential to enable nascent academics acquire relevant competencies and build needed experiences rapidly in order to ensure continued effectiveness.

This present study is motivated by an emerging trend observed in the Nigerian HEIs i.e., the changing workforce demographics ([Onyemaechi and Ikpeazu, 2019](#)). Observably, a larger number of older, more competent and experienced academics are retiring from active service; leaving with their wealth of expertise and

experience, while younger and mostly inexperienced ones are being recruited. This trend leads to what [Piktials and Greenes \(2008\)](#) termed *experience gap*; a situation that results from loss of intellectual capital such as tacit knowledge and knowhow in an organization. [Peterson and Kicks \(2010\)](#) observed that, this form of knowledge loss is usually due to the retirement of older workers who leave the organization with their valuable intellectual resources and life experiences. This trend is leading to significant decline in educational standards as evident in the decrease in quality of recent graduates compared to the graduates of decades past ([Adeogun, Abiona, Alabi, and Yila, 2018](#)). Currently, only a few studies have been carried out on mentoring practices as well as their effect and influence on nascent academics' job performance in Nigeria ([Ekpoh and Ukot, 2018](#); [Peretomode, 2017](#)). Therefore, this study seeks to contribute to the extant mentoring literature by investigating the current mentoring practices and also examining its influence on selected, pertinent, dimensions of job performance among nascent academics in Nigerian HEIs. The findings of this study will contribute to better understanding of the effects of current mentoring practices on the job performance of nascent academics, and also provide valuable insights to aid HEIs

administrators in selecting effective mentoring strategies to ensure both effective transfer of knowledge as well as enhanced job performance among nascent academics.

Research Questions

The broad aim of this study is to examine the relationship between academic staff mentoring (ASM) and job performances (JP) of newly employed academic staff within the context of Nigerian HEIs. Hence, the following research questions were developed to guide the study:

- I. What are the current mentoring practices in Nigerian HEIs?
- II. What is the relationship between academic staff mentoring and job performance (proxied by contextual performance, task performance, and counterproductive work behavior) of newly employed academic staffs?
- III. What are the most appealing and effective mentoring strategies/methods for optimizing the job performance of newly employed academic staffs?

Study Hypothesis

H₀₁: Academic staff mentoring has no significant relationship with task performance of newly employed academic staffs.

H₀₂: There is no significant association between academic staff mentoring and contextual

performance of newly employed academic staffs.

H₀₃: There is no significant association between academic staff mentoring and counterproductive work behavior of newly employed academic staffs.

2.0. Literature Review

Concept of Mentoring

The term *mentoring* evolved from the word *mentor*, which refer to a person that is more advanced in knowledge, skills and experienced in a particular field or line of work who provides guidance and support to another with little knowledge, skills or experience for the purpose of professional development of the latter (Murray, 1991). Allen, (2007) conceptualized mentoring as a semi-structured guidance system involving two persons where by one person assists the other in their career development through sharing of knowledge and experience. Mentoring can also be viewed as a form of sharing, caring and developmental relationship whereby one person lends their experience, expertise and time to enhancing the knowledge and skills of the other (Shea, 2007). The term ‘mentoring’ has been wrongly used interchangeably with terms such as “coaching”, “advising”, “counseling” (Scandura, 1992) or even “teaching” – as in a one-way instruction

imposed by a mentor. However, mentoring is not an exact synonym of any of the aforementioned terms. Mentoring differs from these terms or activities in that, it leans more towards the pursuit of long-term goals, it is based on a longer-term relationship aimed at personal and professional development through a dyadic learning partnership (Kim, Im and Hwang, (2015). Given the context of this study, a more suitable definition which is adopted for the study is that of [Pertin \(2011\)](#); he defined mentoring as a professional relationship between two individuals whereby the inexperienced one referred to as the protégé or mentee gets help from the more experienced one called the mentor in developing essential competencies required for effective work performance and in the career development of the former.

Mentoring Strategies

There are numerous mentoring approaches and strategies. This is necessary due to the diversity and peculiarities of different industries and professional practices. Some of the mentoring strategies proposed by different scholars are summarized and presented in table 1.

Table 1: Summary of mentoring strategies/methods from the literatures reviewed

Scholars/researchers	Mentoring strategies/methods
Ekechukwu and Horsfall (2015)	-collaboration in academic work (research, publications, etc.); providing feedback on task performance (prompt and regular); and demonstration of relevant skills and behavior.
Ramesh (2015)	-role modeling; counseling; and exposure
Wagner (2009)	-formal education and training; apprenticeship; story telling (sharing of experiences); conferences; and simulations and games.
Yoder (1990)	-coaching; giving challenging assignment; exposure and visibility; providing sponsorship; protection; and role modeling.
Vance (1977)	-career support; teaching; guidance;

	advising; counseling; caring; friendship; satisfaction; confidant.
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Source: Literature Review

Concept of Job Performance

The concept of job performance for the purpose of this study is viewed from the perspective of individual work performance; defined by [Campbell \(nd\)](#) in Dunnette and Hough (1999) as –actions or behaviors of individual workers that are important for the realization of the goals of the organization. Based on this conceptualization of job performance, the focus is on the actions or behaviors of the employee, and not the work outcomes. In other words, this perspective of job performance is not based on employees’ work outcomes –as in productivity or output measure– but rather, on the actions and behaviors of the employees, upon which work outcomes depend. The concept of work performance is considered a multidimensional construct, as such, [Koopmans et al., \(2014\)](#) has grouped the various dimensions of job performance into three broad dimensions based on the views of ([Viswesvaran and Ones, 2000](#); [Rotundo and Sackett 2002](#); [Koopmans et al., 2011](#)). The three broad dimensions include -task performance, counterproductive work behaviour, and contextual performance.

[Campbell \(nd\)](#) in Dunnette and Hough (1999) define *task performance* as the competency deployed by the employee in the performance of the core tasks central to his or her job e.g., proficiency in performing one’s core tasks, ability to complete tasks on time, and etc. The second dimension which is *counterproductive work behavior* refer to –behaviors or actions that are detrimental to the interests of the organization e.g., complaining about unimportant matters at work, focusing on negative aspects of a work situation, etc. ([Rotundo and Sackett, 2002](#)). The third dimension –*contextual performance*–, refer to behaviors that facilitate the psychological and social environment for the performance of the core task e.g., updating one’s work knowledge and skills, active participation in work-related meetings, etc. ([Borman and Motowidlo, 1993](#)).

Social Learning Theory

This present study (like several other mentoring researches) draws on the ideas and principles of the Social Learning Theory postulated by [Bandura \(1971\)](#). This theory attempts to explain human behavior and how new behaviors can be acquired. Though the theory acknowledged the option of acquisition of new behaviors through direct experience, its focus is more on acquisition of new behavior through *observation* of other peoples’ behavior. The theory attributes

man's ability to learn by observation to man's superior cognitive capacity. The idea of 'learning by observation, modeling or example' put forward in this theory is based on the belief that people acquire certain new behaviors inadvertently through the influence of examples or models. Hence, the theory advocates the indispensable role of modeling in the acquisition of new patterns of behaviors; arguing further, that, even in situations where other means of learning are possible, the use of suitable models can significantly shorten the learning process. Nevertheless, the theory outlined certain conditions necessary for the effectiveness of learning by *observing* other people. They include: paying attention to, and acknowledging the relevance of the modeled behavior; long term retention of the activities modeled to the learner; integration of components of the modeled behavior to produce new patterns of behavior through practice; and the presence of reinforcement and motivation for performing the modeled behavior. For learning by observation to be effective, these four conditions must be met. This theory helps in understanding how learning occurs in a mentoring relationship. Mentoring is mostly based on social learning since it largely involves one individual learning new behaviors from another individual for the purpose of personal

and professional development. Even though there are diverse mentoring strategies or methods as identified in the previous section, they can be classified either under learning by direct-experience or learning by observation, both of which are within the social learning system.

III.0. Methods

Given the objective of the study, –to ascertain the relationship between mentoring and job performance of newly employed academic staff– a correlational research design was employed in the study. A sample of 60 academic staff was drawn from a population of 182 newly employed academic staff of the Federal College of Education (Technical) Umunze. The term 'newly employed' as used in this study refers to academic staff that joined the college between the year 2016 and 2021. In view of the fact that all the members of the population met the requirement for participation in the study i.e., being an academic staff at the college employed between the year 2016 and 2021, simple random sampling technique was applied in the sample selection. Though a total of 60 participants (32.9% of the study population) were involved in the study, only 54 returned questionnaires were useful for analysis. Hence effective participation was 28.5% of the study population.

Data collection was done using the improved Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ 0.3) instrument developed by (Koopmans et al., 2014). The IWPQ instrument consists of three dimensions of job performance which include (1) task performance, (2) counterproductive work behavior, and (3) contextual performance. These three dimensions of work performance were used as proxy for job performance in this study. Accordingly, the IWPQ instrument was used to measure job performance which is the dependent variable in the study. The independent variable on the other, which is 'academic staff mentoring' was measured with a self-designed instrument, based on a rigorous review of related literatures and instruments. The self-designed instrument contained 9 items while the IWPQ instrument had a total of 19 items, making a total of 28 items. All measures were based on a 5-point Likert-type response scale, with higher scores indicating more agreement with the items on the instrument. In all, 54 questionnaires were found usable for the analysis i.e., 90% response rate.

The measurement instrument was evaluated for construct reliability and validity; the results are presented in table 2. Items loading and communalities met the acceptable mark of > 0.7 and >0.5 respectively (Henseler et al., 2009;

Chin, 1998). The construct reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha; each construct's Cronbach's alpha is above the adequate mark, measuring against the benchmark of >0.7 (Hair et al., (2011). The convergent validity test confirmed that average variance extracted of each construct is >0.5 which is adequate (Hair et al., 2016). See Appendix A for evidence of reliability and validity tests.

Data analysis was done using IBM SPSS Statistics 25; and supplemented with Microsoft Excel. The main objective of the study was to determine the correlation between academic staff mentoring and job performance of newly employed academic staff in HEIs. Accordingly, correlation analysis technique was used to analyze the relationship between the independent variable (academic staff mentoring) and the three dependent variables used as proxy for job performance. The other objective which was to ascertain the current mentoring practices in Nigerian HEIs, and to determine the most appealing or effective mentoring strategies among the newly employed academic staff were easily achieved using descriptive statistics.

4.0. Results

Table 3: Description of the sample (participants)

Characteristics	Type	F	(%)
Gender	Male	32	59.3
	Female	22	40.7
Age (range)	Below 30	Nil	Nil
	30-40	40	74.1
	41-50	12	22.2
	Above 50	2	3.7
Organization tenure (number of years of employment)	1year	8	14.8
	2years	8	14.8
	4years	2	3.7
	5years	36	66.7

Total number of participants: n = 54

The relevant characteristics of the research participants are presented in table 3 with a total of 54 participants. The 54 participants consisted of 32 (59.3%) males and 22 (40.7%) females. Majority of the participants can be classified as young adults seen that most of them (about 74%) fall within 30-40 years of age; about 22% are between the ages of 41-50, while only about 3.7% are above 50 years of age. In terms of work tenure, around 66.7% of the participants have worked with the college for about 5 years, while about 29.6% have worked at the college for 1 to 2 years.

Current Mentoring Practices in Nigerian HEIs

Mentoring Experience of Participants

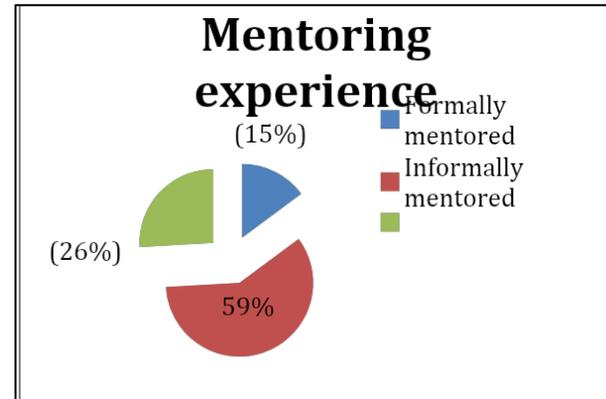


Figure 2: Mentoring Experience of Participants

Participants were asked to indicate their mentoring experience in terms of whether they were formally mentored, informally mentored, or not mentored at all. Their responses are summarized in figure 2. According to the data collected, more than half of the participants (59%) were informally mentored; about 15% were formally mentored, while 26% were not mentored at all.

Work Relationship with Mentors

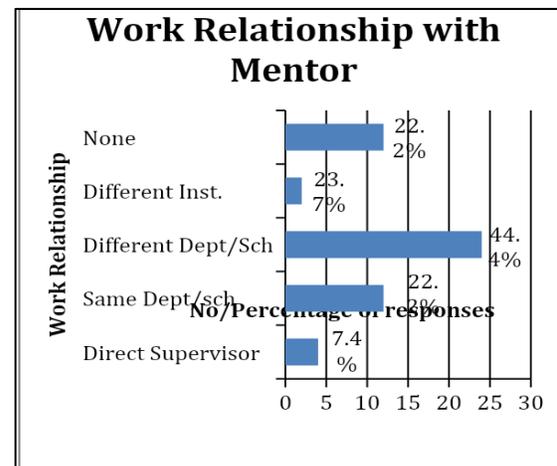


Figure 3: Work relationship with mentor

The participants were also asked to indicate the nature of their work relationship with their respective mentors and the results are presented in figure 3. Majority of the participants (about 44%) have mentors in

different department/faculty; 22.2% have mentors within the same department/faculties; and 3.7% have mentors in different institutions. Interestingly, only 7.4% (i.e., 4 participants) were mentored by their direct supervisor and the remaining 22% have no mentors.

Relationship between mentoring and job performance

Table 4: Results of Correlation Analysis and Discussion

Scale	N	Pearson r	Sig. (2-tailed)	Interpretation
Task Performance (TP)	54	0.362**	0.007	Moderate (positive)
Contextual performance (CP)	54	0.562**	0.000	Strong (positive)
Counterproductive work behavior (CWB)	54	-0.178	0.54	Not significant

Overall correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results of the correlation analysis are presented in table 4. The results showed that ASM has a significant relationship with TP at 0.007 significant levels with a correlation coefficient of 0.362; indicating a positive and moderate relationship. This implies that mentoring moderately improves task performance capacities of newly employed academic staff. Similarly, the relationship between ASM and CP is found to be significant at 0.000 significant levels, with a correlation coefficient of 0.562; indicating a positive and

strong relationship. This means that mentoring has a strongly influence on the CP of newly employed academic staff. The result from the test of the third hypothesis i.e., the relationship between ASM and CWB was not significant (sig. 0.54). Based on these results, H_{01} and H_{02} are rejected accordingly; however, we do not reject H_{03} . We therefore conclude that while ASM is significantly, positively related to TP and CP of newly employed academic staff, it is not significantly related with CWB of newly employed academic staff in this study.

Ranking of mentoring strategies based on appeal and perceived effectiveness

Participants’ ranking of mentoring strategies/methods according to their

preferences and perceived effectiveness are presented in table 5, and the visual representation is shown in figure 4 below.

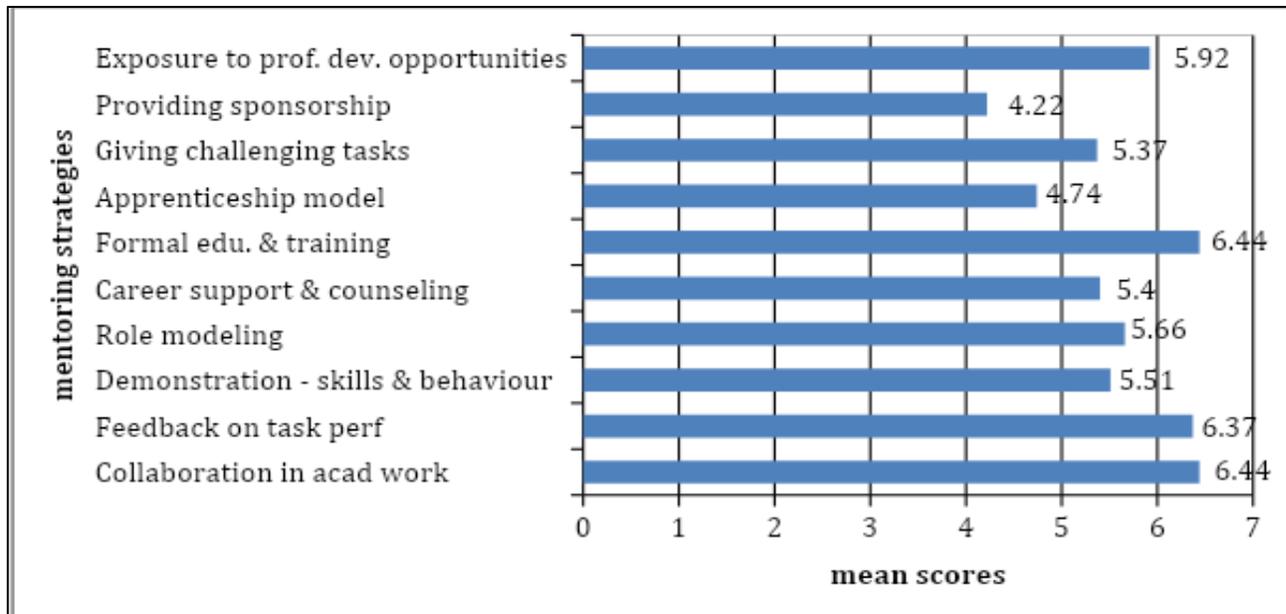


Figure 4: Ranking of mentoring strategies/methods.

Collaboration between the mentor and the newly employed academic staff in academic work, and formal education and training were ranked as the most appealing and effective mentoring strategies followed closely by giving feedback on task performed. Exposure to professional development opportunities also relatively ranked high and was followed by role modeling and demonstration of relevant skills and behavior. The lowest ranking mentoring

strategies/methods are sponsorship followed by apprenticeship model.

5.0. Discussion

Evidence from the data on mentoring practices supports the findings of [Sola, \(2017\)](#) who observed that the dominant form of mentoring in Nigerian HEIs is informal. Although, about 15% said they were formally mentored, however, given that there is no known formal mentoring

programme in the college where this study was conducted, it is reasonable to conclude that the 15% also fall under the informally mentored category. Organizations with formally recognized mentoring programmes usually mandate every new employee to participate in the mentoring programme as part of their onboarding and integration process. Hence, it is only logical to assert that the lack of formal mentoring programme in the college studied is responsible for the 26% who were not mentored at all. This practice is more or less a reflection of the mentoring practices across Nigerian HEIs ([Onyemaechi and Ikpeazu, 2019](#); [Sola, 2018](#)). Additionally, the work relationship of those mentored (formally and informally) with their respective mentors reveals another interesting insight into current mentoring practices in Nigerian HEIs. Apparently, over 70% of the participants were mentored by individuals from different department or faculty. In an organization such as an educational institution where lines of specialization are drawn mainly, along departments and broadly by faculty, it is questionable that new employees are mentored by individuals from different departments and faculties, obviously with dissimilar specialization. This is significant because, the mismatch in terms of specialization could undermine the quality and effectiveness of the mentoring

experience received by those involved in such mentoring relationship. Again, this could explain the lack of effective mentoring in Nigerian HEIs reported by ([Onyemaechi and Ikpeazu, 2019](#); [Ekpoh and Ukot, 2018](#); [Sola, 2018](#)). These lapses in the current mentoring practices are significant and required immediate attention.

Moreover, the small number of those mentored by their direct supervisors (7.4%) and the 22.2% who were not mentored at all raises further significant issues regarding mentoring practices within the Nigerian HEIs. It is expected of direct supervisors (who in this context are usually the heads of departments, course lead-lecturers, programmes directors, etc.) to provide work-related guidance and support to their staff, especially the newly employed staff; which in itself is a form of informal mentoring. However, the findings here show that a considerable number of newly employed academic staffs were not mentored at all. This is significant considering specifically, the relative sizes of the population not mentored at all and those mentored by their direct supervisors. The implication of this situation is that, without, effective mentoring, newly employed lecturers will lack the necessary competence and experience to effectively carry out their jobs. This assertion is supported by the lack of competence among some new lecturers in core

lecturing tasks such as lesson presentation, application of appropriate teaching method and assessment of student, in Nigerian HEIs reported by ([Ekpoh and Ukot, 2018](#)).

The positive (though weak) relationship between mentoring and task performance is in agreement with the findings of [Adeogun, Abiona, Alabi, and Yila \(2018\)](#). Also, the positive and strong relationship between mentoring and contextual performance indicating a strong influence of mentoring on the contextual performance of newly employed academic staff validates the effectiveness of learning from a modeled behavior or example, as postulated in the Social Learning Theory ([Bandura, 1971](#)). In a social learning system, observational learning and direct interaction may be used to acquire useful knowledge and skills to improve one's ability to successfully perform job-related tasks. The implication of these findings is that, with effective mentoring, employees can rapidly acquire relevant competencies needed to improve their task performance. In a functional mentoring relationship with social, vocational, and role modeling support as advocated by the Social Exchange Theory ([Scandura, 1992](#)), newly employed lecturers can learn behaviors from the mentor that will enhance their contextual performance i.e., their ability and tendency to

take up extra responsibilities, use their initiative to start up new tasks when the old ones are completed, or working at keeping their work knowledge up-to-date, in order to have a positive effect on work outcomes in the workplace. The relationship between mentoring and the third dimension of job performance in this study –counterproductive work behavior– was not significant. The implication of this finding is unclear and further research may be required to provide clarity on the relationship between mentoring and counterproductive work behavior of workers.

Among the mentoring strategies available, collaboration with the mentor in academic works (such as research, teaching, and project supervision), was ranked as the most appealing and effective mentoring strategy. Collaboration allows effective social learning, which is the basis for mentoring, to take place. It gives the mentee the opportunity to work closely with the mentor and allows the mentee to observe what the mentor is doing and how he is doing it. This way, the mentee can learn relevant competences such as lesson presentation, application of appropriate teaching method, research skills and etc., as they work closely with and observe the mentor working. On the other hand, the low appeal for apprenticeship model as a mentoring

strategy is partly due to lack of trust and regard for the expertise and experience of senior academic staff by newly employed academic staffs as uncovered in [Sola \(2018\)](#). Another possible explanation for the low ranking of apprenticeship model could be fear of been taken advantage of unduly by the senior ones to further their own careers. Whatever the case, mentoring strategies are numerous and effective mentoring, ideally, should be a mutually benefiting relationship. Therefore, it might help to involve the mentees in the determination of the mentoring strategy or approach. This will not only help allay all ill concerns, but will also enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.

6.0. Conclusion and Suggestions

This study was set out to investigate mentoring practices in Nigerian HEIs and to ascertain the relationship between mentoring and job performance of newly employed academic staff therein. Supporting some previous studies, evidence from this study shows that, although mentoring actually significantly (and positively) influences job performance of newly employed academic staff. However, mentoring practices in Nigerian HEIs are still mostly informal and relatively ineffective. The insignificant relationship between mentoring and

counterproductive work behavior uncovered in the study offers opportunity for further studies, perhaps using different research methods. A qualitative study may be useful (more effective) in probing further towards understanding whether or not, mentoring influences (or could influence) counterproductive work behavior and to what extent. This is important because reducing counterproductive work behavior among newly employed staff could potentially increase their productive work behavior and ultimately job performance.

Also, based on the findings from this study, we strongly suggest the establishment of a functional, formal (or semi-formal) mentoring programme as part of the integration process of newly employed academic staff into Nigerian HEIs. This will help address two critical issues identified in this study i.e., the issues of lack of mentoring and that of ineffective mentoring practices. The presence of a functional formal (or semi-formal) mentoring programme that mandates every new employee to participate in the programme –as part of their onboarding and integration process– will address the issue of lack of mentoring. To ensure the effectiveness of the mentoring programme; firstly, new lecturers should be required to choose their mentors from among members of same department or faculty to address the issue of mismatch or wrong

choice of mentors which can undermine the effectiveness of the mentoring experience. Another measure to help improve the effectiveness of mentoring in Nigerian HEIs is to select mentoring strategies and methods systematically and based on mutual understanding between the mentor and mentee. Though *collaboration* in academic work ranked highest in this study, other approaches such as *exposure to professional development opportunities* may work better for some mentees due to differences in learning preferences and styles. This is very important because, wrong choice of strategy can significantly undermine the effectiveness of the mentoring experience. Therefore, involving the mentee in the determination of the mentoring strategy or approach is vital to ensure the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship, which is essential to improving the job performance of nascent academics and by extension, improving and sustaining the quality and standards of education in Nigerian HEIs.

Conflict of Interests

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Table A1: Reliability and validity tests results of measurement Instrument

Construct	Items	Factor Loading	CR alpha	Communalities	AVE	R ²
Academic Staff Mentoring (ASM)	ASM1	0.905	0.945	0.818	0.868	
	ASM2	0.837		0.700		
	ASM3	0.904		0.816		
	ASM4	0.881		0.776		
	ASM7	0.917		0.841		
	ASM8	0.816		0.666		
	ASM9	0.822		0.676		
Task performance (TP)	TP1	0.751	0.742	0.564	0.751	0.825
	TP3	0.738		0.544		
	TP4	0.786		0.618		
	TP5	0.730		0.533		
Contextual performance (CP)	CP3	0.700	0.827	0.800	0.751	0.934
	CP4	0.859		0.870		
	CP5	0.722		0.779		
	CP7	0.724		0.903		
Counterproductive work performance (CWB)	CWB2	0.770	0.827	0.594	0.812	0.359
	CWB3	0.813		0.661		
	CWB4	0.866		0.750		
	CWB5	0.802		0.642		

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