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CONCEPTUAL ARTICLE

COLLABORATIVE MENTORING MODELS IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: A WIN-WIN-WIN STRATEGY FOR MENTOR, MENTEE, AND THE INSTITUTION

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ABSTRACT: Traditionally mentoring in higher education institutions was an informal one-to-one program where graduate students as well as junior/ fresh faculty are matched with experienced faculty and put under them for influencing and fostering the intellectual development amongst students and career aspirations amongst junior faculty respectively. While such informal one-to-one programs help the students and junior faculty but fail to create a collaborative atmosphere in higher education institutions. Alternative mentoring techniques/methods/processes like; group mentoring, mentoring circles (Just like quality circles), and network mentoring can be employed which will help in creating collaborative atmosphere in higher education settings wherein all the parties involved, i.e. mentor, mentee and institution derive benefit. The concept of the collaborative models of mentoring shifts the focus of mentoring from the top-down approach of institutions assigning mentors to mentees to a more independent approach with the focus on mentee. Mentees develop their own relationship networks in relation to their particular needs. Earlier notion of one to one mentor relationship (Dyadic model) being superior to a network of many developmental mentoring relationships has been proved wrong. There are many advantages of mentoring circles/group mentoring/network mentoring. Individuals gain access to networks, reduction in feelings of isolation, greater connectivity, increased confidence and commitment, career progression, knowledge acquisition, and better understanding of the culture. In spite of all the advantages (Mentioned above) associated with collaborative mentoring models, such as mentoring circle or network mentoring or group mentoring, the implementation of these models compared to traditional one-to-one model (Dyadic model) of mentoring is very rare. The critical success factors in implementing these innovative collaborative models include; a commitment from all the parties involved, mutual trust, confidentiality, rapport amongst circle or network members and voluntary attendance. It should be seen as one of the many developmental activities undertaken to strengthen higher education.

KEYWORDS: Collaborative mentoring, Group mentoring, Higher education institutions, Mentoring, mentoring circles, Network mentoring.

INTRODUCTION: As T. A. Scandura and R.E.Viator¹ postulate, mentoring has been a focus for individual career development since the mid - 1980s when researchers as well as human resource managers started paying attention to the benefits derived out of this whole exercise¹⁵. Research has shown that successful mentoring relationships can assist individuals in learning the ropes at an organization; increase career satisfaction, salaries and influence in the organization; and decrease turnover rates. But over the years, the concept and meaning of mentoring has changed dramatically due to dramatic changes in the job environment. The presumed meaning of mentoring in higher education institutions as a one-to-one relationship between a senior faculty and a junior faculty of the same institution has expanded to include different types of relationships. Researchers in higher