

MENTORSHIP, GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIAN ORGANIZATIONS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This paper examines mentorship, Good Governance, And Development in Nigerian organizations. The paper considers major issues/challenges affecting mentorship, Good Governance, and Development in Nigeria Such as the unwillingness of modern-day Mentors to effectively Coach Mentees for fear of those mentees becoming a threat to them in the nearest future, Absence of good mentors or scarcity of same as well as the lack of humble and teachable mentees in the society. Mentorship methods were addressed and linked to training which eventually leads to good governance and development. The paper argues that if good governance must be bequeathed to future generations, then the present generation of leaders must be willing to exercise good mentorship in all ramifications, even in academia. It suggested amongst others, that mentorship should be taken seriously especially by lecturers, politicians, and officers in government, to ensure National Development.

Keywords: Mentorship, Good Governance, Development, Mentor, Mentee.

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Introduction

Mentorship has been described as the act of teaching someone or giving help and advice to a less experienced and often younger person. A mentor, in this regard, can be regarded as someone who teaches or gives help and advice to a less experienced and often younger person; that less experienced and younger person is called a mentee or protégé (Barnett, 2002).

Anastacia, Skinner and Mundhenk (2012) affirm that the concept of mentoring is an important part of life and education in general, which cannot be over emphasized even though research in this area is fairly not robust. Allen (2005) stated that mentoring relationships can arise in any field of human endeavor. He however gave credence to the academic environment as one of the best places where mentorship can take place with positive lasting effects. Allen (2005) went further to state that mentorship in the academic setting refers to the guidance provided by an experienced lecturer to a less experienced faculty member (also called a protégé), on issues relating to academic traditions, resources and instructional values.

According to Barnett (2002), the need for guidance in achieving or gaining more knowledge and skills are some of the key reasons why some people may desire to be mentored by someone to enable them have professional growth and development in their endeavors’.

No doubt, our youth are the assets of the future. If we must have consistency and increased performance in governance and if we must have a formidable and cohesive national development, mentorship; indeed, good mentorship is the key. The zeal, interest, and enthusiasm to see our youths perform better than the present generation is the major motivating factor of this paper.

According to Provident (2005) the history of mentoring can be traced to Homer’s Odyssey in which the term “Mentor” was first used. As time went by, the term mentor became

synonymous with someone who is responsible for educating and nurturing another as it was realized that Odysseus was responsible for the education growth and development of Telemachus, in all facets of endeavor. Over the years the term mentor is now associated with someone who is a trusted advisor, teacher, friend and wise person. (Shea, 2002)

This paper, which is an opinion paper seeks to consider mentorship, good governance and development in Nigerian organizations.

2.1 Definition of Terms

Here, we shall define, review, and overview some related terms and concepts as follows;

(a)Mentorship/Mentoring:

Mentorship or mentoring is a personal development relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps the less experienced one to grow. (Kran, 1985). Both Ahukannah and Chukwumezie (2008) stated that mentoring is an all – encompassing activity as it deals with coaching, sharing experiences and transferring knowledge and wisdom to the mentee. Dancer (2003) equally affirms that mentoring is a process which involves time, helping personal development and relationship between an expert and an individual called mentee. Mentoring relationship therefore involves exchange of wisdom, learning and development of skills and knowledge about an organization or a field of endeavor for the career growth and advancement of the protégé.

Neo (1988) suggested three major dimensions of the mentoring relationships which are Career Support, Psycho-Social Support and Knowledge transfer.

Career support functions include sponsorship, coaching, exposure to important contacts and resources, visibility, facilitating protection of the mentee and assignment of challenging work to enhance the protégé's career.

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Psychosocial support functions of the mentor include, role modeling, friendship, counseling acceptance and confirmation of the mentee.

(Clutterbuck, 2004).

Knowledge functions according to Delong (2004), embraces everything that has to do with the transfer of anything related to the job of the mentee by the mentor because this is the key mechanism for the success of any organization.

Conway (1988) has given the following roles and responsibilities of a mentor as follows; A mentor should be able to share information about his/her background, skills, and interest; A mentor listens actively, serves as a positive role model, acts as a resource for information about careers, identifies the mentee's goals, support the needs and aspirations of the mentee. The mentor also identifies resources to help the mentee enhance personal development and career growth.

The mentee is the student who needs to absorb the mentor's knowledge and have the ambition and desire to know what to do with this knowledge. As a good "student" the mentee must practice and demonstrate what has been learnt.

Generally speaking, the mentee is the gauge to measure how interactive the connection between the mentor and mentee will be. This means that the mentee determines the capacity of the mentoring relationship connection; He decides upon the amount of help and guidance needed from the mentor. The mentee should as well take the initiative to ask for help or advice from the mentor to tackle more challenging assignments. (Barth, 2011)

Mullen (2001) has equally given the following roles and responsibilities of a mentee in a mentoring relationship as follows; The mentee should allow his mentor to take the lead in the relationship; He should act with courtesy and respect towards his mentor; He should use active listening skills during discussions with the mentor; He should be able to express

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appreciation for every form of assistance received from the mentor; He should always consider and respect the mentor's time, in case of appointments; specific questions geared towards career growth and advancement should always be asked.

Both Noller and Fray (1995) have identified two main types of mentoring, they are informal and formal mentoring.

Informal mentoring happens naturally when an individual gives reinforcement or assists another person. Informal mentorships grow out of informal relationships and interactions between older and younger individuals. The relationship may be based on professional or nonprofessional issues.

Formal mentoring on the other hand is a planned and broad based one which is influential and methodical in approach. It happens especially in organizational settings.

A mentor may share with a mentee or protégé, information about his/her own career path, as well as provide guidance, motivation, emotional support, and role modeling. A mentor may help with exploring careers, setting goals, developing contacts, and identifying resources.

(b)Good Governance:

In literature, governance is quite different from the term, good governance. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1997) governance is the exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels, which comprises mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences.

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For the international Monetary Fund (IMF), governance is the process by which public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources. No matter the differences in definition, three things are common to the understanding of governance. They are; (1) The process, manner and style by which (2) Power, or authority are exercised so as to (3) manage the collective affairs of the community, country, society or nation.

Good governance on the other hand, has also been variously defined. According to the African Development Bank (ADB, 2008), governance is a process referring to the manner in which power is exercised in the management of the affairs of a nation, and its relations with other nations.

The ADB, further identifies the key elements of good governance as; accountability, transparency, participation, combating corruption of an enabling legal and judicial framework.

Harry (2019) advocates that good governance can be recognized based on a few ingredients associated with it, which include; participation, rule of law, transparency, consensus-oriented, accountability, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, other related elements are; human rights protection, social justice and environmental sustainability.

One time President of the World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz says the following about good governance; “In the last half-century, we have developed a better, understanding of what helps governments function effectively and achieve economic progress. In the development community, we have a phrase for it. We call it good governance. It is essentially the combination of transparent and accountable institutions, strong skills and competence, and a fundamental willingness to do the right thing. Those are the things that enable a government to deliver services to its people efficiently, (World Bank President, Jakarta, 11th April, 2006). For the United Nations, good governance is expressed as follows;

“In the comity of nations governance is considered “Good” and “Democratic” to the degree in which a country’s institutions and processes are transparent. Its institutions refer to such bodies as parliament and its various ministries. Its processes include such key activities as elections and legal procedures, which must be seen to be free of corruption and accountable to the people. A country’s success in achieving this standard has become a key measure of its credibility and respect in the world”.



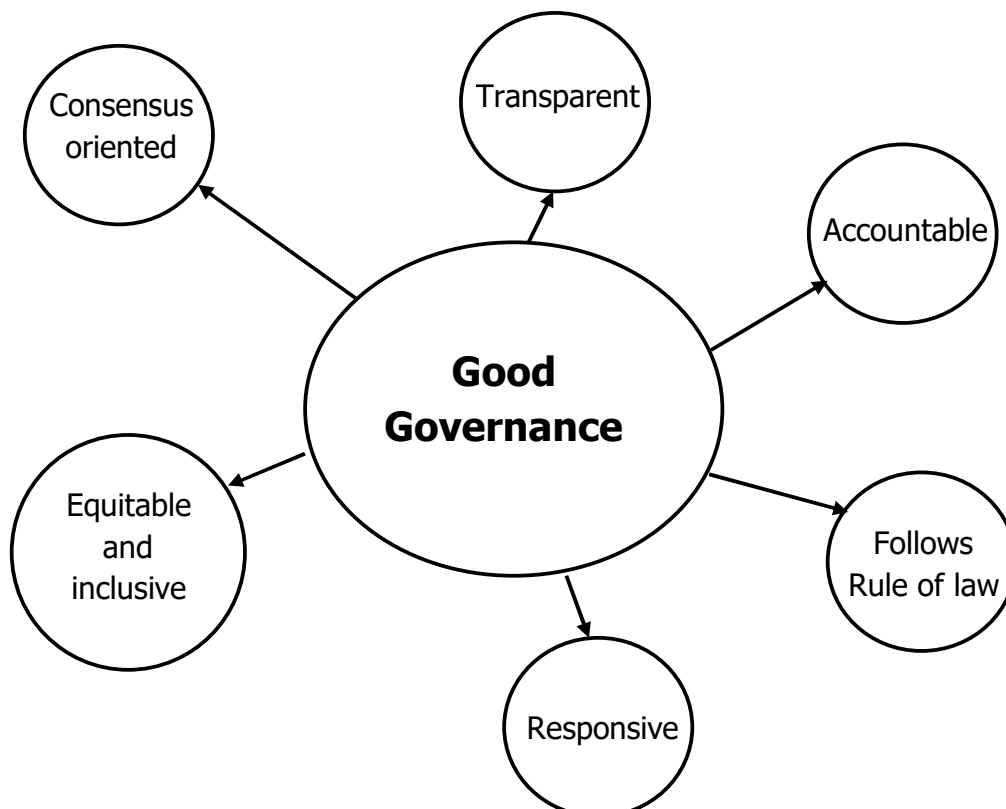
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GOOD GOVERNANCE IN AN ORGANIZATION



Adapted from; learning for sustainability.net. 2021.



Adapted from; learning for sustainability.net. 112 2021

(c)Development:

The term development is said to have been derived from a French word “Voloper”, which means to “wrap” or “Unfold” (Jaja and Owonte, 2019). To develop therefore means to “wrap or to unfold” gradually. It further means to grow larger, stronger and better. In actual fact, the concept of development has been viewed differently by various experts. According to Anikpo (1996) as cited by Nwarogu (2006:76), “Economists view it has a growth in income and infrastructural build-up. Political scientists are more concerned with development as liberation from oppression which shifts focus to the reduction in mortality rate and eradication of diseases. Educationists see development as eradication of illiteracy. Sociologists argue that it is progress toward desired social goals. Engineers and technologists have added the possession of sophisticated technology as a yardstick for determining a developed nation”.

Viewed from the above standpoint, we can safely posit that development is a movement from a less desirable state of well-being to a better and satisfactory state of human existence.

On the other hand, the academic staff union of universities (ASUU) in 2002, asserts that in its current thinking, the development encompasses human development, sustainable growth, poverty reduction, environmental protection, institutional transformation, gender equity, and human rights protection. Embedded in the ASUU’s articulation is the fact that in every aspect of human life, development is an expectation.

3.1 Relationship between mentorship, Good Governance and Development in Nigeria

As seen earlier, mentorship is the act of teaching someone or giving help and advice to a less experienced and often younger person. The person who gives this assistance is called a mentor, while the person who is at the receiving end is called a mentee or protégé.

In the days when handcrafts were in Vogue, craft masters had apprentices whom they mentored for the purpose of effectiveness and efficiency as well as continuity of the profession. The Greek philosophers had mentees each; Kungfu experts in China cannot do without mentoring a fellow. The origin of political Godfatherism is tied to mentorship, to a great extent; in the Holy Bible, Jesus Christ specially mentored Peter, James, and John as they were seen with him more than any of the other disciples. Going by the Holy Scriptures, it is common knowledge that Moses mentored Joshua; Elijah mentored Elisha; Eli the priest mentored Samuel; Paul the Apostle mentored people like Timothy, Titus, etc. it is common knowledge that most often, mentees do better than their mentors as is the case between Plato and Socrates, Elijah and Elisha, Eli and Samuel, Moses and Joshua, etc. Indeed, there is a very strong relationship between mentorship, good governance, and development.

Going by all the previous examples, our emphasis is on the fact that if there is mentorship, there will be good governance, and when there is good governance, development is sure; it is certainly a circle and a continuum.

Our standard postulation therefore is hinged on the inalienable fact that Nigeria is currently passing through the present negative scheme of affairs in government/governance because mentorship has been thrown to the winds, especially after the first and second Republics.

Dapper (2019) likened mentorship to training as he advanced the following basic purposes and benefits:

- Mentorship increases the productivity of the mentee.
- It improves quality because a better-informed mentee is less likely to make operational mistakes.

- Both in government, academia and other organizations, mentorship assists in securing the future as mentees are likely also going to pass across what they have learnt to another generation; it becomes a continuum.
- Mentorship, just like training, improves organizational climate. An endless chain of positive reactions results from a well-planned mentorship and training program.
- Both training and mentorship obsolescence; training and development programs foster the initiative and creativity of employees and mentees.

In a similar vein, Mamoria and Gankar (2009) opine that training, Development and mentorship is essential because of the following;

- Increase use of technology in production.
- Labour turns over arising from normal separations due to death or physical incapacity for accidents, diseases, voluntary retirement, promotion within the organization and change of occupation or job.
- Need for additional hands to cope with an increased production of goods and services.
- Need for reducing grievances and minimizing accidents.
- Need for maintaining the validity of an organization as a whole and raising the morale of its employees, etc.

Dapper (2019) has equally advanced the following benefits of mentorship/training both to the Mentee/Employee and the organization as follows;

- There is increased job satisfaction and recognition.

- It encourages self-development and self-confidence.
 - Mentees are moved close to their personal goals.
 - It helps the Mentee/Employee become an effective problem solver.
 - The mentee becomes more effective, etc.
- In the same vein, the great benefits both to organizations and government agencies at large includes;
- Reduction of work accidents.
 - Profitability is increased.
 - There is general organizational growth.
 - The future is assured, etc.

4.1 Role of a Mentor in Education

A mentor is a friend, coach, supporter, motivator, advocate, role model and listener. A mentor in education is an experienced teacher who facilitates the development and education of a new and upcoming teacher. The mentor is regarded as a career professional with good working knowledge of a repertoire teaching methods, alternative modalities of learning, and styles of teaching and learning that affect student achievement.

5.1 Conclusion/Summary

As a result of all the issues raised above, we conclude that mentorship is essential if good governance must be exercised in organizations, government sectors/parastatals as well as the private sector, which will eventually also bring about development in all facets of endeavour.

This work has been able to consider mentorship, good governance and development in Nigerian organizations; a comparative analysis. It is hoped that the knowledge gleaned here from, shall be useful to all and sundry.

5.1 Suggestions

On the basis of all the key issues raised, we suggest the following.

1. Mentorship must be taken seriously by everyone concerned, and in all spheres of human life.
2. Especially in our higher institutions, there should be a deliberate attempt by lecturers to mentor students.
3. Young officers in government and other sectors should seek for mentors and learn under them.
4. Older politicians should endeavour to both serve as good role models and also mentor the younger and upcoming ones.
5. Organizational leaders both in public and private sectors should be conscious of the fact that someday, they will exit their exalted offices. They should therefore mentor somebody.

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