

# Mentoring Skills and Career Progression of Business Educators in Colleges of Education in South-West, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between mentoring skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria. To guide the study four research questions were raised and four hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational survey research design. A population of 122 business educators was used for the study which also served as sample of the study. The research instrument used was a structured questionnaire titled “Mentoring skills and Career Progression Questionnaire (TWCDQ). The questionnaire was segmented into two parts. Part A and B. Part A consisted of the demographic variables of the respondents such as ownership of colleges of education and sex. Part B was grouped into sub-section 1 and 2 that measured the relevant variables of business educators’ mentoring skills and career progression. Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded a coefficient of 0.73 and 0.75 for mentoring skills and career progression respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts from department of Business Education, Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti, Ekiti State. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study indicated that mentoring skills is significantly related to career progression of business educators. It was concluded that mentoring is significantly related to career progression of business educators. Based on the study, it was recommended that deliberate effort should be made by management of college of education to design and promote mentorship programme that will enhance career progression of business educators.

**Keywords:** Writing skills, Communication skills, Collaborative skills, Career progression

## INTRODUCTION

Business educators are lecturers that teach students courses that are business related, including Accounting, Marketing, Office Technology and Management in tertiary institutions (universities, polytechnics and colleges of education) in Nigeria. Business educators in colleges of education are responsible for training and imparting knowledge into the would-be teachers of business studies and other related business subjects for the primary and junior secondary school levels of education in Nigeria. Business educators contribute to national economic growth and development in the educational industry. Osuala, in Nwokike and Okoli (2015), presented the objectives of business education as follows: (i) to teach all students the discriminative quality of choice of goods and services that business has to be able to provide. (ii) to help foster in the students interest in/of the different occupations that can be encountered in the business world. (iii) to impart in every student the working method of cognising and feeling the real working of the economic system. (iv) to assist the students to learn simple skills in the business occupations as novices who are likely to pursue business as a profession. (v) to equip students to join and achieve success in business careers as new entrants who anticipate pursuing business as a vocation. The attainment of these objectives, require adequate mentoring of business educators.

Mentoring is a personal relationship in which knowledgeable employee helps to guide the upcoming newly employed employee. Mentoring is also a process of serving as a mentor for someone by facilitating and assisting the person’s development (Bozman, 2018). Mentoring is crucial for building competencies in business education, such as leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving skills highly sought after by employers (Oladele, 2023).

mentoring facilitates the transfer of knowledge, skills, and experiences from mentors to mentees, enhancing business educator' readiness for the competitive job market (Ragins, 2017). Effective mentoring offers guidance, career counseling, and professional insights that shape business educator' career trajectories, boosting their confidence and equipping them with skills relevant to their field of study (Allen & Eby, 2011). When properly implemented, mentoring can enhance job performance and support career progression of young business educators (Onifade, 2023).

Career progression is an improvement in the position of employees who put in an effort to gain necessary skills and upgrade their performance. Career progression refers to the advancement an individual makes in their professional life, typically, involving growth in responsibilities, skills and compensation. Career progression of business educators, passes through several stages before they peak at the highest level. In the case of college of education, for example, business educators typically start as Lecturer III with a First Degree in the relevant areas of specialization, such as Accounting, Office Technology and Marketing. Holders of Master's degree start as Lecturer II, while a PhD holders start as Lecturer I. From here, they are expected to proceed to Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer and Chief Lecturer depending on the number of publications they possess. It takes at least three years to move from one cadre to the other. The job performance of business educators in colleges of education involve: lecturing, which is the major task, and this is coupled with other tasks that include: occasionally, periodically, assessing and evaluating the academic performance of students through tests, examinations, assignments, and evaluation of project, supervising students regarding industrial training and teaching practice. They also undertake administrative responsibilities, meetings, research and conferences to ensure they are up to date with latest trends in their area of specialization. To execute these functions effectively, business educators need to acquire some mentoring skills which include research writing skills, communication skills, and collaborative skills.

Writing is the process of representing a language with symbol or letter. Academic writing is any form of logical composition that provides evidence for sustaining an intellectual viewpoint (Fitzmaurice and O'Farrell, 2015). Ogunye (2018) suggested that academic writing must be well- thought out, well-organized, coherent, grammatically correct, well punctuated and logically sequenced. In academics, writing skills are criteria for assessing lecturer career growth. There is need for business educators to acquire this essential mentoring skill from his or her mentor as this will enable them to write article which is publishable in reputable journal. The foregoing may be achievable through communication skills.

Communication skills are the abilities to transmit and exchange ideas, thoughts and emotion between a sender and a receiver, through writing, symbols and body language to create mutual understanding (Haeger and Fresquez, 2016). It helps business educators to present their research report in seminars, conferences, workshop, meetings symposia, colloquiums, discussion group and many other occasions. There is need for business educators to equip themselves with oral communication skills before they venture into presentation of research work. This could be achieved through proper mentorship. Communication skills may foster collaborative skills.

Collaborative skills are abilities that allow individuals to work effectively with others towards a shared goal (Rodriguez, 2012). Strong collaborative skills are essential in academic setting. Effective collaboration encourages and assists business educators to learn new concepts and improve understanding of already known concepts. Collaborative skills among business educators develop individual content and pedagogical knowledge as they are able to interact, share and support one another on their specific problems for their career advancement. There is need for business educators to be mentored on how to interact, support and cooperate with co-workers for greater productivity and career growth.

## **Statement of the Problem**

One of the aims of mentoring is to ensure that employee understand the nitty-gritty of their jobs well on time in order to facilitate personal, career and professional growth necessary for high professional commitment. However, it has been observed that there is poor mentoring practice among business educators in colleges of education. The experienced business educators are not assisting the young or newly recruited business educators to progress in their career and making their potentials to be realized. They are not involving in professional relationship with the young educators at the workplace for them to develop skills and knowledge needed to meet

the standard performance expected from them. This has led to stagnation in their chosen career. They feel confident where they are, and they do not feel the need to advance and realize their full potential because of this they feel weak and of little value, which then affect their desire to advance within the system. All these have adversely affected their career growth. The continuous existence of this scenario remains a concern to the researcher and based on this therefore, this study seeks to find out if mentoring could promote career growth of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between mentoring and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the:

1. relationship between writing skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria?
2. relationship between communication skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria?
3. relationship between collaborative skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria?
4. the relationship between dimensions of mentorship skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria?

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the relationship between writing skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between communication skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria?
3. What is the relationship between collaborative skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria?
4. What is the relationship between dimensions of mentorship skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between writing skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between communication skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria.
3. There is no significant relationship between collaborative skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria.
4. Dimension of mentorship skills do not significantly predict career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria.

## METHODOLOGY

Correlational survey research design was used in the study. The study population included 122 business teachers who were in eight colleges of education that had business education in South-West, Nigeria. The whole population was used for the study, as it was manageable. Data collection was done using a structured questionnaire, which was subdivided into two parts. Part A was on personal data of respondents, whereas Part B consisted of a total of 20 opinion statements formulated in a 4-point rating scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and Strongly Agree (4), respectively. All the questionnaires were filled and sent. Three professionals in the Department of Business Education, Bamidele Olumilua University of Education Science and Technology, Ikere-Ekiti, Ekiti State, had validated the instrument. To accomplish this, the internal consistency of the instrument was evaluated by a pilot test, and the data obtained was analysed through Cronbach's alpha statistics by administering 15 copies of the questionnaire once to 15 business educators of the Federal College of Education, Okene, Kogi State, who were not part of the study sample. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient values of the mentoring and career progression scales were 0.85 and 0.82, respectively, which indicated that all items in the scale were reliable.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient and multiple regression analysis were used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule for the research questions was based on  $r$  value such that calculated  $r$ -value between 0 and 0.20 was regarded as very low correlation, 0.21 and 0.40 was regarded as low correlation, 0.41 and 0.60 was regarded as moderate correlation, 0.61 and 0.80 was regarded as high correlation and 0.81 and 1.00 was regarded as very high correlation (Uzoagulu, 2011). On the basis of the hypotheses, the probability value ( $p$ -value) was used, such that if  $p$ -value was equal to or less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected but if the  $p$ -value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was retained.

## RESULTS

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between writing skills and career progression of business educators.

Table 1: Pearson  $r$  showing the relationship between writing skills and career progression of business educators

Variables	N	R	Sig 2-tailed (p-value)	Remarks
Writing skill				
Career progression	122	.752	<b>.001</b>	Significant

$$\alpha = .05, \quad p < .05$$

Table 1 depicts the relationship between writing skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education, South-West, Nigeria. Based on the table 1 the correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) =.752, this presents an indication of high positive relationship between writing skills and career progression. At.05 alpha levels, the correlation coefficient is significant when looking at the  $p$ -value (.001). The null hypothesis is thus rejected. Therefore, writing skills and career development are strongly correlated.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between communication skills and career progression of business educators.

Table 2: Pearson  $r$  showing the relationship between communication skills and career progression of business educators

Variables	N	R	Sig 2-tailed (p-value)	Remarks
Communication skill				

Career progression	122	.542	<b>.021</b>	Significant
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$$\alpha = .05, \quad p < .05$$

Table 2 shows the relationship between communication skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education, South-West, Nigeria. From the table the correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) = .542, this is an indication of a moderate positive relationship between communication skills and career progression. Looking at the p-value (.021) the correlation coefficient is significant testing at .05 alpha levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. Hence there is a significant relationship between communication skills and career progression.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant relationship between collaborative skills and career progression of business educators.

Table 3: Pearson r showing the relationship between collaborative skills and career progression of business educators

Variables	N	R	Sig 2-tailed (p-value)	Remarks
Interpersonal skill				
Career progression	122	.612	<b>.000</b>	Significant

$$\alpha = .05, \quad p < .05$$

The Table 3 revealed a correlation between collaborative skills and career advancement of business educators in colleges of education, South-West, Nigeria. Based on the table the correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) =.612 This is evidence of a high positive relationship between. collaborative skills and career progression looking at the p-value (.000) the correlation coefficient is significant at.05 alpha levels. The null hypothesis is hence rejected. Therefore there exists a very strong correlation between team work skills and career advancement.

**Hypothesis Four:** Dimension of mentorship skills do not significantly predict career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria.

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA on the multiple regression estimate between dimensions of Mentoring skills and career progression of Business Educators.

Model	Sum of square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
<b>Regression</b>	6492.376	<b>5</b>			
<b>Residual</b>	4031.814	165	811.549	33.312	.000
<b>Total</b>	10524.190	173	24.435		

From Table 4 with p value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05, shows that dimension of mentoring skills significantly predicts career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria.

Table 5: Multiple regression coefficients on dimensions of mentoring skills predicting Career progression of Business Educators



Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	8.084	4.114		2.937	0.001
Writing skills	.310	.237	.530	1.820	.025
Communication skill	.122	.348	.043	.441	.011
Collaboration skills	.208	.198	.115	1.557	.014

Data in Table 5 shows that dimension of mentoring skills predicting career development of business educators was statistically significant such that writing skills yielded a p-value of .025; for communication skills p-value of .011; for collaboration a p-value of .014; The R square is .725, which indicates that 72.5% of the variance in career progression is explained by dimension of mentoring skills of business educators. From the overall model analysis, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the results reveal that the dimension of mentoring skills that has more predictive effect on the career progression of business educators is writing skills.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of hypothesis one revealed that there was significant relationship between writing skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria. The finding is in agreement with Obiyor (2016) whose study established a positive relationship between mentoring writing skills and career progression. The finding is also consistent with fogafty (2016) who reported that writing skills among teachers enhanced their career advancement. The implication of these findings is that there is a direct correlation between mentoring writing skills and career progression of business educators.

The test of hypothesis two pointed out that there was a significant relationship between mentoring communication skills and career development of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria. The finding is in agreement with that of Haeger and Fresquez (2016) whose study reported a relationship between communication skills and career progression among researchers. The implication of these findings is that team communication skills contribute to career progression of business educators.

The test of hypothesis three indicated that there was significant relationship between collaborative skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria. The current study's findings are in consonance with the findings of Rodrigue (2012) that collaborative skills enable teachers to share knowledge make decision and solve problems among themselves. It also agrees with the findings of King and Newman (2014) to the effect that collaboration skills among teachers contribute to their learning and assist them in acquiring more skills which enhance their career growth.

The test of hypothesis four showed that the dimension of mentoring skills significantly predicted career progression of business educators in public colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria. This goes to confirm the findings of the studies of Luca and Tarricone (2017) which reported a positive link between dimensions of mentoring skills and career progression. This implies that career progression of business educators is directly linked to the dimension of mentoring skills practice to which they are exposed. The findings of the study is in line with Mulika (2017) who found that mentoring environment enable employee to develop skills and knowledge needed to meet the standard performance expected from them.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this research, it can be concluded that mentoring skills and career progression of business educators in colleges of education in South-West, Nigeria have significant relationship. This implies that writing skills, communication skills and collaborative skills collectively and independently relate to career development of business educators in colleges of education. When all these dimensions of mentoring skills are exist among business educators, their career progression will be enhanced.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered.

1. The study has revealed that mentoring is significantly correlated with career progression. Therefore, deliberate efforts should be made by management of colleges of education and government to provide enabling environment that will improve dimensions of mentoring skills such as writing skills, communication skills and collaborative skills among business educators in the colleges of education so as to enhance their career progression.
2. Management of colleges of education should design and promote mentorship programme that will enhance career progression of business educators.

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