



THE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF MENTORING PROGRAMME FOR FACULTY MEMBERS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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PRATIBHA BUNDELA GUPTA, AND B. L. GUPTA

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Abstract

The higher education institutions are being reengineered to implement the provisions of the national education policy 2020. There is a need to develop the capacity, capability, and confidence of faculty members to effectively implement the provisions of national education policy.

Objective: To evolve components of a mentoring programme for faculty members of higher education institutions in the context of the national education policy 2020.

Method: Phenomenological research study using researchers designed research instrument was conducted on 525 principals, heads of the departments, and faculty members of higher education institutions of the country.

Key results: A validated goals of the mentoring program, criteria for selecting the mentors, mentees, characteristics of mentors, mentoring processes and methods, barriers to mentoring, outcomes of mentoring, conditions for mentoring, limitations of mentoring, and a wholistic mentoring model is evolved.

Conclusion: The mentoring programme is evolved in the context of reengineering of higher education taking place in the country.

Implication: The heads of the higher education institutions can design and implement a mentoring program using the evolved model in the current study for their institutions to develop the capacity, capability, and confidence to design and implement reforms and innovations as envisaged in the national education policy 2020.

Relevance of the study: The mentoring programme is significantly relevant to higher education institutions as it has evolved in the context of national education policy 2020. The mentoring programme components will guide the mentoring programs of higher education institutions in the present and future as it is based on educational reforms.

Keywords: Mentoring programme, goals of the mentoring programme, criteria for selecting the mentors, characteristics of a mentor, mentoring processes, types of mentoring, barriers to mentoring, mentoring outcomes

1. RATIONALE

Higher education institutions will re-engineer their models and processes to achieve accreditation of educational programmes, autonomy to offer a variety of educational programmes at all levels of education, quality to build their brand image, and excellence in the next fifteen years (MHRD, 2020). The reengineering of the models and processes will be designed and implemented by educational leaders, faculty members, and officers of the institutions. The reengineering will be carried out to achieve quality and excellence in the context of the national education policy (NEP) 2020. To effectively and efficiently implement the reengineering, renovation, and reform in higher education institutions education leaders and faculty members having qualities such as visionary, competent, committed, proactive, confident, proficient, change agents, technology savvy, institution builders, marketing managers, motivators, resource mobilizers, and mentors are required at the institute level. These types of

educational professionals can be developed using well designed and implemented mentoring model at the institute level. The mentoring programme will be designed that will advance with the reengineering of the institutional processes. The mentoring programme will prepare the institutions to complete the journey of reengineering, renovation, and major changes in education and research. This study is undertaken with an aim to develop the mentoring model for higher education institutions to develop capacity and capability so that they can effectively and efficiently implement the provisions of NEP 2020 and achieve their own vision.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A brief review of the literature reveals that mentoring has been used in all types of organizations including the

¹IPER, Institute of Management, Bhopal, India

²Department of Management Education, and Dean Academics and Research, NITTTR, Bhopal, India

*Corresponding author email- bundela.pratibha@gmail.com

education sector with holistic as well as specific purposes. Mentoring models for reform-oriented institutions are not available in general and for higher education institutions in particular. (Salomé van Coller-Peter, 2020) recommended that the coaching and mentoring skills of mentors should be improved to achieve the goals of the organization. (Shaykhutdinova, 2019) concluded that the knowledge of mentoring models will improve the training in real educational processes and result in the adaptation of professional activities. (Montgomery, 2017) developed a mentoring roadmap comprising steps – self-reflection, establishment, maintenance, and moving ahead. (Ilieva-Koleva, 2015) studied the mentoring process in the form of inputs, participants and outcomes. The mentoring programme is considered a strategic tool for staff recruitment and staff development. (Melanie Moorcroft, 2014) The University of Auckland, New Zealand implements the well-designed mentoring programme comprising formal and informal mentoring using one to one, peer, group, team, bifocal and reverse mentoring methods. (Moruff Sanjo Oladimeji) studied ‘the effect of mentoring on employee job performance in the service sector and concluded that mentoring is one of the determinants of the performance of employees. The author suggested that further study is needed to find out how different mentoring functions mediate improved employee performance. (Suruchi Pandey, 2014) studied the trends in mentoring relationships existing in the Indian IT industry and concluded that to meet the challenges and develop the potential, organizations are using different types of mentoring. (Semiyu Adejare Aderibigbe, 2014) described critical constructivism as a framework for exploring mentorship relationships and means for achieving transformation of professional practice. (Ehrich, 2008) concluded that mentoring programme resulted in positive outcomes in the form of improved skills and confidence lack of time and lack of mentor training were attributed to negative outcomes. (Serrat, 2009) suggested structured model for coaching and mentoring comprising steps – analysis, definition, exploration, learning and development, action and evaluation. (Pirjo-Liisa Lehtela, 2014) concluded that the mentoring was found to be positive and role was motivating and inspiring. The mentors and mentees have developed their professional skills. (Koki) stated that mentoring of the teachers goes beyond induction and it develops the commitment to education. the paper defines the mentoring, qualities of mentor teachers, mentoring for human resource development, mentoring programme and concludes that teachers are a valuable resource and high performance is an essential element of educational reforms. (Lonnie D. Inzer, 2005) carved out the importance of the formal and informal mentoring programme.

Conclusion: The brief review of the literature reveals that the mentoring model in higher education institutions is not developed in the past considering the reengineering and revamping of the concept of higher education. This study will fill up the literature gap.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To evolve components of a mentoring programme for faculty members of higher education institutions in the context of the national education policy 2020

Research questions

To achieve the research objective following research questions were formulated:

1. What should be the goals of the mentoring programme for faculty members of higher education?
2. What should be the criteria for selecting the mentors?
3. What should be the criteria for selecting the mentees?
4. What should be the characteristics of mentors?
5. Which mentoring processes should be used in higher education institutions for faculty members?
6. Which mentoring methods should be used?
7. Which could be barriers to the mentoring programme and institute level?
8. What could be the outcomes of the mentoring programme at the institute level?
9. What could be the outcomes of the mentoring programme at the mentee's level?
10. What could be the outcomes of the mentoring programme at the mentor level?
11. Which are the conditions for effective mentoring?
12. What could be the limitations of mentoring?

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Type of research

The phenomenological research design is used to conduct the study in which the research criteria and parameters were given to the respondents and their first-hand experiences and futuristic ideas are recorded. It guided the researchers to explore, describe and analyse the live experiences of the mentors. The overall methodology was qualitative to articulate the views of the respondents on the mentoring model. (Sarıkaya Erdem, 2019) used this type of research design for conducting the research study to determine the perception of stakeholders on effective teaching and learning.

Respondents

Respondents are head of the institution, Deans, Head of the departments, Training and placement officers, Professors, Associate Professors, and Assistant professors of higher and technical institutions of the country.

Research Instrument

A structured and open-ended instrument was designed based on the literature review, experiences of the researchers, and futuristic quality education requirements of higher education. The structured items are identified from the work of (Andrew J. Hobson, 2009), (Andrew, 2016), (UGC, 2021), (MHRD, 2020), (AICTE, 2020), (AICTE, 2018) (Rosemary, 2015), (Abugre, 2017), (Brumage, 2011), (Stephanie M. Mazerolle, 2018), (Hanover, 2014), (Tim, 2009), (Prakash, 2013), (Pirjo-

Liisa Lehtela, 2014), (Agunloye, 2013), (Gupta, 2008), (UGC, 2019), (Watson, 2006) (Shastri). The instrument is validated using pilot testing and taking views of experts working on mentoring in higher education. The suggestions of experts on the content and construct of the instrument were incorporated to improve the content and construct validity of the research instrument. The internal reliability of the instrument is very high which is based on Cronbach's alpha (0.95 to 0.97).

Delimitation

The study is delimited to the faculty members of higher and technical education. The sample was purposive, and responses are provided by willing respondents based on their experiences and visualization.

Data collection

Data are collected from faculty members and educational leaders whose emails are available with the researchers. 525 respondents provided information out of more than 8500 potential respondents contacted through email. The respondents are principals, heads of the departments, lecturers, and officers in higher education institutions. A good mix of respondents having teaching, research, industrial and mentoring experiences provided information.

5. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Goals of a mentoring program in higher education institutions

The goals of a mentoring program for faculty members in higher education institutions are analyzed on a five-point scale and found that to improve individual and institute performance are the most preferred strongest goals. The other goals related to innovation, socio-emotional support, accepting higher positions, and retention of a faculty member are the second preferred strongest goals. The goals validated by respondents and their respective weightage out of five are given in table 1.

Table 1 Goals of the mentoring program

Sl No.	Goals of the mentoring program	Weighted mean out of 5
	To improve the individual performance of faculty members	4.12
	To improve institute performance	4.07
	To design and implement innovations	3.98
	To provide socio-emotional support	3.87
	To prepare faculty members to accept higher positions	3.87
	To increase retention of faculty members	3.86

(Thomas) stated three goals of mentoring program viz initial orientation, improved professional practice and developing a learning community. (OSPI, 2017) stated six standards for mentoring viz cultivates learning focussed relationship, facilitates reflection, responds to the needs of adult learners, fosters equitable practices, connects mentees to curriculum, instruction, assessment, models, and learning communities. (Balu, 2014) stated the importance of mentoring in higher education stating that mentoring programs support the students in program completion confidence building and transitioning to further education or workforce. (Hamilton, 2003) stated

that the mentoring program document should contain the rationale of the program, objectives of the program, roles, and responsibilities of mentors and mentees. The mentoring activities under different mentoring processes need to be stated specifically. The roles and responsibilities of the mentor, mentees, and institution management should be clearly mentioned. Mentoring program should be continuously monitored and supported by the institution (Hilda Asuo-Baffour, 2019).

Criteria for selecting the mentors

The mentors should be trained and committed to the mentoring process. The selection of the mentors should be carried out using objective criteria and characteristics in the context of the institutional development plan. The position and experience of mentors should not be the only criteria for selecting mentors for faculty members of higher education. A rubric of criteria may be prepared at the institute level to select the mentors. The rubric may be used by potential mentors for self-assessment, peer assessment, assessment by superiors and experts to select the mentors. In the context of vocational education (Shaykhutdinova, 2019) recommended that the mentor should possess cognitive, motivational, professional, communication, diagnostic reflective aspects of competence. The mentor development and deployment are crucial for the success of the mentoring program at the institute level. The mentors are expected to develop self-development mentoring competencies and proficiency during the mentoring process on a continuous basis. They need to improve the competency and develop new competencies for implementing mentoring in a dynamic environment. They need to be creative, innovative, and reflective in implementing the mentoring program. The weighted mean of criteria for selecting mentors is given in figure 1. Exposure to the world of work is proposed to be the strongest criterion out of five criteria.

Criteria for selecting the mentees

In a reform-oriented model selecting mentees for a specific transformation is critical to the success of the reform. The mentee(s) assume the responsibility to implement the reform successfully under the guidance of the certified mentors. The selection of mentees for the critical, significant, and innovative role is very important. Mentoring in generic and common areas of importance is available to all faculty members. Criteria for selecting mentees are stated in figure 2 for reform-oriented institutions. The willingness, good listener, positive thinker, and good listener emerged as the most important criteria.

Characteristics of mentors

In a reform-oriented environment the mentors need to be visionary, a source of innovative ideas, and an example of excellence. The mentors are going to develop the next generation of professional teachers and mentors. Therefore, the mentor selection process should be objective, relevant, and rigorous based on a 360-degree assessment. The characteristics listed in table 2 are very highly rated by respondents. Most of the characteristics are having a weighted mean of around four out of five. Therefore, it is recommended to use all the characteristics for selecting the mentors.

The characteristics of the mentors are described in different contexts by researchers. In the context of teacher mentoring use of interpersonal skills, use of teaching-

learning methods, use coaching processes and effective communication are the essential characteristics (Koki).

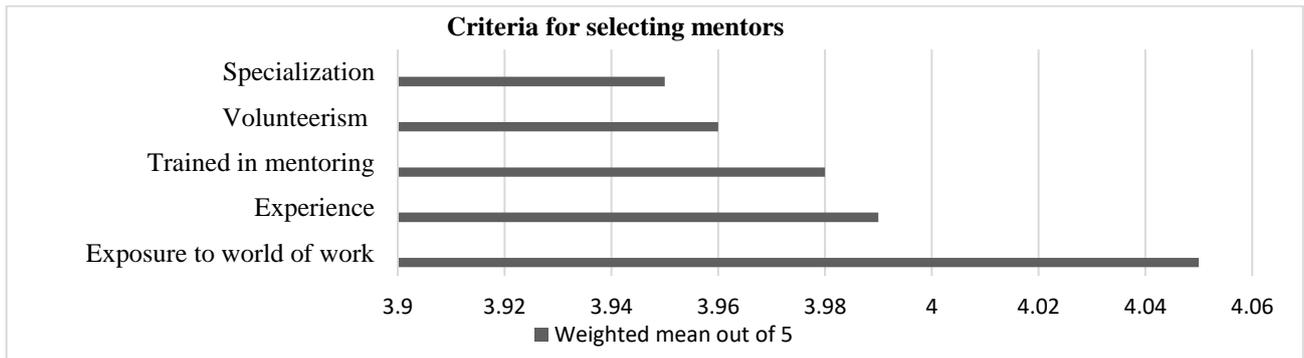


Figure 1 Criteria for selecting mentors

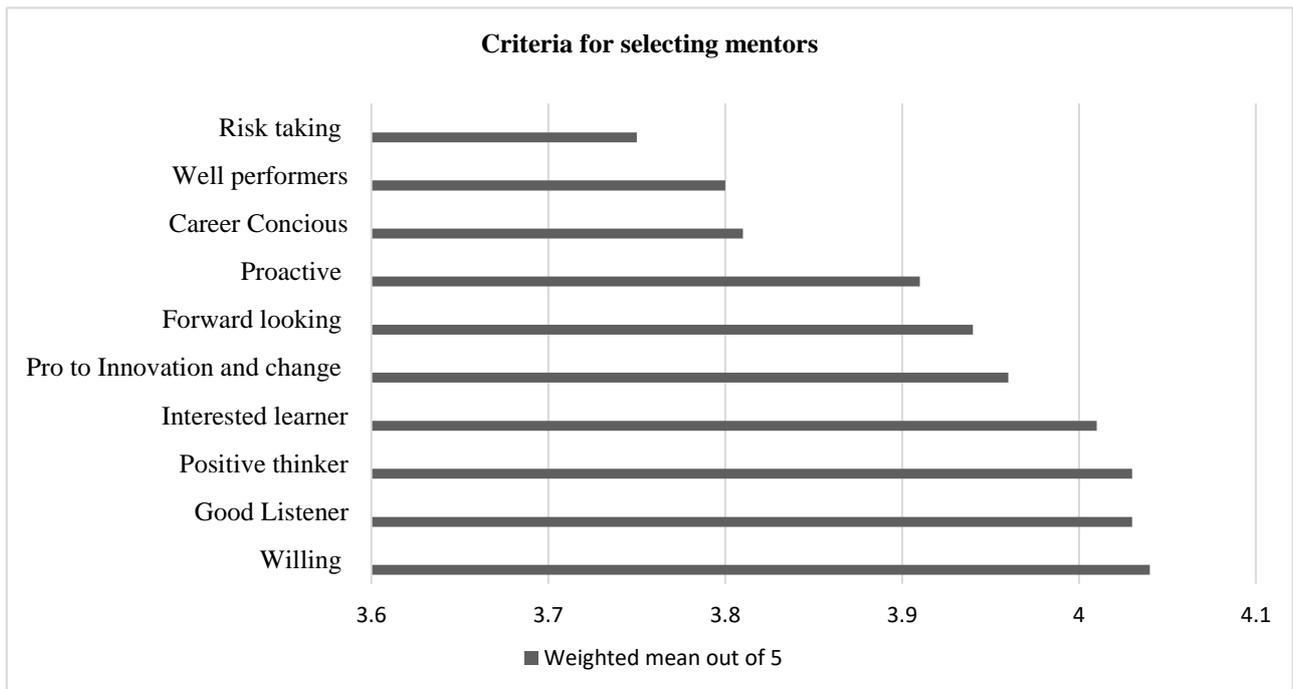


Figure 2 Criteria for selecting mentors

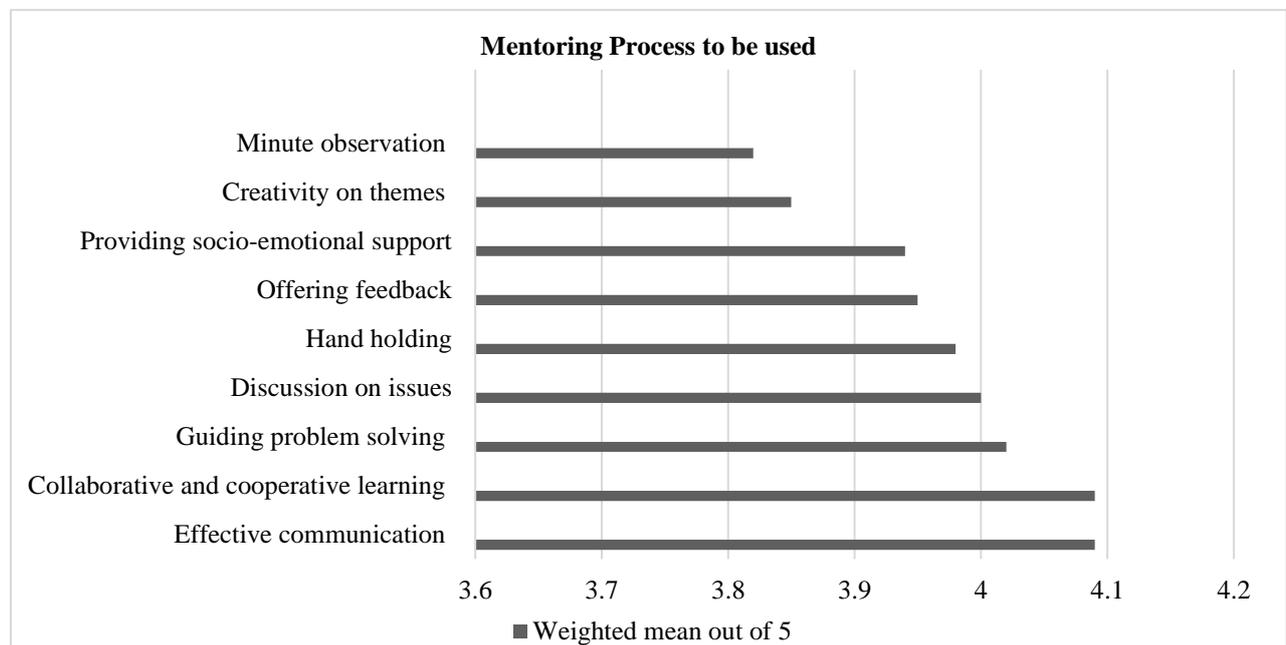


Figure 3 Mentoring Process to be used

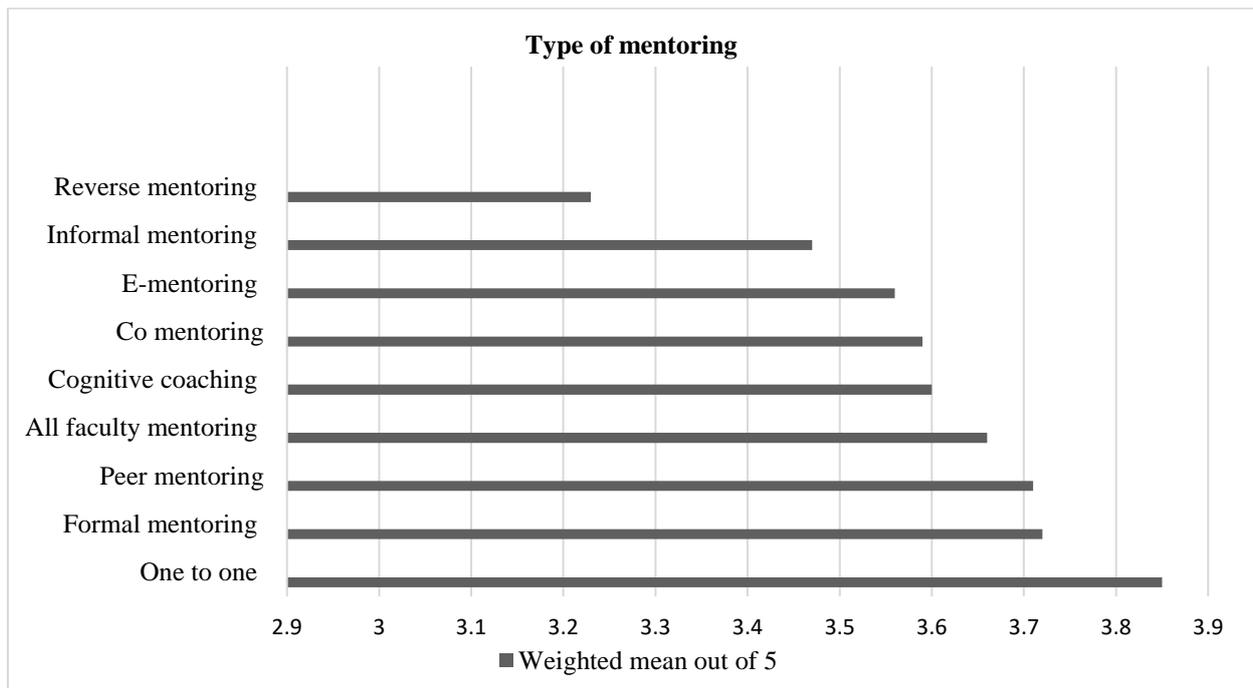


Figure 4 Type of mentoring

Table 2 Characteristics of the mentors

Sl No.	Characteristics of mentors	Weighted mean out of 5
	Be able to boost up the confidence of the mentees to accept the new challenges	4.17
	Possess good interpersonal relationship skills	4.16
	Be able to provide positive, encouraging, constructive, and development-oriented feedback	4.16
	Be the role model for the mentees	4.13
	Be empathic and encouraging	4.10
	Be able to assume the role of the counsellor in the time of turbulence when the significant problem is faced by mentee or mentee is not able to make a balance between personal and professional life, or undergoing stress or not able to cope up with the situation	4.07
	Be able to provide tips, hints, cues, ideas, strategies, and guidelines to mentees	4.07
	Have a deeper understanding of the requirements of the mentees	4.06
	Be able to encourage the mentee to manage the research projects professionally	4.06
	Be able to motivate the mentees to do experimentation, take a risk, accept newer roles and responsibility	4.04
	Be able to use modern tools and techniques such as potential appraisal, strengths, weakness, opportunity and threats analysis, visionary leadership for mentoring the mentees	4.02
	Be able to minutely observe the behavior of the mentee with respect to their goals and plans and document it in anecdotal form	3.97

Mentoring processes to be used in higher education

There is a wide spectrum of mentoring processes developed and used in different contexts. In reform-oriented education, nine processes were identified out of these nine processes effective communication, collaborative and cooperative learning, and guiding problem-solving are strongly suggested by respondents (refer to figure 3). There is a need to have intensive

interaction between mentors and mentees to make the mentoring program successful.

(Rosemary, 2015) stated mentoring processes such as demonstration, provide feedback, effective assessment, provide guidance, and implement collaborative teaching are commonly used. (Thomas) stated functions of mentoring as teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counselling, and befriending are used. (Hudson, 2013) concluded that the mentoring acts as professional development recognized and rewarded as professional development, and addresses potential issues.

The mentoring processes need to develop mutual trust, respect for each other, shared goals, cooperation and collaboration, cohesive bond, between the mentor and mentee. The mentoring process needs to be implemented using motivational, diagnostic, caring, evaluative, thought-provoking, observational, critical, and creative questioning by mentors and mentees. The mentoring process needs to be based on sound footings of trust, positivism, constructivism, development premises, innovation, and change. The mentoring process needs to carry out using demonstrating listening, appreciation, offering, and receiving feedback skills. The mentors need to use the mentoring process to develop self-determined, self-directed, reflective, and autonomous learning skills in the mentees. (Pirjo-Liisa Lehtela, 2014) stated that a successful mentoring relationship is based on shared goals. Mentoring process requires time and resources to be successful. (Hanover, 2014) stated such as reverse, mutual, peer, team, and e-mentoring.

Mentoring methods to be used

There are methods, modes, and approaches of mentoring which have been used in different contexts at different points in time. The commonly used methods in a conventional and stable model and an innovative model of education are based on theories of psychology, sociology, organizational behavior, and learning. (Shaykhtudinova, 2019) stated that situational mentoring model, partner

mentoring model, group mentoring model, goal-directed mentoring model, swift mentoring model, reverse mentoring model, school of mentoring, and young teacher mentoring model are in practice. The one-to-one, formal, peer and all faculty mentoring methods are rated very high by respondents (refer to figure 4). There is a need to use multiple processes for mentoring.

Barriers to the mentoring program at the institute level

The barriers are identified from the literature and adapted for reform-oriented education institutions. The influence of barriers ranges from 67 to 77% (refer to table 3). The institute management needs to ensure that the clerical and non-academic work is not performed by faculty members. The involvement of teachers in non-academic work badly affects their academic performance.

Table 3 Barriers to the mentoring program at the institute level

Sl. No.	Barriers to the mentoring program	Weighted mean out of 5
	Inadequate time for the mentoring process	3.87
	Mentors are not trained in the mentoring process	3.67
	Mentors are not professional in their approach	3.61
	Inadequate rewards to mentors and mentees for achievements of goals	3.59
	Documentation of the mentoring process is weak	3.55
	Mentoring is used as a remedial measure for low performers	3.54
	Inadequate support from the institute	3.54
	Mentors are not having specialized knowledge in which they are mentoring the mentees	3.52
	Purposes of mentoring are not clear to mentors and mentees	3.52
	Mentors are not information technology savvy	3.37

(Tomlinson, 2010) confirmed some of the above nature of barriers in the form of limitations of mentoring in practice. (Andrew J. Hobson, 2009) stated that mentors failed to provide sufficient support and create sufficient challenges.

Outcomes of the mentoring program at the institute level

The significant outcomes were identified using a literature review. These outcomes are weighted by the respondents on a five-point scale. It is concluded that the magnitude of these outcomes ranges from 74% to 82% (refer to table 4). (Rosemary, 2015) concluded that academic mentoring results in empowerment and improve the quality of education. The mentoring program needs to achieve the set goals (quantitative and qualitative) with the limited resources of the institute.

Table 4 Outcomes of the mentoring program at the institute level

Sl No.	Outcomes of the mentoring program	Weighted mean out of 5
	A significant contribution to the achievement of institutional goals	4.10
	The next level of faculty members is ready to take up higher roles and responsibilities	4.01
	Effective and efficient implementation of the institute development plan	3.99
	Appreciation of multidisciplinary approach	3.96
	A pool of competent and proficient faculty members	3.95

	Creation of a conducive academic environment	3.93
	Grab the opportunities to achieve the goals	3.91
	Less training and development expenses	3.88
	Fast adaption of changes	3.88
	Enhancement of quality of education and benchmarking with the best	3.86
	Multidisciplinary understanding	3.86
	Fostering research culture	3.86
	Networking with the experts	3.84
	Organization of a wide range of national and international level events	3.83
	Use of technology	3.74
	Better retention of faculty members	3.71

(Harriet J. Bessette, 2019) stated the 14 outcomes of the mentoring programme which are stated in the context of high-quality teacher preparation. These outcomes are different from the outcomes stated in table 4.

Outcome of mentoring at mentees level

The mentoring program results in outcomes for mentees. It is concluded that the magnitude of these outcomes ranges from 71% to 81% (refer to table 5). (Harriet J. Bessette, 2019) stated outcomes of mentoring as achievement of mentoring goals, continuous improvement, mentoring culture, development of professional compatibility, integrating into the institutional culture, support in professional writing, career satisfaction, enhancement of leadership skills, and the like. (Hudson, 2013) stated that mentoring is a process of professional development of the mentor as well as the mentee.

Table 5 Outcomes of mentoring at mentee level

Sl No.	Outcomes of mentoring at mentee level	Weighted mean out of 5
	Self-satisfaction	4.06
	Use time and energy effectively and efficiently for achieving the goals	4.04
	Set personal and professional goals aligned to self-potential	4.00
	Explore unknown potential	3.96
	Develop a network with experts	3.93
	Develop competency and proficiency in minimum time	3.92
	Derive professional satisfaction, and challenge one's thinking	3.86
	Seek emotional support	3.80
	Increase in salary	3.49
	Promotion	3.55

Outcomes of mentoring at mentors' level

The mentoring program results in outcomes for mentors. It is concluded that the magnitude of these outcomes ranges from 77% to 84% (refer to table 6). (Andrew J. Hobson, 2009) listed benefits of mentoring such as positive development of personal and professional development of mentors, gaining new ideas and new perspectives, new and improved teaching styles improvement in communication skills, feeling less isolated, improved relationship, and more collegial. (Shaykhutdinova, 2019) stated that the mentoring role should result in self-capacity building, skills improvement, improved relations, and satisfaction.

Table 6 Outcomes of mentoring at mentors' level

Sl No.	Outcomes of mentoring at mentors' level	Weighted mean out of 5
	Self-satisfaction	4.16
	Sense of accomplishments	4.01
	Professional respect	4.01
	Familiarisation with the current issues and challenges	3.97
	Increased network	3.95
	Some goals which they could not achieve can be achieved through the mentee	3.85

Conditions for effective mentoring

Effective mentoring takes place under certain conditions. The identified conditions are weighted by respondents and the magnitude of these conditions ranges from 79% to 81% (refer to table 7). (Alred, 2000) stated that the role and responsibility of the mentor and mentees should be clear, both must be committed to the mentoring process, and the focus should be on the mentee.

Table 7 Conditions for effective mentoring

Sl No.	Conditions for effective mentoring	Weighted mean out of 5
	Availability of sufficient time to mentor and mentee	4.07
	Encouraging environment to learn	4.03
	Open communication	3.99
	Mentoring is linked with the institute development plan	3.99
	Effective listening	3.95
	Recognition for participation in a mentoring program	3.94

Limitations of mentoring

The mentoring program is implemented under many limitations. 8 limitations of the mentoring program were identified and weighted by respondents. The magnitude of the limitation ranges from 67% to 74% (refer to table 8). (Stead, 1994) stated major issues in mentoring. These issues are compatibility of two roles mentor and manager, and professional versus mentoring skills. (Hudson, 2013) reported limitation of time for mentoring. (Tomlinson, 2010) described the dark side of mentoring as role overload for mentors, feeling of insecurity, nervousness, and inadequacy. The mentee may drop out of the process because of very high expectations.

Table 8 Limitations of mentoring

Sl No.	Limitations of mentoring	Weighted mean out of 5
	Unavailability of mentors and mentees for meeting	3.69
	Too high expectations from both the sides	3.66
	An ineffective mentoring process may lead to a waste of time	3.61
	Spoon feeding by mentor may increase dependence on mentor	3.59
	Compulsion from mentor to use one approach may curb creativity	3.55
	Self-learning and reflection may get reduced	3.49

	Critical feedback by mentor may decrease the interest of the mentee in learning a particular ability	3.49
	The conflict between mentor and mentee	3.41
	Too low expectations from both the sides	3.33

6. CONCLUSION

Higher education institutions will go through a major transformation in the next 15 years in tune with the provisions of the national education policy 2020. The education leaders and faculty members will play a major role in conceptualizing the transformation and implementing it effectively and efficiently at the institute level for the benefit of the students and major stakeholders. The proposed mentoring model will be useful to design mentoring model and mentoring program at the institute level and implement it effectively. The model may be adopted for mentoring the students for achieving career goals. Mentoring needs to be implemented in self-financed institutes also. The quality of education in the country will improve only when all higher education institutes implement mentoring programs effectively and efficiently.

7. FURTHER RESEARCH

Opportunities for further research include the experimental study on the actual impact of the mentoring model on the performance of the higher education institutions, pre and post status of competencies and confidence of the faculty members for performing in reform-oriented higher education institutions and benchmarking the competency profile of the mentors.

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