



PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS REGARDING MENTORING

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Abstract

A teacher is not just a disseminator of knowledge but the one who brings about positive transformation in learners. In this sense a teacher transcends the narrow role of completing the prescribed course work to becoming a Mentor. The present scenario has become very challenging and competitive due to the ever-increasing demands of the knowledge society. The realm of education is ever expanding. New knowledge is continuously pouring into every discipline. This knowledge explosion is also blurring the boundaries of disciplines. All these factors have necessitated both a broader, more sophisticated notion of mentoring, and a heightened recognition of its vital role in the preparation of the next generation's intellectual leaders, both within and beyond the institution. The study was conducted on teachers of Higher Education to know their perception regarding Mentoring and its types. It is seen from the study that a training in Mentoring would go a long way to enhance the process. Also institutions would need to plan and structure the Mentoring process by selecting the suitable type of Mentoring. The study attempts to throw light on the same.

Key words: *Mentoring, Types of Mentoring, Soft and Hard disciplines, Higher Education Institutions.*

Introduction:

Education leads to the all-round development of a personality. It includes the development of cognitive skills, affective behaviour and psychomotor acumen. In the process of undergoing the transformation in all three realms, a student faces many physical and psychological hurdles. This necessitates a support system for the students to help them tide over any explicit or implicit problems that come their way. Hence the need for a mentor in the educational process of a student. A systematic and structured Mentoring system would be needed in educational institutions, if they have student welfare as part of their vision and mission.

What is Mentoring:

Mentoring is a term generally used to describe a relationship between a less experienced individual, called a mentee or protégé, and a more experienced individual known as a mentor. Traditionally, mentoring is viewed as a dyadic, face-to-face, long-term relationship between a supervisory adult and a novice student that fosters the mentee's professional, academic, or personal development (Donaldson, Ensher, & Grant-Vallone, 2000). A mentor serves as a

trusted counselor, advisor, role model, and teacher. He or she is paired with a mentee for purposes of professional and personal development

A mentor performs various roles such as;

- A Disciplinary Guide
- Skills development Consultant
- A Reflective Practitioner
- A Professional and Psychological Support

Types of Mentoring:

There are different types of Mentoring that can be used in Higher education Institutions. Some of them are as follows;

1. Individual vs. Group Mentoring – Mentors may either mentor the students individually on one-on-one basis or in groups.
2. Teacher Mentoring vs. Peer Mentoring – When Teachers solely provide mentoring to students on various issues it is called teacher mentoring. Peer mentoring would imply senior students playing the role of mentors to the juniors.
3. Generic Mentoring vs. Theme-based Mentoring – Generic mentoring implies that which is done without any specific theme and can be done in general with any group of students. On the other hand, theme-based mentoring implies that which is organized on specific themes that are relevant to the context and situation.
4. E-Mentoring vs. Face-to-face Mentoring – E-mentoring implies that which is done online, without direct contact with the mentee. Face-to-face mentoring implies the one that is done offline directly with the mentees.

Variables of the Study:

The Independent variable of the study was Mentoring and its types. The Dependent Variable was Perception of teachers of Higher education and the academic disciplines namely soft (arts subjects) and hard (Mathematics, Commerce and Science) that the teachers belonged to.

Objectives:

The following objectives were framed for the study;

1. To ascertain the perception of teachers of higher education regarding Mentoring.
2. To find out the difference in the perception regarding Mentoring as perceived by teachers of higher education belonging to different academic disciplines.
3. To find out the type of Mentoring that would be useful for students of higher education.

Hypothesis:

The following null hypotheses were framed for the study;

1. The teachers of higher education institutions do not perceive mentoring as feasible to be practiced in HEIs.
2. There is no significant difference between the perception of teachers of higher education belonging to the soft disciplines and hard disciplines regarding the feasibility of using Mentoring in HEIs.
3. There is no significant difference between the suitability of individual mentoring and group mentoring, as perceived by teachers of higher education.
4. There is no significant difference between the suitability of teacher-mentoring and peer-mentoring, as perceived by teachers of higher education.
5. There is no significant difference between the suitability of theme-based mentoring and generic mentoring, as perceived by teachers of higher education.
6. There is no significant difference between the suitability of face-to-face mentoring and e-mentoring, as perceived by teachers of higher education.

Sample:

An available sample of 74 teachers of higher education across Mumbai were considered for the study.

Tools Used For the Study:

The tools used for the study were as follows;

Perception Regarding Mentoring – This comprises the following;

- i. Perception regarding the Feasibility of using Mentoring in Higher education Institutions: This is a 4-point Likert Scale with 10 items in all. The details of the scale are as follows;

Table 1 Rating Scale Scoring

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Positive	4	3	2	1
Negative	1	2	3	4

- ii. A Rating Scale regarding types of Mentoring, in which the teachers had to rate each type out of 5, where 5 is the highest score of suitability and 1 is the least score of suitability.

Method of Study:

The Descriptive Survey Method was used for the study.

Data Collection:

The data was collected in the following manner;

- i. A pretest was conducted regarding perception of Mentoring, but not on the types of Mentoring.
- ii. A six-day Course was conducted on Mentoring and its various facets.
- iii. A posttest was conducted on the perception of Mentoring.
- iv. The Rating scale on the types of Mentoring was also administered to the teachers.

Data Analysis:

The data was analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation, Graphs and t-test.

1. Analysis of Perception regarding the Feasibility of using Mentoring in Higher education Institutions:

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of the Scores on Pretest and Posttest on Perception Regarding the Feasibility of Using Mentoring In Higher Education Institutions (Heis)

Perception regarding feasibility Of using Mentoring in HEIs	N	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Pretest	74	22	10.8
Posttest	74	34	11.6

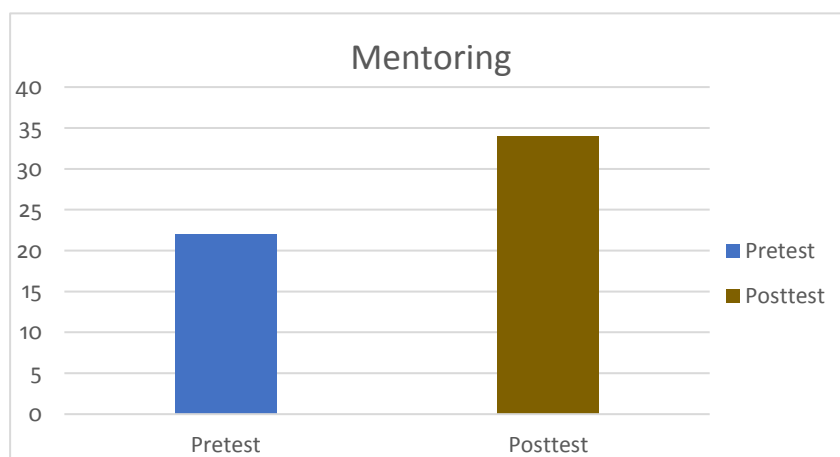


Figure 1 Mean Scores Obtained On Pretest and Posttest on Perception Regarding the Feasibility of Using Mentoring In Higher Education Institutions (HEIS)

Testing Hypothesis 1:

Hypothesis 1 states: The teachers of higher education institutions do not perceive mentoring as feasible to be practiced in HEIs.

The following table shows the comparison of Means obtained on the perception regarding the feasibility of using mentoring in higher education institutions (HEIs) and the Level of significance of the t-value.

Table 3
Comparison of Means of the Scores on Pretest and Posttest on Perception Regarding the Feasibility of Using Mentoring In Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Sr. No.	Perception regarding feasibility of using Mentoring in HEIs	Mean	SD	Obtained t-value	t-value at df= 73 at 0.01 and 0.05 level	Level of Significance
1	Pretest	22	10.8	6.52	0.01 level – 2.65	Significant at 0.01 level
2	Posttest	34	11.6		0.05 level – 2.00	

Conclusion: It can be concluded from Table 3 that the Hypothesis is rejected. Mentoring has been perceived favourably to be applied in Higher Education Institutions after the 6-day Course on Mentoring.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics Of The Scores On Perception Regarding the Feasibility of Using Mentoring In Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) Based on the Academic Disciplines Of The Teachers.

Perception of teachers about Mentoring based on their academic disciplines	N	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Soft Disciplines	40	37	10.5
Hard Disciplines	34	31	11.6



Figure 2 Mean Scores Obtained On The Perception Regarding The Feasibility Of Using Mentoring In Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) Based On The Academic Disciplines Of The Teachers.

Testing Hypothesis 2:

Hypothesis 2 states: There is no significant difference between the perception of teachers of higher education belonging to the soft disciplines and hard disciplines regarding the feasibility of using Mentoring in HEIs.

The following table shows the comparison of Means obtained on the perception regarding the feasibility of using mentoring in higher education institutions (HEIs) on the basis of their academic disciplines and the Level of significance of the t-value.

Table 5 Comparison Of Means Of The Scores Mean Scores Obtained On The Perception Regarding The Feasibility Of Using Mentoring In Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) Based On The Academic Disciplines Of The Teachers.

Sr. No.	Perception of teachers about Mentoring based on their academic disciplines	Mean	SD	Obtained t-value	t-value at df= 52 level	Level of Significance at 0.01 and 0.05 level
1	Soft Disciplines (N=40)	37	10.5	2.32	0.01 level	Significant at 0.05 level
2	Hard Disciplines (N= 34)	31	11.6		2.00	

Conclusion: It can be concluded from Table 5 that the hypothesis 2 is rejected, The teachers from the soft disciplines perceive Mentoring to be more feasible to be used in Higher Education Institutions.

2. Analysis of Scores on Perception regarding the types of Mentoring:

Table 6 Perception Regarding the Suitability of the Different Types of Mentoring In Higher Education Institutions.

Sr. No.	Types of Mentoring	Mean	SD
1	Individual	4.08	2.34
	Group	4.20	2.53
2	Teacher	4.26	2.16
	Peer	4.31	2.23
3	Generic	3.46	3.12
	Theme-based	4.76	4.02
4	E-mentoring	4.56	3.19
	Face-to-face	4.82	3.98

Testing Hypotheses 3, 4, 5 and 6:

The hypotheses are stated as follows;

3. There is no significant difference between the suitability of individual mentoring and group mentoring, as perceived by teachers of higher education.
4. There is no significant difference between the suitability of teacher-mentoring and peer-mentoring, as perceived by teachers of higher education.
5. There is no significant difference between the suitability of theme-based mentoring and generic mentoring, as perceived by teachers of higher education.
6. There is no significant difference between the suitability of face-to-face mentoring and e-mentoring, as perceived by teachers of higher education.

The following table shows the comparison of Means obtained on the perception regarding the types of Mentoring that can be used in higher education institutions (HEIs) and the Level of significance of the t-values.

Table 7 Comparison of Means of the Scores Mean Scores Obtained On the Perception Regarding the Suitability Of The Different Types Of Mentoring For HEIs

Sr. No.	Suitability of different Types of mentoring	Mean	SD	Obtained t-value	t-value at df= 52 at 0.01 and 0.05 level	Level of Significance
1	Individual	4.08	2.34	0.3		Not Significant
	Group	4.20	2.53			
2	Teacher	4.26	2.16	0.14	0.01 level – 2.65	Not Significant
	Peer	4.31	2.23			
3	Generic	3.46	3.12	3.89	0.05 level – 2.00	Significant at 0.01 level
	Theme-based	4.76	4.02			
4	E-mentoring	4.56	3.19	0.44		Not Significant
	Face-to-face	4.82	3.98			

Conclusion: It can be concluded from Table 7 that;

Hypotheses 3, 4 and 6 have been accepted. Hypothesis 5 has been rejected. Theme based Mentoring is perceived to be significantly more suitable for Higher Education Institutions than Generic Mentoring.

FINDINGS:

The findings of the study are as follows;

1. Teachers of HEIs significantly perceive Mentoring favourably to be applied in their institutions. This change is seen after the 6-day course on Mentoring. This shows that teachers should be provided with thorough understanding of mentoring before even starting the programme in the institution.
2. Teachers from soft disciplines perceive Mentoring significantly more feasible to be applied in HEIs than the teachers from hard disciplines.
3. The teachers have perceived that the following types are equally necessary in HEI's;
 - Individual Mentoring and Group Mentoring
 - Teacher Mentoring and Peer Mentoring
 - E-Mentoring and Face-to-face Mentoring
4. Teachers significantly prefer Theme-based Mentoring over Generic Mentoring, probably because it is more focused and structured.

Conclusion:

Mentoring is essential for students of HEIs, however, teachers who are to be Mentors require training in how to conduct the same. Well trained Mentors would be able to provide the

necessary guidance to the mentees and lead them towards holistic development. In order to institutionalize Mentoring, teachers would have to decide the type of Mentoring that needs to be adopted based on the context and the situation.

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