

MENTORING IN NIGERIAN HIGHER EDUCATION: DUAL ROLES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT: Mentoring in Nigerian higher education institutions is crucial for academic and professional development, yet it can also become a source of exploitation. The dual character of academic mentoring—where mentors act as either opportunistic tormentors or supportive guides—is investigated in this paper. Examining both the favourable effects of mentoring on research output and the negative consequences of exploitative methods on mentees' well-being using Social Exchange Theory as a framework, the paper shows weaknesses in formalised mentorship systems that let unethical behaviour continue. Using case studies and flow charts, this paper shows typical "tormenting" behaviours in mentoring. Results imply that Nigerian colleges have to put in place disciplined, moral mentoring programs and responsibility systems to provide a balanced intellectual environment fit for development.

Keywords: Mentoring, Tormentors, Development, Implications, Higher Institutions

INTRODUCTION

Mentoring is essential for the academic growth of individuals in higher education institutions. Within Nigerian higher institutions, the nature of mentoring relationships exhibits a range of dynamics. Certain individuals assume the role of mentors, providing support and guidance to their mentees, while others adopt the role of tormentors, imposing detrimental impacts that impede academic advancement. Mentoring is a relationship where an experienced individual provides guidance (the mentor), assistance, and counsel to a less experienced or knowing person (the mentee) to foster their personal or professional development. Mentoring entails imparting knowledge, expertise, and resources while providing motivation and valuable criticism to assist the mentee in overcoming obstacles, establishing objectives, and attaining triumph in their pursuits.

Tormenting, on the other hand, refers to behaviour that involves causing distress, harm, or suffering to another individual. In mentoring relationships, it relates to a mentor or peer engaging in acts or behaviours that undermine, criticize, exploit, or mistreat the mentee. Tormenting encompasses a range of behaviours, such as verbal abuse, intimidation, manipulation, discrimination, or exclusion. These actions can have negative consequences on the well-being, self-esteem, and academic or professional growth of the person being targeted.

Mentoring in Nigerian higher education operates within a context shaped by cultural hierarchies, limited resources, and a lack of institutional oversight. These unique challenges amplify the potential for mentoring relationships to become exploitative. While mentoring is widely recognised as a tool for academic and professional development, in Nigeria, mentors sometimes serve dual roles: as supportive guides or as exploitative "tormentors."

This paper investigates these dual mentoring roles and their implications for academic development, drawing on Social Exchange Theory and Power Dependency Theory to analyse the mentor-mentee relationship. By examining case studies from Nigerian universities, this study aims to highlight institutional gaps and recommend structured, ethical policies to enhance mentoring practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Promoting research output and raising educational quality depends heavily on academic mentoring. Mentoring helps close the discrepancy between student learning and professional growth, therefore supporting quality assurance in teacher education, according to the study by Ekechukwu & Horsfall (2015). They also underlined, nonetheless, the requirement of institutions formalising mentoring initiatives and offering explicit policies to stop variations in practice.

Career-oriented mentoring improves students' employability and provides graduates with practical skills. To increase employability, a 2020 Okolie et al. study looked at how career training with mentorship (CTM) programs had been included in Nigerian universities. The study also found that many initiatives were applied unevenly, leading to inadequate results.

Career advancement, research teamwork, and academic staff skill improvement all depend on mentoring. Okurame (2008) used qualitative and quantitative tools to study mentoring experiences and obstacles among 48 faculty members in a Nigerian university's social science department. Though small and unofficial, mentorship relationships—where mentors assigned duties, invited protégés to conferences and included them in research projects—often evolved based on shared research interests.

Mentors mostly assisted protégés in joining research networks, providing guidance on publications, counselling, and occasionally financial assistance. Several obstacles hampered good mentoring: junior staff members' seeming lack of response, mentors' onerous administrative responsibilities, limited financial resources, and a lack of official mentoring systems. These results imply that administrative support, formalised policies, and mentoring training could raise academic progress and mentoring effectiveness.

Mentoring improves institutional performance, particularly in terms of matching research aims with academic growth. Examining mentoring practices at the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Abiodun-Oyebanji and Oyedeji (2021) found that mentoring interactions strengthen academic networks and, hence, enhance institutional performance through knowledge exchange.

Poor mentorship systems sometimes impede knowledge management initiatives in Nigerian educational institutions. Iyoha and Igbinedion (2022) contend that inadequate institutional structures and a dearth of formalised mentoring models continue to underutilise mentoring programs as knowledge-sharing mechanisms.

According to Afolabi et al. (2015), mentoring is not a new concept among academic staff, but it has since been revitalised in Nigerian institutions. Mentoring at Nigerian institutions is designed to improve academic standards and compete favourably with their counterparts in the rest of the industrialised nations, the researchers further added.

Experiences of negative mentoring might lead to psychological stress and lower academic drive. According to Okurame (2008), mentees subjected to bad mentoring—that is, emotional abuse, favouritism, or neglect—have poor mental health and fewer future employment opportunities.

Osezua's 2016 study on gender-related issues in academic mentoring revealed that cultural expectations and gender prejudices at Nigerian institutions cause female mentees often more difficulties than their male counterparts. This shows how urgently institutions should implement mentoring programs with gender sensitivity.

Recent global studies offer valuable insights into the dynamics of mentoring in higher education, underscoring its significance in academic and professional development. These studies provide a comparative framework to understand the unique challenges faced by Nigerian institutions.

Global Perspectives on Mentoring

Lunsford et al. (2017) highlight how transforming structured mentorship programs in higher education could be. Their results show that institutional systems promoting mentorship greatly improve student performance, research partnerships, and general academic happiness. These kinds of methods help mentees to have fair access to resources and reduce the possibilities of exploitation.

Likewise, in a comprehensive assessment of mentoring programs, Abelha et al. (2020) show how competency-based mentoring increases graduate employability worldwide. These programs equip mentees for job success by closing the gap between academic theory and labour market needs, therefore promoting innovation and flexibility.

By challenging conventional models and supporting culturally sensitive and inclusive practices, Mullen and Klimaitis (2021) present a more comprehensive study of several mentoring strategies. Their work highlights the need to change mentoring approaches to fit the particular requirements of mentees in different institutional and cultural environments.

Collier (2017) emphasises the success of peer mentorship, especially in improving academic achievement and student retention rates. In cultural settings where hierarchical systems could restrict the efficacy of conventional mentor-mentee interactions, this strategy is very helpful.

Crisp et al. (2017) further this conversation by examining how academic performance in undergraduate programs relates to mentorship strategies. Their studies support changing mentorship structures to meet different cultural norms, guaranteeing inclusion and mutual benefit for all participants.

Distinctiveness of Nigerian Mentoring Dynamics

While global studies show the advantages of organised programs, institutional and cultural settings determine Nigerian mentoring dynamics. As Okurame (2018) describes, the hierarchical structure of Nigerian academia often results in exploitative behaviour whereby mentors could put personal benefit above the academic development of mentees. Furthermore, Iyoha and Igbiniedion (2022) underline that mentorship in Nigeria is generally informal, lacking

clear norms and accountability procedures, which lets exploitative activities, including workload overloading and favouritism, continue uncontrolled.

Theoretical Framework

1. Social Exchange Theory (SET)

Social Exchange Theory argues that when both sides perceive mutual advantage, partnerships endure. In mentoring, the mentee supplies effort, loyalty, and learning while the mentor contributes direction, experience, and support. However, disparities can develop, which would cause mentors to mistreat mentees. According to Okurame (2008), mentees suffer when mentors exploit this relationship to prioritise personal benefit, so stressing the need for official laws to control these interactions in Nigerian academia.

2. Power Dependency Theory (PDT)

Power Dependency Theory investigates the power relations in mentoring more especially. It implies that people or groups with less power depend more on those with more authority, which can lead to a basis for exploitation. Under academic mentoring, mentees frequently rely on their mentors for career advancement, academic resources, and research direction. According to Morley (2013), this power disparity in Nigerian academia often leads to exploitative interactions, particularly in cases where mentors use their authority to further personal interests. PDT offers an understanding of why some mentors in Nigerian institutions could be "tormentors," using their position to enforce unethical behaviour free from institutional responsibility.

3. Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory stresses a leadership style in which mentors encourage and motivate their mentees to realise their potential. This theory highlights the traits of excellent mentors who act as role models, fostering academic freedom and innovation, thus contrasting the exploitative mentoring method. Using transformational leadership ideas in Nigerian mentoring, Morley (2013) contends, can help to close power disparities, advance moral behaviour, and empower mentees. By helping Nigerian mentors see their part in the whole growth of their mentees, training in transformational leadership could help foster academic output and a respectful atmosphere.

METHODOLOGY

This paper investigates the twin functions of mentorship in Nigerian higher education using a conceptual framework. Rather than conducting primary research, the study relies on a systematic review of existing literature, theoretical frameworks, and secondary data.

Literature Review and Theoretical Analysis

Drawing conclusions from empirical studies and scholarly publications, the research synthesises results from worldwide and Nigerian studies on mentoring to evaluate mentoring dynamics. Social Exchange Theory and Power Dependency Theory were chosen as analytical frameworks to grasp the hierarchical and reciprocal elements of mentoring relationships. These

ideas offer a framework for analysing how mentoring relationships change and how imbalances could result in exploitative behaviours.

Selection of Case Study Institutions

Two universities—the University of Port Harcourt and Landmark University, Omu-Aran, were purposively selected based on their documented mentoring programs and accessibility to participants. These institutions were chosen to represent diverse educational settings, encompassing both public (University of Port Harcourt) and private (Landmark University) higher education systems in Nigeria.

Data Collection

Data were collected through two main methods:

1. **Semi-Structured Interviews:** A total of 15 participants were interviewed, comprising graduate and undergraduate students as well as male and female faculty members. This diverse participant pool was intended to capture a wide range of experiences and perspectives on mentoring. The interviews focused on:
 - The nature and structure of mentoring relationships.
 - Perceived benefits and challenges of mentorship.
 - Instances of exploitative or unethical practices in mentoring.
 - Recommendations for improving mentoring systems.

Analytical Framework

Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns and key themes from the interview data and document analysis. The findings were then interpreted using two theoretical frameworks:

- **Social Exchange Theory (SET):** To examine how reciprocity and benefit-sharing shape mentoring relationships.
- **Power Dependency Theory (PDT):** To analyse how hierarchical structures and dependency dynamics affect the mentor-mentee interaction, particularly in cases of exploitative practices.

Ethical Considerations

All participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Informed consent was obtained before data collection, and institutional approval was secured to ensure ethical compliance.

Prevalence of Exploitative Mentoring Practices in Nigeria

Though largely understudied, exploitative mentoring programs in Nigeria pose major difficulties, especially in the academic, business, and apprenticeship fields. These behaviours are characterised by an unbalanced connection whereby mentors use mentees for their benefit, usually under the cover of offering chances for career or skill development (Onyia & Asikhia,

2019). Several studies expose the frequency and expressions of exploitative mentorship in Nigeria's socioeconomic scene.

In academia, exploitative mentoring sometimes involves too demanding activities for mentees, like ones unrelated to academic progress, which might hinder actual skill development (Ajake et al., 2014). According to research, informal mentoring methods predominate in Nigerian institutions, therefore establishing informal hierarchies and situations whereby mentoring interactions are vulnerable to personal prejudices and exploitation (Aina-Pelemo & Olujobi, 2024). Moreover, sexual exploitation has been observed in religious mentorships, therefore underscoring the vulnerability of mentees to mentors who use their positions of authority for personal benefit (Afunugo & Molokwu, 2024).

Furthermore, research on librarians in the library and information sciences sectors reveals that mentoring relationships could exploit mentees by assigning them demanding responsibilities unrelated to professional growth (Enakriri et al., 2022). While mentoring is meant to help mentees advance their careers, exploitative aspects reduce the value of these connections and cause mentees to be reluctant to participate in more mentoring prospects.

Thus, exploitative mentoring in Nigeria influences many areas, so hindering career advancement and development for mentees and implying a need for uniform mentoring techniques that give mutual respect and support a top priority. Improved supervision and more transparent mentoring systems in Nigeria could help to solve these problems by promoting moral and positive mentoring relationships.

Illustrative Cases of Tormenting in Mentorship

- **Excessive Workload and Academic Neglect:** Joining a Nigerian university department, a junior academic is assigned to work under a senior faculty member in a mentoring program. The senior professor first gives direction on research techniques and asks the mentee to watch their presentations. Over time, though, the mentor starts giving the mentee administrative duties such as departmental correspondence, slide preparation, and assignment marking. These duties take a lot of time and provide little space for the mentee's academic interests unrelated to her studies. The mentee feels overloaded and unsupported since their non-academic obligations cause them to lag in their research and coursework. The mentee's lack of development frustrates, lowers confidence, and increases concern about approaching academic deadlines. However, the mentee is reluctant to speak up because of the power disparity and concern about consequences, including missing networking events or bad academic recommendations.
- **Academic Favouritism and Resource Withholding:** A professor in a graduate school mentors multiple students, but depending on personal prejudices like colour or gender, she routinely favours some mentees over others. These selected mentees have first access to academic resources, including publishing chances, conference attendance, and research funds. Other group mentees are deprived of these chances and do not get the same amount of direction or mentoring in the meantime. Realising they are not getting the same help to progress academically; the excluded mentees develop emotions of loneliness and frustration. They struggle to publish, go to conferences, or interact with the scholarly community without means of resources. This favouritism results in a poisonous mentoring atmosphere that only a few chosen

mentees gain, depriving others of opportunities and demoralising them against academics.

- **Intellectual Exploitation and Lack of Recognition:** A graduate student working on a collaborative project with a professor finds that, after completing significant parts of the research, the professor publishes the work without giving the student proper credit or authorship. The professor minimises the mentee's contributions, even if they are quite significant, and leverages their position to assert exclusive authorship. The professor argues that this is normal when the mentee expresses worries and that crediting students might not be suitable at their present level. The mentee is demoralised and feels exploited since they know their intellectual talents and hard effort were taken use. This encounter not only prevents the mentee from helping more with research but also damages their impression of academia generally. The mentee loses drive and doubts their academic objectives without institutional support to challenge such activities.
- **Gender-Based Discrimination in Mentorship:** A female junior faculty member is assigned to a senior male mentor. The mentor regularly undermines her research ideas, interrupts her in meetings, and treats male mentees preferentially. When she suggests her study subjects, the mentor usually writes them off as lacking discipline. She finds it difficult to get recognition in her field as the mentor does not give her male colleagues the same degree of encouragement and networking chances he presents. Low self-esteem and self-doubt drive the female mentee to feel demoralised and underappreciated. This gender-based prejudice makes the surroundings unpleasant and lowers her participation in intellectual events. She might eventually think about quitting academia since she feels limited and unsupported in her professional development. This case emphasises the need to put gender-sensitive mentoring programs into action to stop discriminating behaviours.
- **Emotional Manipulation and Dependency:** A professor subtly fosters an emotional dependency in a mentee by consistently undermining their confidence and framing the mentee's academic success as entirely dependent on the professor's guidance. The professor writes out any mentee's autonomous ideas as naïve. The mentee grows more dependent on the mentor for approval over time since he is unable to make academic decisions by himself.

This kind of emotional manipulation undercuts the mentee's academic autonomy and confidence, therefore strengthening the power disparity. The mentee starts to hesitate to investigate uncharted territory alone or question accepted wisdom. This reliance stunts the mentee's intellectual development and reduces their capacity to create a distinctive academic identity. Such events highlight the need for mentoring programs that stress mentee autonomy and confidence-building.

The following flowchart illustrates the typical progression of a mentoring relationship, moving from first support to exploitative behaviour. It demonstrates how mentors who start as guides could turn into "tormentors," progressively assigning non-academic chores, exercising too much influence, and finally impeding the mentee's academic and professional growth.

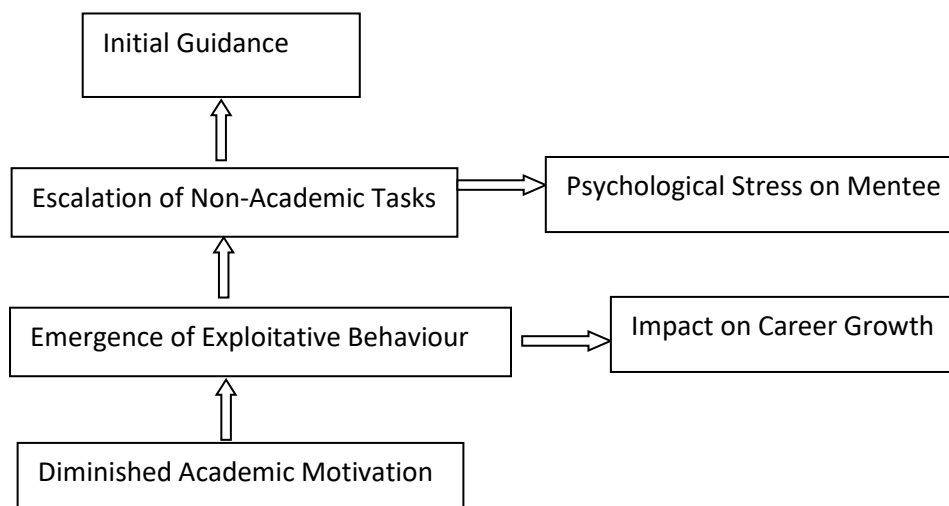


Fig 1: Flowchart of Mentorship Dynamics

Positive Mentorship as a Catalyst for Academic Growth in Nigerian Institutions

Positive mentoring has shown to be a very effective tool for promoting academic progress in Nigerian educational institutions, thereby improving staff and student personal development as well. Mentors provide direction, support, and tools that help mentees fulfil their potential, therefore fostering critical thinking, self-confidence, and increased academic performance (Ehinola & Akomolafe, 2022). Particularly in Nigeria, school-based mentoring initiatives have proven rather helpful in improving student involvement and learning results by utilizing organised chances for mentor-mentee interactions targeted at both academic and personal development (Adewale & Adebayo, 2020).

Mentoring has also been connected in Nigerian institutions to improve research output and professional growth for early-career academics. A study at Obafemi Awolowo University found that mentorship helps early-career employees develop research skills necessary for academic achievement and advancement (Afolabi et al., 2015). Through this cooperative approach to academic mentoring, mentees feel empowered to pursue creative research, therefore enhancing the academic scene.

For the development of human capital inside Nigerian institutions, the mentoring approach has especially helped. Supporting skill development and offering role models helps mentors create a new generation of leaders capable of driving national economic and educational growth (Fapohunda, 2011).

Furthermore, greatly helping to address the gender disparity in academic success are mentoring initiatives within Nigerian universities. For instance, mentoring women has helped staff members and female students to participate more actively in academia, hence promoting gender inclusiveness in Nigerian higher education (Aina-Pelemo & Olujobi, 2024).

Therefore, good mentoring in Nigerian academic institutions may be seen as the pillar of educational development since it helps mentees not only to achieve academic success but also to grow leaders necessary for society's development. Nonetheless, the full possibilities of mentoring as a tool for development can only be reached if organised, regular, and encouraging mentoring programs are embraced everywhere among Nigerian educational institutions.

Institutional Gaps and Lack of Formal Policies

In Nigerian higher education, institutional gaps and the absence of official policies have had a major influence on the sector, leading to poor control, differences in educational quality, and difficulties in reaching coherent educational standards. Weak policy frameworks, limited resources, and inconsistent norms among institutions are among the several ways these weaknesses show themselves. Clear rules on academic mentoring, faculty development, and research funding would help to provide consistent support networks for faculty members as well as for students (Anyamele, 2004).

Furthermore, the Nigerian educational system has a serious policy implementation issue, mostly resulting from political unrest and inadequate government support of educational changes (Moja, 2000). Policy contradictions affect institutions' performance and global reputation by influencing the distribution of resources and undermining attempts to create quality control policies (Okoroma, 2006).

Many institutions unable to provide sufficient teaching facilities or preserve infrastructure have resulted from the absence of organised policies for curriculum creation, resource allocation, and institutional responsibility (Aka & Onoyima, 2023). Furthermore, since colleges struggle to match their courses with industry needs, the neglect to enforce current policies essentially impedes attempts to reduce skill gaps and solve employability problems among graduates (Aleru, 2023).

Particularly troubling is the lack of consistent mentoring rules since they restrict organised direction for junior faculty members and students, impeding academic progress and research output (Materu, 2007). Formal mentoring programs could provide structures for professional growth, resource sharing, and teamwork, therefore addressing some of the institutional shortcomings.

Integrating Theoretical Frameworks

Social Exchange Theory (SET) discusses the reciprocal dynamics of worldwide mentoring practices, wherein both mentors and mentees derive mutual benefits from organised connections. In Nigerian academia, reciprocity frequently deteriorates due to institutional imbalances, consistent with the Power Dependency Theory, which discusses how mentees' reliance on mentors for academic resources fosters potential for exploitation. Global mentoring systems with regulatory oversight could exemplify reform paradigms for Nigeria.

DISCUSSION

This study emphasises the two purposes mentorship serves in Nigerian higher education: it can be a source of exploitation as well as a developmental instrument. The results are analysed using Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Power Dependency Theory (PDT), therefore offering a complex knowledge of mentorship dynamics in Nigerian institutions.

Positive Mentoring Practices

When done correctly, mentoring greatly accelerates professional and academic progress. Effective mentors, according to participants, guided research methods, academic network access, and emotional support during trying times. These results line up with global viewpoints,

including those by Lunsford et al. (2017) and Mullen and Klimaitis (2021), who underlined how organised mentoring initiatives inspire creativity and empower mentees. Particularly at Landmark University, mentoring programs were noted at Nigerian institutions to foster cooperation, increase publishing output, and raise student employability.

Social Exchange Theory holds that reciprocity and mutual benefit define the success of these interactions. Those who made investments in their mentees often expressed delight from the achievements of their protégés, therefore fostering a good cycle of support. This emphasises the need of colleges establishing mentoring systems to guarantee responsibilities and expectations are clear.

Negative Mentoring Dynamics

On the other hand, the investigation turned several cases when mentors turned into "tormentors," using their subordinates for personal benefit. Common exploitative methods included assigning non-academic chores, ignoring academic contributions, and demanding personal favours utilising power disparities. These results align with reports by Okurame (2018), who observed comparable trends of exploitation in unofficial mentorship relationships inside Nigerian academia.

A prism through which one could see these exploitative behaviours is the Power Dependency Theory. Some mentors take advantage of the power imbalance of the mentees' reliance on them for academic resources, professional development, and recommendations. In Nigeria, where institutional supervision of mentoring relationships is sometimes absent, this hierarchical dependency is especially noticeable.

Implications for Academic Development

Academic growth in Nigerian higher education is largely affected by the absence of official policies and current institutional weaknesses. In fields like research assistance, mentoring programs, and resource distribution, institutions run against obstacles that restrict the possibility of academic development absent organised procedures. Inappropriate policy execution compromises uniformity in educational standards, therefore generating further differences in quality between institutions (Anyamele, 2004). Studies show that universities' ability to satisfy both local and international academic requirements is hampered by unequal funding distribution and inadequate infrastructure assistance (Aluede et al., 2012).

The field of faculty development and retention bears still another important consequence of these disparities. Research productivity and teaching quality suffer because many Nigerian institutions lack defined systems for career advancement and growth for academic staff (Joseph et. al, 2023). These shortcomings sometimes deter faculty members from conducting creative research or participating actively in academic mentoring, therefore undermining the atmosphere in which student development might flourish.

Particularly the lack of official mentoring rules has left students without organised direction, which influences the calibre of their academic and professional education. Promoting good mentor-mentee relationships and improving academic results depend on standardised mentoring systems (Onoyima, 2023). The lack of these systems in Nigerian universities results in very informal mentoring practices, which might lead to unfair access to academic help and developmental possibilities.

Moreover, inadequate policy frameworks also limit the capacity of Nigerian higher education institutions to solve the gender gap in academic leadership, restricting support networks for female academics and students (Igiebor, 2021). This disparity compromises initiatives to establish inclusive learning settings that support the academic and professional progress of every student. Therefore, there is a great demand for Nigerian legislators to give the creation of official policies addressing these important areas top priority to create a fairer and more efficient academic scene.

The results highlight the need for organised mentoring programs as well as the necessity of correcting systematic power disparities in Nigerian higher education. Grounding the conversation in Social Exchange and Power Dependency Theories helps this study establish a theoretical framework for comprehending the complexity of mentoring relationships and gives reformable suggestions.

CONCLUSION

This study emphasises the two purposes mentorship serves in Nigerian higher education: a growth tool and a possible source of exploitation. Good mentoring improves research output, supports academic and professional development, and shapes the following generation of leaders and researchers. However, the predominance of exploitative behaviours driven by unofficial and uncontrolled mentoring networks compromises these advantages, thereby erasing mentee confidence, academic inspiration, and long-term professional goals.

The results show that institutional shortcomings including the lack of formal mentorship procedures, unfair financial distribution, and poor infrastructure seriously impede academic advancement in Nigerian universities. Particularly for female academics and students, these structural disparities create an environment where exploitative mentorship thrives, hence aggravating inequality in access to academic resources and opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address these challenges, this study proposes the following actionable steps:

- 1. Establish Formal Mentoring Policies:** Nigerian institutions should implement organized mentoring systems that specify exact roles for mentors and mentees. Policies should have ethical standards and responsibility systems to guarantee justice and openness.
- 2. Implement Mandatory Mentorship Training:** In mentor-mentee interactions, training courses should centre on ethical mentoring techniques, power dynamics, and approaches to fostering mutual respect. Particularly focused attention should be on gender-sensitive strategies to correct current inequalities.
- 3. Introduce Feedback and Evaluation Mechanisms:** Establishing anonymous reporting tools for mentees will help institutions guarantee that exploitative behaviours may be found and corrected by sharing of experience. Frequent assessments of mentoring initiatives help to gauge their success and point up areas that can want development.
- 4. Increase Institutional Support for Mentorship:** Universities should set aside funds for mentoring programs comprising training courses and cooperative research projects. Apart from that, one should try to solve unequal resource allocation and upgrade infrastructure.

Dealing with these problems not only improves personal performance but also helps to create fair and effective learning environments. Nigerian institutions should position themselves as competitive players in the worldwide higher education scene by giving organised mentoring systems priority, therefore matching with global best standards. A strong academic ecosystem supporting invention, inclusion, and excellence depends on effective mentoring.

All things considered; mentoring has great power to change Nigerian higher education. Realising this potential, nevertheless, calls for institutional dedication to moral behaviour, organised policies, and fair allocation of resources. Through these changes, Nigerian colleges may empower mentees, increase teacher capacity, and propel academic and professional achievement across the board.

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