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Empirically Investigating Moderating Role of Longevity between Mentoring and Scholar-Guide Relationship Quality

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Abstract

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the role of longevity as a moderator between mentoring and scholar-guide relationship. Only one scholar from each guide (Dyadic relationship) has been selected from different universities in Jammu and Kashmir. The results proved that longevity moderates the relationship between mentoring and relationship quality. This study contributes to the literature by identifying the importance of longevity of relationship between guide and scholar in order to understand relationship between mentoring and relationship quality. Further, scale reliability, validity, research limitations, and implications have also been discussed.

Keywords: Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Longevity, Mentoring, Relationship Quality, Structural Equation Modeling

Introduction

Human resources are the most important intangible assets of the organization as the success dependence on competence of its human resources. No organization can exist and grow without efficient and effective human resources (Chahal et al., 2016). In the past few years, most of the organizations have adopted the mentoring programmes to encourage, motivate, and boost employees' capabilities and confidence level in order to achieve the organizational objectives (Pan et al., 2011). Competition and technological advances have resulted in dramatic change in human resource practices. These environmental changes have forced the organizations to adopt appropriate strategies in order to cope with major organizational changes (Kram & Hall, 1996). In this context, mentoring plays a significant role in reducing the negative outcomes as well as increasing the positive outcomes of mentoring. The benefits of mentoring are not only work related, but it can also provide individuals with opportunities to enhance cultural awareness, aesthetic appreciation, and the potential to lead meaningful lives (Jyoti and sharma, 2015a, 2015b and 2017). Mentoring helps organization to see their employees more personally and obtain knowledge of their personal needs as well as their work (Christa, 2011). Mentoring is vital as it benefits both, the organizations and its members. It provides more fruitful result when it is long lasting. So, the study proposes to check the interaction effect of mentoring and longevity to relationship quality.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

Figure 1 represents the conceptual model and accordingly the hypotheses have been framed. The model shows that longevity moderates the relationship between mentoring and scholar and guide relationship quality.

Hypotheses Development

The benefits of mentoring accrue over a relatively long period. Therefore, sufficient time is needed for the relationship to develop. There are various studies, which revealed that duration of relationship in mentoring

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positively affects mentoring outcomes (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Herrera et al., 2007; Grossman et al., 2012). Time facilitates mentor-mentee relationships quality (Rodes et al., 2014). Research indicates that the longevity of mentoring relationship strengthens the relationship between mentoring and related outcomes (Rhodes, 2005; Rhodes et al., 2006). Grossman et al. (2012); Grossman & Rhodes (2002) state that early termination of relationship between mentee and mentor negatively impacts mentoring outcomes. Based on the above discussion, we can hypothesize that:

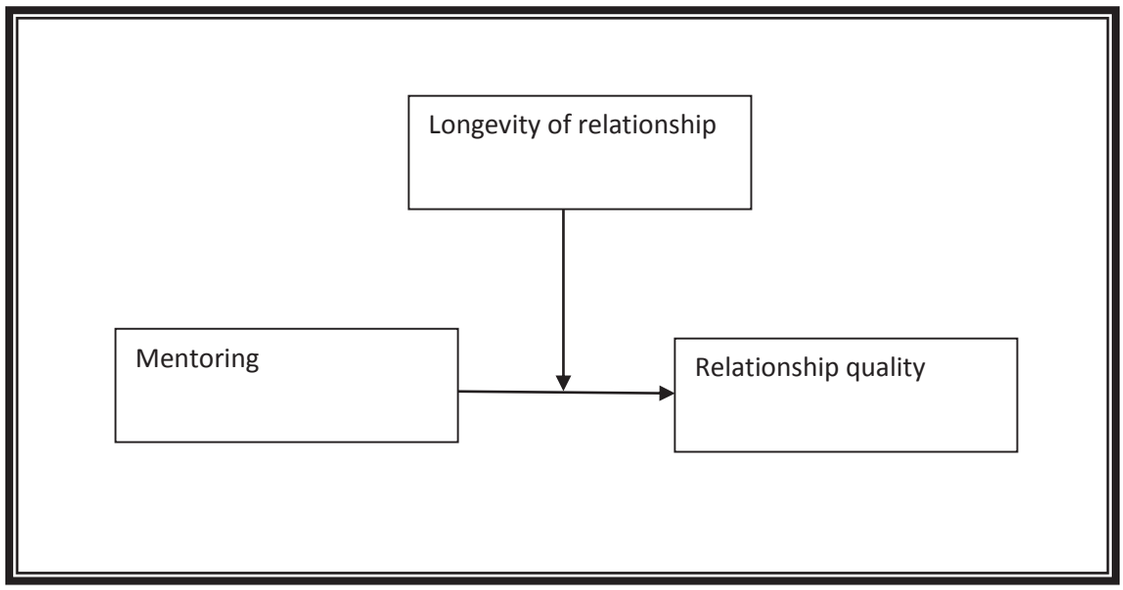

Fig. 1: Theoretical Framework

H1: Longevity moderates the relationship between mentoring and relationship quality.

Methodology

Generation of scale items

The scale items have been finalized with the help of following literature:

Mentoring: It has been measured with the help of fifteen items adapted from Scandura and Ragins (1993). The sample item is: "my mentor instructs me about my job". The value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.946.

Relationship quality: It has been measured through eight items; it is self-generated from reviewing the research paper of Ragins et al. (2000) and Karcher et al. (2005). It includes items pertaining to trust, support, respect, information sharing, collaborative problem solving, and expectations. This scale has a Cronbach's alpha value as 0.971.

Longevity: The duration of association/relationship between mentor and mentee has been taken in as longevity of relationship.

Pilot Survey

A pilot survey has been conducted on 100 scholars in Jammu and Kashmir pursuing research work in education sector in North India. EFA has been conducted to identify the factors of different scales used in the present study. The test of appropriateness of a factor analysis has been verified through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (Hair et al., 2010). The statement with factor loading less than 0.50 and multiple factor loadings have been deleted (Hair et al., 2010). Initially, mentoring contains 15 items which have been reduced to 11 items after EFA that converged under three factors (career functions, psychosocial functions, and role modeling). Further, relationship quality consisted of eight items and reduced to seven items, which converged under two factors (i.e., psychological support and respect and helpfulness.). Longevity of relationship is a single-item

construct. The KMO values of all the scales are above 0.70 and total variance explained by all the constructs is above 60%.

Data Collection

Data have been collected from scholars of different universities taking research courses in Jammu province. Dyadic approach has been used (one guide and one scholar) for data collection. Total number of guides is 267. Out of this population, 259 complete sets of questionnaire have been received back, which accounted for 97% of response rate.

The descriptive statistics revealed that majority of the respondents (58%) are females and most of the mentees (65%) are in the age group 25–30. 53% of the mentees have 3–5 years of association with their mentors.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Scholars

Variables	*Groups*	*Percentage%*	*Mentoring (Mean)*
Gender	Male Female	42 58	3.74 3.57
Age group	20-25 25-30 30-35	24 65 11	3.55 3.63 3.89
Mentor	Senior researcher Junior researcher Teachers fellow researcher Other	17 5 39 26 13	3.57 3.52 3.68 3.69 3.61
Longevity of relationship	1-3 3-5 5-7	16 53 31	

Common Method Variance

Majority of the information has been procured from scholars only, which can cause a problem of common method variance. In order to remove this problem Harman's 1-factor test has been applied, where all dependent, independent, and moderating variables have been added together and principal component factor analysis has been conducted with varimax rotation. The total variance explained by single factors account for 20.3% variation. Hence, no common method bias exists in the data (Liu et al., 2011).

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) has been used to assess the goodness of model fit, reliability, and validity of the scales. Items with standardized regression weights (SRW) less than 0.50 have been deleted (Hair et al., 2010). Second-order CFA models have been designed for mentoring and relationship quality as two and three factors emerged for each after EFA.

Further, reliability of the constructs in the study has been checked using composite reliability. In the present study, the values of composite reliability is above the threshold limit (mentoring 0.91), (relationship quality = 0.95). Discriminant validity got established as the squared root of average variance extracted of this scale is higher than the squared correlation between different scales used in this study (Table 3). Further, average variance extracted and standardized estimates (>0.50) proved the convergent validity (Table 4).

Moderation Effect

In this study longevity (metric variables) has been taken as moderating variables between mentoring and relationship quality. Moderation of metric variable has been checked through significance of interaction effect (Gaskin, 2012; Little et al., 2007, p. 223). In order to model moderating

effect of metric variables, product indicator approach has been used (Chin et al., 2003). Additionally, a series of simple slop analyses have also been conducted to assess moderation too. The result revealed that the interaction of mentoring and longevity significantly predict quality of relationship (SRW= 0.629, p<.001, Table 5). Further, the interaction model is explaining 83% (R^2=0.832) of the total variation in relationship quality.

Table 2: Summary of Goodness of Model Fit Indices

Constructs	*χ^2/ df*	*RMR*	*GFI*	*AGFI*	*CFI*	*NFI*	*RMSEA*
Mentoring	1.920	0.055	0.948	0.890	0.952	0.908	0.077
Relationship quality	1.647	0.039	0.962	0.918	0.971	0.930	0.065
Longevity	Single item construct						

Table 3: Discriminant Validity and Correlation Analysis

Constructs	*Mentoring*	*Relationship quality*
Mentoring	.87	
Relationship Quality	.514**	.94
Longevity	Single item construct	
Note. Values on the diagonal axis represent the square root of average variance extracted. Values below the diagonal axis are correlation **p< 0.01		

Table 4: Reliability and Validity

Constructs	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*	*Standardized Regression Weight*	*Average Variance Extracted*	*Composite Reliability*	*Cronbach's Alpha*
Mentoring	3.9	.701		0.78	0.91	
Career function	3.88	.775	0.83			0.75
Psychosocial function	3.61	.837	0.39			0.71
Role modeling	4.21	.492	0.79			0.70
Relationship Quality	3.83	.672		0.91	0.95	
Psychological support	3.64	.721	0.79			0.75
Respect and helpfulness	4.01	.624	0.83			0.75

Table 5: Moderation Result

	Model I	*Model II*	*Model III*	*Accepted/ rejected*
Mentoring →relationship quality	0.690***	0.691***	0.196***	H1-accepted
Longevity →relationship quality		0.060ns	0.630***	
Mentoring* Longevity → relationship quality			0.629***	
R^2	0.477	0.480	0.832	
Note: ***P<.001, ** P<.01, ns= not significant				

Further, moderation an effect of longevity has been cemented by simple slop analyses (Gaskin statistic tool software). The result indicated that higher the length of relationship, better is the relationship between mentoring and relationship quality (Figure 2).

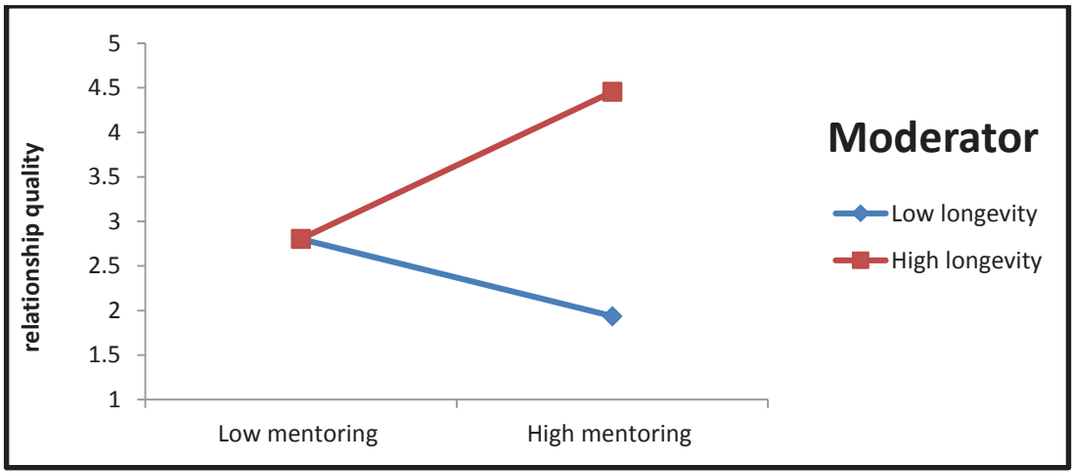

Fig. 2: Moderating Effect of Longevity between Mentoring and Relationship Quality

Discussion

Present paper investigates the moderating role of longevity between mentoring and relationship quality. The result confirms that mentoring results in better relationship quality when the duration of relationship is more. Mentoring is more fruitful when the duration of relationship between guide and scholar is long. Mentoring in initial stage is introductory and with the passage of time both develop interpersonal comfort. Interpersonal comfort allows both parties to express their views freely and develop sound relationships. Further, relationship closeness and caring attitudes between guide and scholar increase when their relationship develops continuously. Long relationship helps in understanding the likes and dislikes of each other, which helps in establishing a strong bond between both of them.

Results from this study have practical implications for the education sector. Guide/mentor should devote considerable time to understand their scholar. Guide should not over expect from their scholars without knowing them properly in short duration. In order to build relationship quality, guide should encourage their scholars to open up freely and discuss problems faced by them in research work. Guide should also show openness and affection, which enhances relationship quality.

Limitation and Future Research

The paper has certain limitations, which can be overcome in the future. Firstly, the study is cross-sectional in nature; longitudinal study should be conducted in future to bring out the true extant of causal relationships. Secondly, the study is conducted only in the education sector in Jammu and Kashmir (North India). For future research, it can be extended in other sectors such as insurance, banking, healthcare, etc.

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