Psycho-social Predictors of Satisfaction with Formal Mentoring Relationship in the Banking Sector

David E. Okurame
Department of Psychology, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Satisfaction with mentoring is a crucial factor for the success of formal mentoring programmes, which has become popular tools for supporting new employees in the Nigerian banking sector. Yet, little is known about the protege's satisfaction with mentoring in the sector. This paper ascertains the level of protege satisfaction with formal mentoring in a banking organization, and examines its psycho-social (career stage, type of duty, gender, age, tenure in current organization and education) predictors. Data were collected from 182 proteges of formal mentoring relationships in the banking sector, using a questionnaire. Results indicate that proteges who reported a below average level of satisfaction were significantly greater (73.6%) than those who expressed an above average level of satisfaction (26.4%) ($r^2 = 40.63; p < .001$). Hierarchical regression analysis which controlled for the effects of mentor's gender reveals that psycho-social variables jointly predicted satisfaction with mentoring ($R^2 = .44; p < .001$), accounting for 38.5 percent ($p < .001$) of its variance. The strongest significant independent contribution to satisfaction with mentoring was made by career stage ($\beta = -.35, p < .001$), while the least was by gender ($\beta = -.13, p < .05$). Type of duty ($\beta = -.08, p \text{ n.s.}$) and education ($\beta = .16, p \text{ n.s.}$) were not significant independent predictors of a protege's satisfaction with mentoring. The practical implications of these findings are that management intervention for satisfactory mentoring should incorporate the psycho-social domain of proteges and empower mentors to satisfy the needs of proteges.

Key words: Mentoring, satisfaction, psycho-social variables, career stage, formal relationship

Introduction
Mentoring is a relationship in which a higher ranking, influential, senior organization member, with advanced experience and knowledge (mentor) is committed to providing upward mobility and support to the professional career of a younger, less-experienced individual, called the protege (Kram, 1985; Mincemoyer and Thomson, 1998). Because a mentoring relationship can be formal or informal, there are also formal and informal mentors. Informal mentors evolve spontaneously from shared admiration and interest, while formal mentors are assigned to proteges through a planned matching of mentors and proteges by the organization (Chao, Walz and Gardner, 1992; Dreher and Cox, 1996; Kram, 1985; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Ragins and Cotton, 1999). Whether the relationship is formal or informal, it is expected that mentoring would lead to the personal and professional development of a protege (Cureton, 2009; Cureton, Green and Meakin, 2010) and, consequently, organizational effectiveness. A meta-analytic review of mentoring research across disciplines indicated that mentoring positively correlates with personal health, quantity/quality of interpersonal relationship and productivity (Johnson and Anderson, 2010). Individuals with supportive mentors report greater chances of becoming eminent in their fields across organizations, settings and research designs (Chao, 2009; Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng and DuBois, 2008; Kammeyer-mueller and Judge,
These possibilities are heightened if mentors provide their protégés with satisfactory career development functions such as: a challenging assignment, and pleasing psychosocial functions that enhance a protégé's self-confidence, and address other interpersonal concerns of the relationship.

The pervasive and affirmed benefits of mentoring have made it a hot topic worldwide. It has captured the attention of management in academic, economic, political and social institutions. The understanding that mentoring is a useful tool for effectively managing the career of employees has spurred the emergence of formal mentoring programmes. A majority of research on mentoring is on informal mentoring in the private sector. With the emergence of formal mentoring in the business arena and other organizations, research attention has now shifted towards planned relationships. In the Nigerian environment, formal mentoring programmes seem more visible in the private sector, and perhaps even more important is the fact that it is increasingly embraced in the banking sub-sector. Banking organizations now assign new employees to older and more experienced members of staff with the hope that the latter will provide acceptable mentor functions to their protégés, and the relationship will be effective.

Two questions come to mind when viewing the emerging trend of mentoring in the banking sector. First, are protégés in the formal relationships created by these organizations satisfied with formal mentoring? Mentoring is not always a bed of roses; the relationship can be satisfying or dissatisfying (Ragins, Cotton and Miller, 2000). Mentoring occurs on a continuum and the level of satisfaction in the relationship is a key variable in determining the extent of mentoring effectiveness (RFB, 2010). Therefore, mentoring effectiveness cannot be established without considering satisfaction with the mentoring relationship, as doing this will give an erroneous assessment (Ragins, Cotton and Miller, 2000). The second question is: what are the individual difference variables that may predispose protégés to be satisfied or less satisfied with a mentor, especially in a formal mentoring relationship where mentors are assigned? While these questions remain unanswered, formal mentoring programmes are increasingly popular among organizations in the banking sector. Indeed, critical commentaries have questioned the formal mentoring bandwagon because it is devoid of context-specific information on the ability of the programme to meet expectations. There is a need to empirically investigate satisfaction with formal mentoring in the banking sector. This study therefore examines the level of protégé satisfaction with their formal mentoring relationship in a banking organization and the psycho-social factors (such as career stage, age, tenure in current organization, education, gender and type of duty) that influence their level of satisfaction with the mentoring relationship.

Findings of studies that compared mentoring benefits/outcomes in formal and informal relationships provide a guide for understanding satisfaction in formal mentoring. Many of such studies conclude that formal mentoring is not a substitute for the traditional informal relationship because it cannot replicate benefits of informal mentoring (Douglas, 1997; Murray, 1991; RFB, 2010). The experiences of mentoring in formal and informal relationships are sharply different from each other (Ragins and Cotton 1999; Ragins and McFarlin 1990). Unlike informal mentoring where mentors are driven by long-term career developmental needs of their protégés, mentors in formal relationships are focussed on orienting new employees to meet organizational goals (Kram, 1985; Murray, 1991; Ragins, Cotton and Miller, 2000). Again, while mentors in an informal relationship may meet their protégés for many years as the situation warrants, their counterpart in formal mentoring are only able to meet their protégés at locations and times specified in the signed contract, and in between the statutory six months to one year duration of formal relationships (Murray, 1991). These differences limit the opportunity for a formal mentor to impact positively on his or her protégé. These differences reduce
Psycho-Social Predictors of Satisfaction With Formal Mentoring in the Banking Sector

mentoring functions and outcomes in formal relationships, because opportunities for the formal mentor to impact positively on his or her protégé become limited (Ragins and Cotton, 1999). Mentors in informal relationships have more time to provide mentoring functions to their protégés, giving their intervention more time for fruition (Chao, 1997). In contrast, formal mentoring function is restricted because the relationship is short-term. This structural hindrance results in greater protégé satisfaction in informal mentoring relationships compared to satisfaction in formal mentoring relationships (Murray, 1991; Zey, 1985).

Another guide for understanding satisfaction in formal mentoring relationships is the processes involved in formal programmes. Formal mentors, compared to their informal counterparts, are less-motivated to be in a mentoring relationship (Ragins and Cotton, 1991). They are less willing to identify with a protégé and are short of coaching skills compared to informal mentors (Chao et al., 1992; Kram, 1985). Protégés in formal relationships may therefore feel dissatisfied at a mentor’s lack of concern and/or attention. Again, formal mentoring is a ‘public relationship’ because it is watched by programme organizers. This makes it less likely for formal mentors to shield their protégés from career stress created by ‘adverse forces in the organization’ (Scandura, 1992). Process impediments reduce the quality of mentoring functions in formal mentoring and diminish outcome benefits to a protégé. Some studies (Douglas, 1997; Murray, 1991; Scandura and Williams, 2001; Zey, 1985) reported that the quality of mentoring functions and outcomes in formal relationships is well off the mark when compared to what is obtained in informal mentoring.

The link between the quality of mentoring functions/outcomes and satisfaction with mentoring is well established in the literature. Research has shown that effective mentoring increases the satisfaction of new employees with the relationship (Weng, Huang, Tsai, Chang, Lin and Lee, 2010). Some studies (Dilmore, Rubio, Cohen, Seltzer, Bryce, Primack, Fine and Kapor, 2010; Greiman, 2007; Holloway, 2001; Kram, 1985) reported that high quality mentoring support lead to more benefits for a protégé. Greater benefits in turn are positively related to a protégé’s satisfaction with the dyad relationship (Greiman, 2007). Given that previous studies (Douglas, 1997; Murray, 1991; Zey, 1985) suggested that the quality of mentoring functions/outcomes are low in formal mentoring, and the quality of mentoring functions/outcomes received by a protégé are associated with satisfaction in mentoring, it is logical to expect that a greater number of protégés in formal mentoring will be less satisfied with their relationship. Consequently, this study formulated and tested hypothesis 1: A greater number of protégés in formal mentoring will report low levels of satisfaction with mentoring compared to those who report high levels of satisfaction with mentoring.

A review of the literature reveals that research on the relationship between psycho-social variables (such as career stage, age, tenure in current organization, education, gender and type of duty) and satisfaction with mentoring in a formal relationship is virtually non-existent, with the exception of that by St-Jean and Audet (2009); though it did not examine the impact of psycho-social variables investigated in the present study. The few studies (Chao et al., 1992; Ragins and Cotton, 1999) on protégé satisfaction with mentoring have mainly focused on quality of mentoring functions as antecedents of satisfaction, and on positive outcomes of satisfaction with mentoring, such as work and career attitudes (Ramaswani and Dreher, 2007; Ragins, Cotton and Miller, 2000). This conclusion led to a deluge of investigations of the relationship between psycho-social variables of protégés and quality/level of mentoring functions provided by their mentors. Although, findings of these studies are based on the relationship between psycho-social variables and quality of mentoring functions received, they provide direction for the investigation of the relationship between psycho-social variables and satisfaction with mentoring in this study, since quality/level of
mentoring function is a predictor of satisfaction with mentoring.

A review of the literature on the relationship between psycho-social variables and satisfaction with mentoring functions reflects conflicting findings. The empirical investigations of the relationship between career stage and level of mentoring functions yielded inconsistent results. The results in a number of studies which measured career stage as the number of years an employee has spent in a profession/career (Dreher and Ash, 1990; Turban and Dougherty, 1994; Whitely, Dougherty and Dreher, 1992) showed that protégés with more career/professional experience receive fewer mentoring functions. A few others (Higgins and Thomas, 2001; Lankau and Scandura, 2002) reported that professional experience is positively-related to the level of mentoring function reported by protégés. These findings imply that career stage is a significant predictor of quality/level of mentoring functions received by a protégé. For this reason, it is projected that career stage will be a significant predictor of satisfaction with formal mentoring.

The relationship between the type of duty an employee carries out for a specific period of time and the quality of career mentoring functions received is reported in the literature with mixed findings. Since some studies found significant relationship between the two variables (Nielsen, Carlson and Lankau, 2001; Wayne Liden, Kraimer and Graf, 1999), this study anticipates a significant relationship between the variables. It envisaged that the type of duty may influence the nature of support a protégé expects from a mentor, and that the ability of formal mentors to meet such expectations should influence a protégé’s satisfaction with mentoring.

Chao, 1997 and Gravells, 2006 found no relationship between age and quality of mentoring functions received. Cox and Nkomo, 1991 and Scandura and Williams, 2001 reported that older protégés received less mentoring functions compared to their younger counterparts; while Burke and McKeen, 1997 and Whitely, Dougherty and Dreher 1992 reported the opposite. Since the argument that age influences the quality of mentoring is robust in the literature, this study predicts that age and satisfaction with formal mentoring will be significantly related. Mentors in formal relationships are likely to perceive that younger protégés need more support than their older counterparts. As such, younger protégés will receive more mentoring support and, consequently, will be more satisfied with their relationship than older protégés.

Findings on the extent to which educational attainment is related to the quality of mentoring support received by a protégé are equally mixed. Godshalk and Sosik, 2000; Gravells, 2006; Koberg, Boss and Goodman, 1998) found little or no effects of education on mentoring support; while Lankau and Scandura, 2002; Okurame and Balogun, 2005; Whitely and Coetsier, 1993 reported significant effects. Educational attainment is therefore proposed as a predictor of satisfaction with formal mentoring. It is suggested that protégés with low educational attainment seek mentoring functions more often than those with higher levels of education, and the receipt of such support makes them more satisfied with mentoring.

Research on the relationship between gender and mentoring quality is not an exception. Most of the studies reported that men tend to receive more mentoring functions (especially career development functions) than women (Allen and Eby, 2004), while others found no significant difference (Noe, 1988; Ragins and Cotton, 1999). It would therefore be expected that men will be more satisfied with mentoring in a formal relationship than women. Investigations of the effects of protégé’s organizational tenure on mentoring support have yielded fairly-consistent significant results. However, results of the investigations have either been significantly positive or negative. This suggests that organizational tenure is a predictor of mentoring.
Psycho-Social Predictors of Satisfaction With Formal Mentoring in the Banking Sector

quality. Accordingly, it is expected that organizational tenure will predict satisfaction with mentoring in a formal relationship.

The foregoing reviews indicate that the majority of findings on the influence of each of the psycho-social variables on quality/level of mentoring functions are significant. Consequently, it is expected that in this study, psycho-social variables (career stage, age, tenure in current organization, education, gender and type of duty) will independently predict satisfaction with formal mentoring. These variables may also combine to influence satisfaction with formal mentoring relationship.

This study formulated and tested hypothesis 2: Psycho-social variables will independently and jointly predict satisfaction with mentoring in a formal relationship. Specifically, career stage, age, organizational tenure, education, gender and banking duty will independently and jointly predict satisfaction with formal mentoring.

Method
Participants
Data for the study were collected from 182 employees (103 male and 79 female) in a banking organization in Nigeria, where there is a one-year formal mentoring programme for new members of staff. All the respondents were protégés in a just-concluded formal mentoring relationship, in which mentors were officially-assigned by management. Of the total sample. Their mean age was 31.26 years (SD = 3.96), ranging from 25 to 39. One hundred and eight of the respondents carry out marketing duties, while 74 are involved in operations. The respondents had worked for an average of 3.33 years (SD = 0.94) in their current organization and had a mean professional tenure of 1.3 years (SD = 0.94), ranging from 1 to 7 years. Their educational status varied thus: 58 (31.9%) had a higher diploma, 32 (17.6%) had a first degree, 48 (26.4%) had a second degree, while 44 (24.2%) had a combination of one of the foregoing credentials and a professional qualification.

Procedure
Data were collected through questionnaires that were administered during working hours, with the help of supervisors and research assistants. Two hundred questionnaires were handed to the respondents who agreed to take part in the study. They were asked to fill the questionnaires at their free time and submit with the signed consent form. One hundred and ninety questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 95%. Because some of the respondents did not supply the required information, only 182 questionnaires with full data for analysis were utilized in the study; resulting in a final response rate of 91%.

Measures
Control variable
Mentor’s gender in formal relationships were considered as potential covariates in this study, because previous studies (Okurame, 2007; Ragins, 1997; Ragins and Sundstrom, 1989) have associated it with quality of mentoring functions, which in turn is related to satisfaction with mentoring (Baugh, Lankau and Scandura, 1996; Chao, 1997; Ragins, Cotton and Miller, 2000). The effect of mentor gender was therefore controlled in the analysis to reduce error variance and increase statistical power (Cohen and Cohen, 1983).

Independent variable
Psycho-social factors in the study include: career stage, type of duty, gender, tenure in current organization, age and highest educational attainment.

1. Career stage: This variable was measured using the professional tenure of the respondents. As a continuous measure, the respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they have spent in the
banking profession since obtaining their undergraduate qualification or its equivalent. This measurement procedure is consistent with past research in the area of career stage (Cox and Harquail, 1991; Reilly and Orsak, 1991; Lynn, Cao and Horn, 1996; Mount, 1984). In line with prior studies, employees with professional tenure of less than two years were considered to be in the establishment stage of their career. Those with a professional tenure of more than two years but less than or equal to ten years were regarded as employees in the advancement stage of their career. The maintenance stage, which is made up of individuals with professional tenure greater than 10 years, was not utilized in this study. One hundred and one of the respondents were in the establishment stage of their career, while 81 were in the advancement stage. The career stage cut-offs are “pivotal points in terms of changes in career-related attitudes of professionals” and correspond to the natural developmental career stages (cited in Lynn, Cao and Horn, 1996).

2. **Gender and type of duty**: Gender was coded 1 if a respondent was a male, and 2 if a female. Type of duty was coded 1 if a respondent was involved in marketing duties, and 2 if in operations duty.

3. **Age and tenure with current organization**: These factors were measured as continuous variables.

4. **Education**: This was assessed by the highest educational qualification attained by a respondent as at the time of the study. It was coded 1 if a respondent had a higher diploma or an undergraduate degree, 2 for a graduate degree and 3 for a combination of a degree/higher diploma and a professional qualification.

**Dependent variable – Satisfaction with mentoring**: This variable was assessed using a 4-item scale developed by Ragins and Cotton (1999). The scale is a measure of the extent to which a protégé is satisfied in his or her relationship with a mentor. Sample items include: “My mentor has been effective in his or her role”, and “My mentor fails to meet my needs.” In line with the procedure suggested in the literature (Anastasi and Urbina, 1997; Rust and Golombok, 1995), the scale was subjected to item-total analysis for re-validation, because original items were based on a different population. Item analysis results revealed a significant least item-total correlation of .61. Construct validity was established by correlating scores on the scale with scores on Okurame’s (2009) mentoring support scale. The results indicated a strong significant positive relationship \( r = .84, p < .001 \). The mentoring support scale was used to ascertain convergent validity for two reasons. First, the scale is a standardized instrument that has been used to measure the level of mentoring functions among Nigerian samples in previous studies (e.g. Okurame, 2009; Okurame and Balogun, 2005). Second, the degree of mentoring support received by a protégé is positively related to satisfaction with a mentoring relationship (Baugh et al, 1996; Chao, 1997; Ragins, Cotton and Miller, 2000). All the items of the satisfaction with mentoring scale loaded strongly onto one factor. The coefficient alpha for the scale in the present study was 0.89. The respondents responded to the items on a seven point scale, ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 7 “strongly agree”. High scores represent greater satisfaction with mentor, while low scores signify lower satisfaction with mentor.

**Results**

Hypothesis 1 stated that a greater number of protégés in formal mentoring relationship will report low levels of satisfaction with mentoring compared to those who report high levels of satisfaction with mentoring. Descriptive statistical analysis (mean and simple frequency and the chi square inferential tool)
Psycho-Social Predictors of Satisfaction With Formal Mentoring in the Banking Sector

were utilized to test this hypothesis. The mean score on satisfaction with mentoring was used to classify protégés into “high satisfaction with mentoring” and “low satisfaction with mentoring” groups. Protégés whose levels of satisfaction with mentoring were below the mean for the sample formed the low satisfaction group. Those with satisfaction scores above the mean comprised the high satisfaction with mentoring group. Simple frequency showed that more protégés (73.6%, n = 134) reported lower levels of satisfaction with mentoring compared to those who expressed higher satisfaction with mentoring (26.4%, n = 48). Chi square analysis using the goodness-of-fit procedure showed that the observed differences in frequency is significant (χ²(1, 182) = 40.63, p < .001). Hypothesis 1 was therefore supported.

Hypothesis 2 stated that psycho-social variables (career stage, gender, age, tenure in current organization, type of duty and education) will be significant independent and joint predictors of a protege's satisfaction with formal mentoring. Preliminary analysis involved inter-correlations of psycho-social variables and satisfaction with mentoring.

Table 1: Chi Square Goodness-of-fit Showing Differences Between Observed and Expected Frequencies in Satisfaction with Mentor Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>fo*</th>
<th>fe**</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>X²</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low satisfaction</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40.63</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with mentor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High satisfaction</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with mentor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: fo* = observed frequency, fe** = expected frequency

The results (table 2) show that career stage β = -.49, P < .001), gender β = -.16, P < .01), age β = -.29, P < .001), and tenure in current organization β = .25, P < .001) were significantly related to a protégé’s satisfaction with mentoring. Type of duty β = -.08, P n.s.) and education β = .02, P n.s.) were not related to satisfaction with mentor. This pattern of correlations strengthens the argument that psycho-social factors may operate as predictors of a protégé’s satisfaction with formal mentoring.

Hierarchical regression analysis was computed to examine the unique contribution of a protégé’s career stage, type of duty, gender, age, tenure in current organization and education to satisfaction with mentoring. The hierarchical regression analysis was utilized because it enabled control of the effects of mentor gender on satisfaction with mentoring. As presented on table 3, study variables were entered into the regression equation in two steps. The covariate – mentor gender was entered in the first step, followed by psycho-social variables in the second step.

The results in table 3 revealed that the control variable entered in the first step was significantly related to a protégé’s satisfaction with mentoring (F(1, 180) = 12.406; p < .01, with β = .25 (p < .01)). It accounted for 6% (p < .01) of the variance in satisfaction with mentoring. Table 3 showed that hypothesis 2, which stated that psycho-social factors will independently and jointly predict a protege’s satisfaction with mentoring, was to a large extent supported. Psycho-social variables jointly accounted for a significant variation in satisfaction with mentoring (F (7, 174) = 20.261; p < .001, R² = .44; p < .001) in the second step. This represents a significant F change (ΔF = 7.855, p < .001). All the psycho-social variables jointly accounted for an additional 38.5% (p = < .001) of the variance in satisfaction with mentoring. The strongest significant independent contribution was made by career stage (β = -.35, p < .001), followed by organizational tenure (β = .29, p < .001) and age (β = -.27, p < .001). The least independent contribution was by gender (β = -.13, p < .05). Type of duty (β = -.08, p n.s.) and education (β = .16, p n.s.) did not contribute significantly to a protégé’s satisfaction with mentoring.
Table 2. Correlation matrix of psycho-social factors and satisfaction with mentoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s.d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career stage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>-.17**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.49**</td>
<td>-.018**</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking duty</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protégé gender</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>-.27***</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>-.16**</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.29***</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31.26</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational tenure</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>.25***</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with mentor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.25***</td>
<td>14.85</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Table 3. Hierarchical regression analysis of satisfaction with mentoring on psycho-social factors (n = 182)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Control variable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor gender</td>
<td>.06**</td>
<td>.06**</td>
<td>3.522**</td>
<td>12.406**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Psycho-social variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor gender</td>
<td>.33***</td>
<td>.33***</td>
<td>5.377***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career stage</td>
<td>-.35***</td>
<td>-.35***</td>
<td>-5.720***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking duty</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-1.466</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>-2.140*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.27***</td>
<td>-.27***</td>
<td>-4.422***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational structure</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>4.570***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.44***</td>
<td>.385***</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>2.746***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Discussion

This study examined the level of satisfaction expressed by protégés involved in a formal mentoring relationship. A fundamental interest of the study was also an exploration of the effects of psycho-social factors on satisfaction with formal mentoring relationships. While controlling for the effects of mentor gender, the study isolated the predictive value of psycho-social factors (career stage, age, gender, tenure in current organization, type of duty and educational attainment) on satisfaction with formal mentoring. The findings of this study established two theoretical positions. First, in consonance with previous arguments in the literature, it found that majority of protégés reported low levels of satisfaction with mentoring. Second, it established that career stage, age, gender and organizational tenure are significant independent predictors of satisfaction with formal mentoring, and that these variables acting together with other psycho-social factors (type of duty and educational attainment) jointly influenced satisfaction with formal mentoring.

The significant wide disparity found between the number of protégés who expressed low satisfaction with formal mentoring and those who reported high
levels implies that the formal mentoring programme is meeting the needs of only a few protégés. This finding reflects results of studies (Murray, 1991; Zey, 1985) that have compared the quality of mentoring functions/outcomes in formal and informal mentoring relationships. Researchers have consistently found the level of protégé satisfaction with mentoring functions in formal mentoring relationships to be generally lower. Therefore, in line with prior studies, a probable explanation for the low level of satisfaction with formal mentoring reported by a majority of protégés in this study is an indication of the shortcomings of formal mentoring, as suggested in the literature. This explanation is tenable in the present population for a number of reasons. First, formal mentoring programmes is an emerging phenomenon in the banking sector. Therefore, it may be vulnerable to conceptual lapses. Second, formal mentoring in the population examined in this study seems more focussed on work/organizational procedure rather than the career needs of employees. Employees tend to be more satisfied with assistance focussed on their developmental needs rather than organizational needs (Kram, 1985). Alternatively, it could be argued that discrepancies in the number of satisfied and less-satisfied protégés may be a reflection of the extent to which they are amenable to the formal programme. Either way, the findings portends a challenge to management to design a formal mentoring programme that will be satisfying to all, or at least, the majority.

The practical implication of the finding that majority of the protégés expressed low satisfaction with their formal mentoring experience, is that management will have to take further steps to ensure the success of the programme. First, management should adopt a matching method that makes partners to be comfortable with each other. Indeed, some people have what it takes to be good mentors, but personality match is a problem that often destroys their effort. If ‘agreeableness’ is similar for partners in a formal relationship, the relationship stands a better chance of being satisfactory to protégés (Engstrom, 2004). Second, successful formal mentoring is beyond merely assigning new entrants to senior employees. The possibility of a satisfactory relationship can be enhanced if management ensures that senior members of staff who serve as mentors possess skill levels required to do well as mentors, and are adequately motivated to leverage protégé development. It is erroneous to believe that all senior employees in the banking sector can be good mentors. The fact that an individual is good at what he or she fixes at work does not make that person a good mentor. Management must create a profile of effective mentors to enable the organization source for good mentors from their pool of senior staff. Third, management should conduct an audit of protégé needs to be factored into the programme, and use this to provide a checklist of expectations for mentors. This will help to address the counterproductive practice of focussing solely on organizational goals. Fourth, management must create a work environment that allows mentors to invest sufficient time in their formal relationships, such that they are available for their protégés. The time invested in such relationships and the rigours of interaction are important factors in the perceived satisfaction of mentoring, since it influences the protégé’s value of the support received from a mentor (Cull, 2006; Lankau, Riordan and Thomas, 2005; Nandram, 2003). It also increases the possibility for mentoring pairs to successfully pass through the four vital phases of mentoring.

The results of this study demonstrate that psycho-social variables are significant predictors of satisfaction with formal mentoring in two respects. First, career stage, age, gender and tenure with current organization, type of duty and education combine to influence satisfaction with mentoring. The importance of the combined effects of the variables is underscored by the fact that it accounted
for more than one-third of the variation in satisfaction with formal mentoring. This implies that management intervention for satisfactory mentoring should necessarily incorporate the psycho-social domain of protégés. The second aspect is that career stage, age, gender, and tenure in current organization independently influenced satisfaction with formal mentoring. Career stage and age of protégé are significant negative predictors of satisfaction with formal mentoring. While career stage made the greatest contribution to satisfaction with mentoring, age was the third highest contributor to satisfaction. These findings are in congruence with results of some studies (Turban and Dougherty, 1994; Whitely, Dougherty and Dreher, 1992) on the effects of career stage and age on mentoring functions. The present findings regarding career stage signifies that when a protégé is in the advancement stage of his/her career (high level of professional/career tenure) they experience low levels of satisfaction with mentoring. Conversely, when they are at the establishment stage of their career (low levels of professional/career tenure) they tend to be satisfied with formal mentoring. Similarly, findings regarding age imply that older protégés are less-satisfied with formal mentoring and vice versa.

Mentoring is a mechanism for the exchange of information on a protégé's career. It makes sense therefore to expect that younger protégés and protégés in the early stage of their careers will receive higher levels of mentoring support, and consequently, be more satisfied with their relationship. In line with this reasoning, studies have reported that younger protégés receive more mentor functions, because mentors perceive that they need greater levels than their older counterparts (cited in RFB, 2010). Current findings may therefore be due to the fact that low career stage and young age influence perceptions of the value of support received from mentors in formal mentoring. On the other hand, since older individuals and people at higher career stages have negative perceptions of interpersonal comfort in dyadic relations (Finkelstein, Allen and Rhoton, 2003), it could be argued that the higher a protégé’s career stage and age, the more partners in the relationship act as peers rather than protégé-mentor dyad, and the less the mentor support and satisfaction reported in the relationship. The implication of the foregoing interpretations is that formal mentors will have to take note of the peculiarities of older protégés and those who are at the late stage of their careers to ensure that they benefit from the relationship.

The significant relationship between gender of respondent and satisfaction with formal mentoring implies that male protégés were more satisfied with formal mentoring than their female counterparts. Some studies (Allen and Eby, 2004; Okurame, 2007) argued that there are differences in the nature of mentoring functions received by men and women. While men tend to receive more career development functions that results in better outcomes, women receive more psycho-social functions (Ragins and Cotton, 1999). Because career development function has been found to relate more strongly with positive outcomes, it may account for gender differences in the level of satisfaction with mentoring observed in this study. This implies that providing complete mentoring functions for females may be one practical means for their enhancing satisfaction with mentoring. Management should ensure that formal mentoring relationships, where mentors provide adequate mentoring support for female protégés are in place. They can achieve this by training formal mentors to deliver superior levels of complete mentoring support, and by creating a policy that rewards mentors for satisfactory mentoring relationships with female protégés.

It was discovered that protégés who have been in an organization for a longer period are more satisfied
with formal mentoring than their counterparts with a short tenure. Two potential explanations are possible for this finding. First, protégés with longer tenure probably expressed higher levels of satisfaction with mentoring, because they received a better quality of mentoring functions. This is probably hinged on the fact that quality of mentoring functions received in a mentoring relationship is positively-related to satisfaction with mentoring. Alternatively, it is possible that protégés with longer tenure value mentoring support more than protégés with shorter tenure. These tendencies further challenge management to ensure high quality mentoring functions in formal relationships, and to tailor relationships to the needs of all categories of staff so that mentor support will be valued.

The non-significant finding for the predictive independent effects of type of duty and educational attainment on satisfaction with formal mentoring suggests that the variables may not be crucial factors when they act in isolation. It was expected that a protégé’s level of education and type of duty will influence expectations of mentor support, which in turn will affect satisfaction with mentoring. Findings in this study show that this possibility may only arise if type of duty and education combine with other factors as indicated by the significant joint influence of all psycho-social variables.

The findings of this study are useful for a better understanding of satisfaction with formal mentoring and its psycho-social predictors, with meaningful implications for theory development and the management of formal mentoring programmes in the banking sector. Nevertheless, caution should be exercised in the interpretation of results because of a number of limitations. First, findings are based on a study of a single banking organization. This limits generalization and creates a need for confirmatory studies. Besides, it calls for studies that compares formal mentoring programme in the banking sector with formal relationships in other sectors in the Nigerian arena. Second, caution is required in interpreting findings because the data obtained from participants were self-reported. A longitudinal investigation that incorporates the qualitative approach is therefore recommended for future studies. Though the psycho-social variables examined in this exploratory study made significant contributions to the understanding of satisfaction with mentoring, they cannot be said to be exhaustive. Therefore, future studies should incorporate other psycho-social factors that may be relevant in satisfaction with formal mentoring.

References
Ibadan Journal of the Social Sciences


Psycho-Social Predictors of Satisfaction With Formal Mentoring in the Banking Sector


Biographical Note

David E. Okurame David E. Okurame is an industrial and organizational psychologist and teaches in the Department of Psychology at the University of Ibadan. His research interests include gender issues and organizations-related issues.

Email: daveokurame@yahoo.com