

Mentoring Experiences: A Study of Indian Public Sector Professionals

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Although many public and private sector organizations in India have introduced programs in their organizations, mentoring has generated mixed responses. It was realized by those involved in the process that mentoring effectiveness is greatly dependent on the mentor-mentee relationship. It is very important to understand the perception of mentors and mentees towards the mentoring process, mentoring outcomes and mentoring effectiveness. The present study attempts to provide a fair understanding of the nature of mentoring relationship which was carried out in two leading public sector organizations in India. The study seeks to compare the views of the mentors and the mentees with regard to the “outcomes of the mentoring” process as well as “mentoring effectiveness”.

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Introduction

Today's business environment is incredibly fluid and ever-changing and demands a new set of competencies including managing uncertainty, dealing with ambiguity and leading with strategic agility. As the global market for professionals is shrinking and business environment is becoming more volatile and complex business leaders are slowly transitioning to 'a new era of talent spotting'—one in which evaluation of one another is being based 'not on brawn, brains, experience, or competencies, but on potential' (Claudio Fernández-Aráoz, 2014). It is also a tough challenge for companies today to find ways of tapping and utilizing the knowledge base they have, and then sharing that knowledge among the employees. Here, mentoring, as a management process, plays a significant role. Mentoring is a valuable way to transfer knowledge, foster talent, and promote best practices. It is a process of transferring specific knowledge from

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the mentor to the protégé (Hendrikse, 2003). By pairing any new recruit, whether at the entry level or beyond, with a veteran employee, companies can help workers make better contributions to the firm (Coleman & George, 2012). Mentoring programs are a proven method for generating professional interest and commitment to the firm or department (Arms, 2010). According to United States Office of Personnel Management (2008) mentoring has been identified as an important influence in professional development in both the public and private sector organizations.

Positive Outcomes

A large volume of literature is available on mentoring which points to the fact that the process of mentoring benefits the organization as well as both the mentee and the mentors in different ways. This paper primarily focuses on the outcomes of mentoring specific to the protégés or mentees only.

Mentoring has been seen as a key employee development and career management tool in organizations (Finkelstein & Poteet, 2007). It enhances employee skills, aids socialization of an employee to a new work setting and improves career outcomes. Many researchers found a positive relationship between mentoring and career outcomes of mentees such as salary, promotions, career satisfaction, and perceptions of advancement opportunities, to name a few (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz & Lima, 2004; Eby, Allen, Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005; Evans, Ng & Dubois, 2008). There are

also researches which highlight on the link between career mentoring activities and positive employee outcomes (Allen, Poteet, Russell & Dobbins, 1997; Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge, 2008), including affective organizational commitment (AOC), job involvement and reduced turnover intention (Joiner et al., 2004; Kraimer et al., 2010; Noe, 1988). Research undertaken by Dymock (1999) highlighted on improved understanding of other areas of the company's operations, opportunities for extended networking, a better understanding of their own practices, and the development of personal skills and satisfaction as some of the mentoring outcomes.

A research on the mentoring at Sun Microsystems demonstrated that mentoring had a much higher impact on the bottom 60 per cent of the performers than on the top 40 per cent. The greatest impact was found to be for the bottom 20 per cent, leading to the conclusion that mentoring for lower performers would be a better investment for Sun Microsystems. Results from the research within the company showed higher retention rates for both mentees (72%) and Mentors (69%), when compared to the retention rates of non-participants (49%) (Creek, 2010).

Psychosocial and psychological aspects of mentoring play an important role. Psychosocial mentoring represents a deeper, more intense mentoring relationship and often depends more on relationship quality than on career function (Allen et al., 2004). Researches have revealed that in public and private sector organizations, psychosocial support and

psychological mentoring have been linked to beneficial protégé outcomes, including employee satisfaction, commitment, and lowered turnover intention among employees (Koberg et al., 1998; Raabe & Beehr, 2003; Young & Perrewe, 2000; Reid, Allen, et al., 2008). It may enhance an individual's ability and effectiveness, help alleviate work-related stress (Greiman, 2007), evolve into a strong emotional bond between the mentor and the protégé (Kram, 1985), and become a positive, pleasurable interpersonal contact (Raabe & Beehr, 2003). Noe (1988) found that individuals with high levels of job involvement tend to find career mentoring appealing and seek out such relationships.

The benefits for the mentors include improvement in job performance, recognition and visibility, job satisfaction and loyalty and support of the mentee (Ragins & Scandura, 1999; Eby, Durley, Evans & Ragins, 2006). Eby (2007) claims that the benefits to mentors include learning, developing personal relationships and enhancing managerial skills. Mentoring leads to potential benefits for the organization too. Higher attraction among job applicants (Allen and O'Brien, 2006) organizational commitment (Payne & Huffman, 2005), and talent pool development, performance, and productivity (Ramaswami & Dreher, 2007) are some of the benefits which organizations gain out of mentoring.

Mentoring in India

Mentoring is not a new concept in India. It has been there since ages. In

the Hindu epics mentors were seen to be playing a critical role in the lives of their mentees. For example in Ramayana, Lord Ram's mentor was Viswamitra and Lord Krishna acted as the mentor of Arjun during Mahabharata. We have also examples of ancient Indian history about the relationship between young Chandragupta, a great ruler and Kautilya, an effective mentor. The famous guru-shishya tradition underscores that mentoring relationships are both culturally and historically deep-rooted in India. There are also references found in other literatures (Neki, 1973; Raina, 2002) to mentoring. However, there is no systematic examination of the dynamics of work-based mentoring among Indians. The paucity of mentoring research among Indians is surprising, given the growing realization of the importance of mentors for individual and organizational leadership.

Mentoring relationships are both culturally and historically deep-rooted in India.

Though mentoring is an age-old process in India, for augmenting organizational productivity, boosting employee morale, productivity and career development, more and more organizations are now emphasizing on mentoring programs. Growing business investments from the West, combined with India's economic growth (Budhwar & Bhatnagar, 2009; Kapur & Ramamurti, 2001), make mentoring quite relevant in the organizational context in India (Budhwar, 2000, 2001; Aryee, Chen & Budhwar, 2004;

Baruch & Budhwar, 2006). With a large number of global companies entering the Indian market, the competition for tapping right talent has significantly intensified among Indian companies, who now have a plethora of organizational options to choose from to deal with problems of employee motivation, commitment, and retention (Ramaswami & Dreher, 2010). For these reasons Bhatnagar (2007) suggested that it was important for managers and employers to focus on career and talent management strategies such as mentoring.

In their study of ‘the nature of mentoring relationships in a highly power-distant and collectivistic culture’ such as that of India, Ramaswami and Dreher (2010) found that in the case of seventy percent of the respondents their mentors were immediate supervisors or team leaders who were either formally assigned or informally chosen. The results indicated that mentors in India perform career, psychosocial, role modeling, and networking functions and the commonly identified benefits of mentoring for the protégé included faster learning curve, security and protection in the organization, and receiving emotional support.

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One can assume that mentoring relationships could differ between India and the West, given the difference in the

mentoring dynamics. Because of the persistent influence of socio-cultural, economic, and political factors in Indian management and interpersonal relationships (Baruch & Budhwar, 2006; Bhawuk, 2008; Budhwar & Khatri, 2001), mentoring relationships in India could also be different from the West. Hence examining the mentoring experiences of the mentors and mentees in India has important implications for organizations as well as managing mentor-mentee expectations and designing appropriate mentoring programs for organizations. This study’s findings will therefore be of interest to HR researchers and practitioners in India and elsewhere.

The Present Study

Over last one decade many public and private sector organizations in India have started mentoring programs to help and develop young employees, which has generated mixed responses. It was realized by the professionals involved in the mentoring process that mentoring effectiveness is greatly dependent on the mentor-mentee relationship. It is very important, nevertheless, to understand the perception of mentors and mentees towards the mentoring process, mentoring outcomes and mentoring effectiveness as they affect the relationship between mentors and mentees.

The present study attempts to provide a fair understanding of the nature of mentoring relationship. It seeks to compare the views of the mentors and the mentees with regard to the “outcomes of the mentoring” process as well as

“mentoring effectiveness”. It also provides some general suggestions to make the mentoring activities more effective. Hence, the present research has been conducted keeping the following objectives in mind:

- To study the nature of mentoring relationship between the mentors and the mentees
- To compare the perception of mentors and the mentees with regard to mentoring outcomes and mentoring effectiveness
- To suggest measures to make mentoring more effective.

Methodology

This study was conducted with a sample of 64 mentors and 88 mentees from two leading public sector organizations, one from heavy engineering sector and the other from power sector. Out of the 64 mentors, 40 had one mentee each and remaining 24 had two mentees each making the total number of mentees 88. Purposive random sampling method was used for selecting the respondents.

The two public sector organizations selected for study have introduced formal mentoring programs. The leaders of these two organizations are aware of the relevance of mentoring outcomes. Their training departments regularly organize programs on mentoring and also send their professionals for attending management development programs on mentoring. Hence, all the mentors of the sample have had exposure to the

mentoring process through their training. The HR departments of these two organizations as well as the mentors provided the names of the mentees who have undergone the mentoring process under their guidance.

Two sets of questionnaires were prepared to elicit the responses, one for mentors and another for the mentees. Each questionnaire comprised three parts dealing with three different aspects of mentoring, i.e., (I) Description of Mentoring Relationship, (II) Mentoring Outcomes; and (III) Mentorship Effectiveness Scale. The ‘Mentoring Effectiveness Scale’ used for the study was developed by Ad Hoc Faculty Mentoring Committee, Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing (2002). In the case of part (III) of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to judge the statements through a six-point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. For data calculation, “strongly agree” was given 5 points, “strongly disagree” was assigned 0 point.

Interviews were also conducted with both the mentors and mentees to understand the mentoring issues better. Frequencies, percentage, average, standard deviation, and t test were used for data analysis.

Demographic Profile

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Table I Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Mentees(N= 88)			Mentors(N=64)		
Age Group	N	Percent	Age Group	N	Percent
24-28	70	79.54	30-35 Years	8	12.5
29-32	11	12.5	36-40 Years	24	37.5
33-37	7	7.95	41-45 Years	26	40.62
			46-50 Years	4	6.25
			51-56	2	3.12
Gender	N	Percent	Gender	N	Percent
Female	11	12.5	Female	4	93.75
Male	77	87.5	Male	60	6.25
Education	N	Percent	Education	N	Percent
BE & B. Tech	62	70.45	BE &B tech	54	84.37
BBA, B Com &B.Sc.	6	6.81	B Com & B.Sc.	4	6.25
M Tech	3	3.40	M Tech	4	6.25
MBA	7	7.95	MBA	2	3.12
Managerial Level	N	Percent	Managerial Level	N	Percent
Junior	85	96.6	Middle	60	93.75
Middle	3	3.4	Senior	4	6.25
Years of Experience	N	Percent	Years of Experience	N	Percent
1-5	68	72.27	9-12	8	12.5
6-9	19	21.59	13-16	20	31.25
10-13	1	1.13	17-20	28	43.75
			21-25	8	12.5

N refers to the No of respondents

the junior management level. Majority of them were having 1-5 years of experience. Around 70 percent of the mentees had Bachelor's degree in Engineering (B.E.) or Technology (B. Tech) as their educational qualification and only 3 mentees had post graduate level education. Only 12.5 percent of the mentees were women which is a reflection of the fact that there were less number of women professionals in the power and heavy engineering sectors.

The mentors were in the age group of 30 to 56 years. Ninety four percent of them were males and were mostly from the middle management level. Majority

of them were having B.E. or B.Tech degrees. Less percentage of mentors were post graduates. The mentors also varied in terms of their work experience ranging from 9 to 25 years.

Mentoring Relationships

Analysis of the mentoring relationship reveals that around 32 percent of the mentees had their own departmental bosses as their mentors while 68 percent had mentors from other departments. Usually these organizations take care not to assign the mentor from the same department as very often, it is pointed out that the mentors should not be the departmental bosses. But around one third

Table 2 Description of Mentoring Relationship (Responses of Mentees& Mentors)

Questions	Responses	Responses of Mentees		Responses of Mentors	
		N=88	Percentage	N= 64	Percentage
Who is your mentor?	Departmental Boss	28	31.81	(This response was collected from the mentees only)	
	Seniors from other departments	60	68.18		
		Mentees' Responses		Mentors' Responses	
How often do you communicate with your mentee/mentor?	Frequently	11	12.5	12	18.75
	As and when required	56	63.63	44	68.75
	Not so frequently	21	23.86	8	12.5
How long have you had this relationship?	< one year	21	23.86	(This response was collected from the mentees only)	
	1-2 years	63	71.59		
	3-4 years	4	4.54		
		Mentees' Responses		Mentors' Responses	
*Medium of Communication	Email	45	71.13	28	43.75
	In person	80	90.90	60	93.75
	Telephone	67	76.13	46	71.87
		Mentees' Responses		Mentors' Responses	
*Which role did your mentor play?/ Which role did you play as a Mentor?	Counselor	60	68.16	56	87.50
	Teacher	44	50.00	45	70.31
	Resource	36	40.90	40	62.5
Which role did you play as a Mentor?	Advocate	10	11.36	14	21.87
	Advisor	76	86.36	64	100.00
	Sponsor	04	04.54	07	10.93

Mentor?

*Multiple Responses

of mentees selected for this study had their bosses as their mentors. Through discussion it was found that while assigning the mentor to a mentee the HR department faces operational challenges. When they face difficulty in finding a mentor from some other departments usually they assign the superiors from the same department as their mentors. This finding is in line with that of Ramaswami

and Dreher (2010) according to whom seventy percent of the respondents had their immediate supervisors or team leaders as mentors, either formally assigned or informally chosen.

In most of these cases, the mentoring activities were carried out between less than a year and 1-2 years. In a few cases, the mentoring continued for more than 3

years. The two public sector organizations had the provision of continuing the mentoring process for at least one year which could be extended further depending on the requirement of the mentee and the willingness of the mentor to provide the service. They also had the provision of changing their mentor / mentee in difficult situations (where the mentor-mentee did not gel well with each other) through the HR department.

Only 12.5 percent of the mentees and 18.5 percent of the mentors mentioned that the mentor- mentee meetings were held frequently, whereas a large percentage of the mentors & mentees (68.75 & 63.63 percent respectively) mentioned that they met their mentee/ mentors meetings as and when required. It is interesting to know when around 24 percent of the mentees mentioned that they met their mentors “not so frequently”, only 12.5 percent of mentors said they met frequently. This finding is indicative of the fact that even though formal mentoring process is established in these two public sector organizations, possibly meetings are not structured in a routine manner and hence mentees were meeting their mentors only when there was a requirement. While discussing this issue with the mentees, most of them considered the mentoring exercise as a problem solving mechanism whereas in case of some mentees interested in their career development regular and systematic meetings/ follow ups were considered extremely important.

All modes of communication, i.e. email, telephone and in person were used

by the mentors and mentees to interact with one another. Both in the case of mentees and mentors, in-person communication was majorly used followed by telephone and email. It is interesting to note that only around 43 percent of the mentors used emails to communicate with their mentees. As far as the communication aspect is concerned, the results suggested that both mentors and mentees were comfortable with in-person contacts or exchanges as compared to other modes of communication.

Out of the six roles of the mentors (counselor, teacher, resource, advocate, advisor, and sponsor), as specified in the questionnaire, a large percentage the mentees believed that mentors played the role of ‘advisor’ (86.36 percent), ‘counselor’ (68.16 percent), ‘teacher’ (50.00 percent) and resource (40.90 percent). Mentors also felt that they were majorly playing the role of advisors (100 percent), counselor (87.50 percent), teacher (70.31 percent) and resource (62.5 percent). It is important to note that very low percentage of the mentors and mentees agreed that mentors were playing the roles of ‘advocate’ and ‘sponsor’. Mueller and Judge (2008) had mentioned that career-related support is the main component of sponsorship which provides protégés with direct human capital

By not playing the roles of advocate and sponsor the mentors are probably not focusing on the career enhancement opportunity of the mentees and developing their leadership abilities.

enhancement opportunities and connections with powerful individuals who can assist their career progression and sponsors may advise or steer the mentee, but their chief role is to develop the mentee as a leader (Hewlett, Marshall, Sherbin,

2013). So, one can assume that by not playing the roles of advocate and sponsor the mentors are probably not focusing on the career enhancement opportunity of the mentees and developing their leadership abilities.

Table 3 Comparison of Mentors' & Mentees' Perceptions of the Outcome of Mentoring Process

Mentoring Outcomes	Yes (%) Mentees	Yes (%) Mentors
Understanding of organizational norms and policies etc.	50.00	68.75
Better understanding of work	61.11	81.25
Improve job performance	61.11	87.50
Promotion	8.33	6.25
Career advancement opportunity	16.67	46.88
Networking	11.11	28.13
Recognition	22.22	34.38
Visibility	11.11	12.50
Job satisfaction	22.22	21.88
Organizational commitment	25.00	25.00
Socialization	44.44	43.75
Leadership development	33.33	34.38

Mentoring Outcomes

Mentoring outcomes listed in Table 3 were finalized on the basis of the reviewing the available literature on mentoring. The results of the comparison of mentors' and mentees' perception of the outcome of the mentoring process revealed that there was a greater agreement among mentors and mentees that mentoring had led to 'better understanding of organizational norms and policies', 'better understanding of work' and 'improved job performance'. However, in the case of other mentoring outcomes like 'career advancement opportunity', 'networking', and 'recognition' the differences in agreement levels between mentors and mentees were high. Hence for all these mentoring outcomes, generally

mentors believed more strongly than mentees that these were the outcomes of mentoring. The reason could be that there was a general belief among the mentors that the mentoring activities are generating the desired outcomes whereas this belief is not very strong amongst the mentees. Additionally as one third of the mentors were departmental bosses of the mentees who were having less (1 -5) years of work experience, it was understandable that mentoring outcomes are more related to work rather than other developmental aspects of mentoring. This finding has supplemented the finding that, more importantly, mentors have played the role of a teacher. It has also been supported by the study conducted by Ramaswami and Dreher (2010) who found that, because most

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mentors were supervisors who directly oversaw their protégés' performance, it was reported that mentors were mostly emphasizing on career functions. In Indian organizations, mentoring and performance management tend to be clustered under the same career management category (Budhwar & Baruch, 2003); therefore, it is not surprising that 70 per cent of the respondents had supervisory mentors who also evaluated their performance.

Only around one third of the mentors and mentees agreed that 'leadership development' was an outcome of mentoring. Similarly, around 44 percent agreed that mentoring contributed to effective organizational 'socialization'. Therefore, a large percentage of the mentors and mentees did not agree with the view that leadership development and socialization were the outcomes of mentoring.

As indicated in Table 3, a large percentage of mentees did not agree that promotion, career advancement opportunity, networking, recognition, visibility, job satisfaction and organizational commitment were some of the outcomes of the mentoring process. Though the mentors also did not agree that 'promotion' and 'visibility' were outcomes of mentoring, in the case of career advancement opportunity, networking and recog-

nition, as outcomes of mentoring, the mentors' level of agreement was higher than that of the mentees. Some mentors felt that through the mentoring process they were providing information to their mentees about career advancement opportunities, introducing them to many professionals within and outside the organization and also recognizing their efforts. Somehow these aspects were not acknowledged by a large number of mentees.

When we compare the responses of mentors and mentees it is found that in every aspect of mentoring outcomes, the mentors' level of agreement was higher than that of the mentees. It could be because of the fact that the mentors perceived the mentoring outcomes more beneficial than the mentees. This perceptual gap might bring down the impact of mentoring, which is not desirable.

Mentoring Effectiveness

In order to compare the perception of "mentoring effectiveness" by mentors and mentees, the responses were collected from both on 12 different statements assessing mentoring effectiveness. Mean, standard deviations of both the groups were compared and t- test was carried out to find out whether the difference was significant or not. Independent samples t-test was used to find out whether there existed significant difference between the responses of the mentees and mentors with regard to mentoring effectiveness. The level of significance was considered at 99 % ($p \leq 0.1$). Levene's Test for equality of vari-

Table 4 Comparison of Mentors' and Mentees' Perception of Mentoring Effectiveness

Statements Different sets(My mentor is/I am) were used for mentors and mentees	Mentors		Mentees		t	Degree-freedom	Sig (2-tailed)	Std.Error Difference
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
My mentor is/I am...accessible to my mentee	3.781	.7064	3.028	1.2532	-3.096	56.361	.003	.2434
My mentor /I demonstrated.. professional integrity	4.250	.4399	3.500	.8452	-4.661	53.933	.000*	.1609
My mentor /I demonstrated content expertise in my area of need	4.000	.6222	3.694	.7863	-1.786	65.167	.079	.1711
My mentor is/I am approachable	4.094	.6405	3.611	.7281	-2.886	66	.005*	.1672
My mentor/I am supportive and encouraging	4.063	.6189	3.361	.9607	-3.617	60.437	.001*	.1939
My mentor/I provide constructive and useful critics of my work	3.719	.9583	2.750	.8742	-4.359	66	.000*	.2222
My mentor/I motivate me to improve my work product	3.938	.5644	3.361	1.0994	-2.763	53.519	.008*	.2086
My mentor is /I am helpful in providing direction and guidance on professional issues(e.g. , Networking)	3.625	.4919	3.194	.8218	-2.654	58.219	.010*	.1622
My mentor/I answer the questions satisfactorily(e.g., Timely response, clear, comprehensive)	3.688	.7378	3.528	.6088	-.978	66	.332	.1634
My mentor acknowledge my contributions appropriately/I acknowledge the contributions of my mentee appropriately	2.563	1.2165	2.500	1.2071	-4.726	60.798	.000*	.2446
My mentor/I suggest appropriate resources (e.g., Experts, electronic contacts, source materials)	3.406	.8370	2.333	1.0954	-4.494	66	.000*	.2387
My mentor challenged me /I challenge them to extend their abilities(e.g., Risk taking, try a new professional, activity, draft a section of an article	3.125	1.1846	2.389	1.1283	-2.623	66	.011*	.2806

* Significant at .01 level

ances was calculated. For the items which are in italics, the assumption of equal variances was fulfilled and for the remaining items assumption of equal variances was not taken into account. Results from the independent samples t-test for the sample surveyed indicated that out of the twelve statements, there were significant differences between mentors' and mentees' responses in case of the following ten items of the mentoring effectiveness.

- I. My mentor /I demonstrated content expertise in my area of need
- II. My mentor /I demonstrated professional Integrity
- III. My mentor/ I am approachable
- IV. My mentor/I am supportive and encouraging
- V. My mentor/I provide constructive and useful critics of my work
- VI. My mentor/I motivate me to improve my work product
- VII. My mentor is /I am helpful in providing direction and guidance on professional issues(e.g. , Networking)
- VIII. My mentors acknowledge my contributions appropriately/I acknowledge the contributions of my mentee appropriately
- IX. My mentors/I suggest appropriate resources (e.g., Experts, electronic contacts, source materials)
- X. My mentors/I challenge them to extend their abilities(e.g., Risk taking, try a new professional activity)

The result mentioned in Table 4 was indicative of the fact that both mentors and mentees agreed fairly on almost all statements on mentoring effectiveness except one on "My mentor acknowledges my contributions appropriately/I acknowledge the contributions of my mentee appropriately." Also there existed a significant perceptual gap between mentors and mentees in terms of mentoring effectiveness. In the above mentioned ten items mentors believed more strongly than the mentees that they were more effective. This has been reflected in the mean difference. Mentees could find their mentors to be relatively less effective on the statements given above.

Mentors seem to have more positive opinion about their accessibility, approachability and professional integrity. They feel they are supportive, encouraging and motivating. There exists a sharp difference between mentor and mentees in terms of "Mentors providing constructive and useful critics of my work" and "My mentor suggests appropriate resources (e.g., experts, electronic contacts, source materials). Mentees did not agree greatly on the proposition that they received constructive and useful critic of their work and they also felt that their mentors did not suggest appropriate resources for their development. Similar was the result in case of "My mentor challenged me to extend my abilities".

Conclusion

There is a large body of literature available on mentoring which dwelt pre-

dominantly on the Western/US perspectives. There is a clear dearth of research work on mentoring in the Indian context. It has been established repeatedly that mentoring has both career development and the psychosocial outcomes which increases employee engagement in multiple ways. This paper highlighted that there exists a perceptual difference between mentors and mentees in terms of mentoring outcomes. In the case of mentors there is a stronger agreement with respect to most of the mentoring outcomes than their mentees. Similarly, mentors felt that they were more effective in terms of various mentoring dimensions than what their mentees felt. In most of the cases the differences were significant.

Successful mentoring programs require proper understanding of mentor and mentee relationship and also understanding of each other's expectations. It requires proper planning, implementation and evaluation so that the perceptual gap between the two groups can be minimized. Successful mentoring programs do not just happen. Organizations must first make a strong business case to demonstrate why the organization should devote time, attention and resources required to make a mentoring process work. Reasons for establishing a mentoring program must be linked to the organization's business goals.

Implications for Organizations

This research has many implications for the organizations, mentors and mentees. Over the past few one decades

many Indian organizations have shown interest in introducing mentoring practices. Though mentoring practices have always been there in organizations informally, many organizations have taken steps to formalize these processes expecting large benefits out of it. But in reality many organizations have actually not taken large benefits out of these mentoring programs as the relationship between mentor and mentees plays a great role.

In this study it was found that in around 32 percent cases the immediate bosses are the mentors. That the immediate bosses acting as mentors may be helping their mentees in developing better understanding about their work and performing their job well but it is interesting to know to what extent the mentors are successfully playing other roles.

The findings suggested that mostly mentors and mentees communicated as and when required and it is mostly in person communication. This reflects that even though organizations are discussing about e-mentoring but professionals opt for in-person communication.

The mentors are greatly playing the roles of a teacher, advisor, counselor, and resource whereas roles like advocate and sponsor are underplayed.

It was also seen that the mentors are greatly playing the roles of a teacher, advisor, counselor, and resource whereas roles like advocate and sponsor are un-

derplayed. By underplaying these roles actually mentors are not focusing on the career advancement of the mentees and enabling them for leadership roles. If organizations want to make the mentoring programs successful they need to focus on creating career advancement opportunities for the mentees.

Limitations & Imperatives

This research is restricted only to two public sector organizations and the sample size was also not large. Therefore, care must be taken while generalizing the findings of the research. Research can be carried out in private sector organizations as well as in multinational organizations to find out the effectiveness of mentoring programs. Future research on the topic can be aimed at further understanding why does there exist a difference in the perception of the mentors and mentees towards the mentoring outcomes and mentoring effectiveness. Research can also try to assess which are the intervening variables which has most significant impact on mentor and mentee relationship.

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