UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

MENTORING EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE ADMINISTRATORS IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

LINDA OBENG ANSONG

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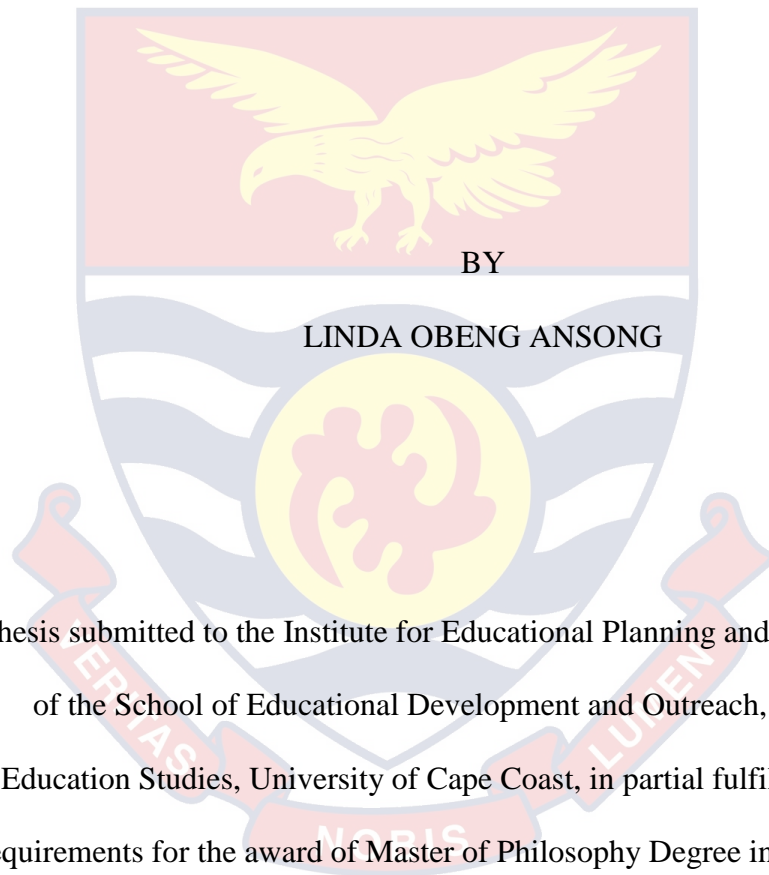UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

MENTORING EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE ADMINISTRATORS IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

BY

LINDA OBENG ANSONG

Thesis submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration

of the School of Educational Development and Outreach, College of

Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the

requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Administration

in Higher Education

SEPTEMBER, 2019

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and

that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or

elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature …………………………   Date ……………………

Name: ………………………………………………………………………..

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were

supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid

down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature ……………………… Date …….……………

Name: ………………………………………………………………………..

Co-Supervisor's Signature ……………………… ……Date……..……………

Name: ………………………………………………………………………..

ABSTRACT

Over the years, the number of female employees in management positions has seen a steady increase yet females are in the minority of such management positions in most organisations. One of the strategies suggested to help women overcome the challenges to their career advancement is mentoring. It is against this background that this study was undertaken to explore the mentoring experiences of female administrators (non-teaching female senior members) and its influence on their careers in the University of Cape Coast. A case study design with a qualitative approach was adopted for the study. The snowball sampling technique was adopted to identify the study participants. In all, seventeen (17) female administrators were interviewed. The thematic analysis approach was used in analysing the recorded interviews. The study revealed that mentees encountered both positive and negative experiences with their mentors. These experiences as reported by the mentees largely emanated from some lapses in the structure of the programme. Nevertheless, it was revealed that the mentoring programme had an appreciable influence over the career and personal development of most of the mentees. The study, therefore, recommends that the mentoring programme at the University of Cape Coast should be sustained since it plays an important role in the career development of employees (females). Management of the University of Cape Coast should take immediate steps to develop a mentoring policy or if such policy already exists, it should be made readily available to both mentors and mentees to guide the mentoring process. Finally, periodic mentoring should be conducted to enhance the effectiveness of the programme.

KEY WORDS

Career advancement

Female administrators

Mentoring

Mentoring experiences

Mentoring policy

Monitoring

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Finally, to family: my husband, Dr. Abraham Ansong, children, Kaila and Joel and my mother, Madam Emma Nyarkoh, you have been my greatest pillar of support. Thank you for being there for me.

DEDICATION
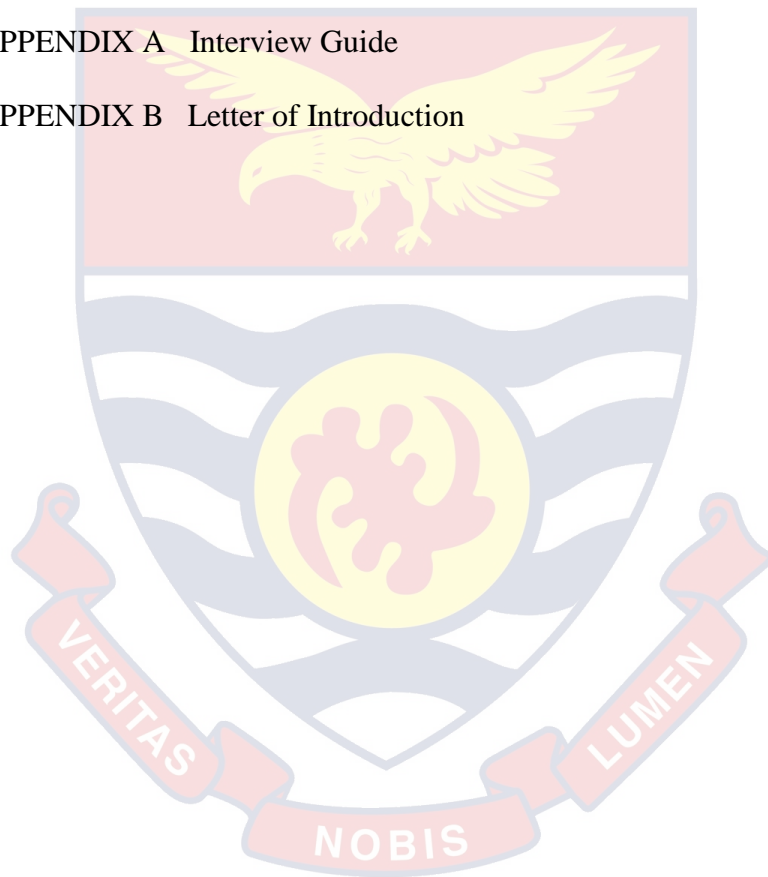
To my husband, children and mom.

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UCC-University of Cape Coast

SAR – Senior Assistant Registrar

AR – Assistant Registrar

JAR – Junior Assistant Registrar

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The issue of underrepresentation of females in management positions is a persistent and well-documented phenomenon for many years. This issue is not different particularly at the higher levels of positions in educational institutions. Though the number of female employees in universities management positions has seen a steady increase, females are still in the minority. These females are faced with some challenges in the quest of their progression which prevent them from attaining top level positions. To ameliorate this problem, mentoring has been identified by most researchers as one of the key strategies to help women overcome the challenges militating against their career advancement. It is against this background that this qualitative study explored the mentoring experiences of female administrators in the University of Cape Coast.

This study holds a potential to contribute to the discourse on mentoring and female representation in management positions. Additionally, the study would serve as a source of vital information to Management of UCC in particular, on the mentoring experiences of females and the influence on their career lives. Finally, the findings if implemented would possibly enhance the mentoring programme in UCC. This chapter presents the overview of the study. The chapter further describes the statement of the problem, and explains the purpose and significance of the study. The final part defines the delimitations and limitations of the study and outlines the organisation of the study.

Background to the Study

Having females in senior positions leads to higher levels of organisational performance and better environment, yet females are underrepresented in top-level positions (Herring, 2009; Zhang & Hou, 2012). According to the UN (2010) report, females constitute 50 percent of the global workforce. The USA Department of Labour (2015) also indicated that women constitute 57.7 percent of the labour force in the United States. Although, females participation in the labour force has increased over the years, yet they remain vastly underrepresented at the top management positions of many organisations (Parker, Horowitz, & Rohal, 2015).

The issue of underrepresentation of females is not different particularly at the higher levels of educational ladder. This has been a persistent and well-documented phenomenon for many years (Bagilhole, 2002; DiGeorgio-Lutz, 2002; Luke, 2001; Morley, 2005). Despite the fact that the number of female employees are increasing in universities management positions, females are still the minority in the management positions of most universities (Zhang & Hou, 2012). Meyerson and Fletcher (2000) commended females for progressing steadily in their career but these females are faced with some challenges in the quest of their progression which prevent them from attaining top level positions.

Men have been identified as dominating all the top-level positions in higher education institutions and this has created an environment that inhibits the advancement of females into top positions in such institutions (Chliwniak,1997). The reasons given for this lack of progress are wide and varied. Koomson (2012) acknowledged that, the underrepresentation of

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females especially in Ghanaian universities and their small numbers at the managerial level positions can be ascribed to some factors which hinder their career progression. In support of this, studies (Eagly & Carli, 2007, Giscombe, 2007, Heilman, 2001) have pointed some challenges which hinder female career progression. These include gender stereotypes and bias that prevent women from being seen as leaders, differences in leadership style, lack of general management experience, exclusion from informal networks, and lack of role models. Despite these challenges, some females just do not want to accept the responsibility for management positions since they think this responsibility may take much of their time they would spend with their families. Instead, they will choose to stay at home more often with their families (Rhode & Kellerman, 2007). As posited by Akyeampong (2010), management positions demand total immersion, long hours, many evening meetings and personal visibility.

Various strategies have been proposed to help females to overcome the challenges they face in their advancement to yield benefits such as enhancing performance in current positions; gaining experience in the workplace; and holding senior leaders responsible for female advancement. One of the strategies cited most often is for females to find mentors (Catalyst, 2003). Mentoring is generally agreed as a process where a more experienced senior individual in an organisation provides career guidance and counseling to a less experienced junior member in an organization (Bleil, 2012). Fowler and O'Gorman (2005) also define mentoring as the relationship between an experienced and knowledgeable person and a junior person who is trying to find assistance and support in his or her career, personal and professional

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development. Mentors may also provide introductions and entry into important social networks in an organization, offer advice on career paths, and at times serve as a role model for the mentee.

Mentoring is a very old concept in a new guise. It can be traced back to Greek mythology in Homer's Odyssey when King Odysseus entrusted his son Telemachus to his loyal friend and servant Athena-Mentor, the Goddess of Wisdom and charged her the responsibility of educating and nurturing his son. Telemachus was educated, given wisdom, nurtured, provided opportunities for experience, and was guided by Athena-Mentor (Giddis, 2003). Over the past two decades, mentoring has been widely researched and has been given a great deal of attention (Noe, Greenberger, & Wang, 2002; Ragins & Kram, 2007; Wanberg, Welsh, & Hezlett, 2003). Clutterbuck (2007) adds that globally, mentoring as a practice and programme has increased in popularity.

Due to the phenomenon of mentoring gaining popularity, organizations are using mentoring as training and developmental strategy for their managers and also as a socialization tool for newly recruited employees (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Noe, Greenberger, & Wang, 2002). Likewise, managers have become increasingly interested in the career development of their employees and one process they are using to develop these employees is through mentoring (Dziczkowski, 2013). According to Knippelmeyer and Torraco (2007), the surge in this interest may be attributed to organizations desire to develop enough talented employees to replace those about to retire, maintain high levels of managerial contribution as well as reducing turnover in early career stages.

Arkaifie (2016) and Gardiner, Tiggemann Kearns and Marshall (2007) have also reiterated that through counselling, sponsorship, friendship and encouragement, thus effective mentoring, could lead to higher retention rates, promotion and employees' better understanding of themselves as well as the job they find themselves. Mentoring programmes have also been found to increase job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation and also to improve employees and organizational performance (Pomeroy & Foust-Cummings, 2009). In as much as organizations' benefit from mentoring, both the mentors and mentees benefit as well. For the mentors, mentoring may help them gain important information on their work from mentees which they would not have recognized when working alone (Hegstad & Wentling, 2005).

Dubetz and Turley (2001) also indicated that mentoring can provide mentors intrinsic fulfilment from assisting in the professional development of mentees which will help them renew their sense of self-esteem, self-confidence and purpose. In the case of the mentees, McDowall-Long (2004) acknowledged that mentees benefit from mentoring by advancing more quickly in their careers and also expressing positive psychological coping skills. Thus, effective mentoring enables the mentee to build on his or her self-confidence and self-awareness and as a result, may take on more responsibilities and assume higher positions with less fear of failure.

Hobson and Sharp (2005) are of the view that mentoring helps reduce feelings of stress and anxiety through the support and encouragement given by the mentor. Mentors offer mentees the opportunity to share their thoughts and concerns which helps them (mentees) to adapt to the organization as well as achieving their career goals and development (Arkaifie, 2016). The absence of

mentoring, therefore, slows the promotion rates as well as the career advancement of employees, reduces career satisfaction and self-esteem (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Wanberg, Welsh & Hezlett, 2003) and also increases role stress and role conflict (Wilson & Elman, 1990). Hereafter, employees become frustrated and may end up quitting their jobs. Females are more prone to such frustrations since they are usually faced with peculiar challenges as a result of their entrance into management position (Zhang & Hou, 2012).

There are two types of mentoring relationship (these are informal and formal mentoring relationships). In the view of Inzer and Crawford (2005), informal mentoring is a natural coming together of a mentor and a mentee that usually takes place in society, at the workplace and among family members whereas formal mentoring is where an organisation develops a programme and a process for mentoring to take place. For formal mentoring, there is a third party who pairs both the mentors and the mentees. According to these researchers, informal mentoring relationship is either initiated by the mentor or the mentee (Inzer & Crawford, 2005). It is voluntarily formed and it first starts with friendship followed by learning and then career development. Hence, many people may not have the opportunity to develop a mentoring relationship in an informal way.

It is generally believed that women find it difficult to initiate an informal mentoring than their male counterparts since higher positions are mostly occupied by men in organisations. Thus, in settings where informal mentoring is prevalent, women may have fewer opportunities than men (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Therefore, in an attempt to capture the benefits of mentoring which includes personal development and career development

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(Dreher & Cox, 1996, Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993; Scandura, 1998; Viator & Scandura, 1991), many organizations have put in place formal mentoring programmes as part of their developmental initiatives for their employees (Arkaifie, 2016) and in the case of females as a mechanism to address the inequalities that females face in organisations. According to Lewis and Fagenson (1995), organisations are using mentoring as a tool to address the developmental needs of their female managers.

Mentoring has been suggested as a tool to assist females in bridging the gap between men in career advancement (Burke & McKeen, 1990; Catalyst, 1998; Heery, 1994; Ragins & Cotton 1999; Van Collie, 1998). In an attempt to help females, attain their potentials and become effective in performing their managerial roles, mentoring has been recognised as an important aspect of personal and career development for females in both business and higher education (Eagly, Makhijani & Klonsky, 1992; Kanter, 2008).

Most higher education institutions have acknowledged mentoring as a tool that assist in increasing females access and success in senior leadership positions (Blackwood, 2010) and also facilitates their career advancement as well as their success in education and development (Crawford & Smith, 2005). According to Catalyst, (2003) and Giddis, (2003), mentoring helps females build their confidence and effectiveness at the workplace and thus ultimately overcome some of the challenges they encounter. Reich (1986), suggested that females who participated in mentoring programme have reported greater self-confidence and also has enhanced the awareness of and use of skills.

Although mentoring has been widely acknowledged as a developmental tool for mentees, ones mentoring experiences can either be positive or negative (Arkaifie, 2016). Kram (1985) affirmed that mentoring relationship can either be destructive or helpful depending on certain conditions. In as much as mentoring is tailored to mentees development, parties of the mentoring relationship have to also fulfil their responsibilities. Ndeble, Heerden and Chabaya (2013) affirm that the presence or absence of a professional mentor can have effect on the success or failure of the mentee. Also, organisations are required to put in place structures that will enable them to achieve the intended purpose of mentoring. Nevertheless, if mentoring is not properly practiced in organisations (that is, where there are no streamlined guidelines), it can run the risk of tokenism or extinction (Arkaifie, 2016).

Studies conducted on females in administrative positions in Ghanaian universities have acknowledged the importance of mentoring as a developmental tool thus have attested to the benefits and need for mentor (Addai-Buobu, 2013; Adusah-Karikari, 2008; Alakija, 2010; Danquah-Djan, 2012; Kanco, 2013; Koomson, 2012; Nyantakyiwaa, 2013; 2014), According to these scholars, the advice, support, and encouragement from mentors are very important to enable females to become ambitious and also gain access to higher positions, yet little is known about the experiences of females in this endeavour, hence the need for this study.

University of Cape Coast as an educational institution has put in place a mentoring programme for senior members both in administration and academia. The mentoring programme is to provide newly appointed senior members with professional guidance and opportunity to cope with the

difficulties they would encounter as a result of their new appointment as well as their personal enhancement. After the appointment of senior members, they are put on probation for a year or two and are assigned mentors after which they are confirmed depending on the assessment report submitted by the mentors to the Directorate of Human Resource (DHR) (University of Cape Coast Statutes, 2012).

The mentorship report presented on a mentee by a mentor is very vital in the confirmation of appointment of the former. According to the DHR, the mentors are persons who have the experience in supporting the mentee to develop in all aspect of his or her career as well as personal development. Upon these expectations of the UCC mentoring programme, some empirical studies (Danquah-Djan, 2012; Nyantakyiwaa, 2013; 2014) on issues confronting women in senior administrative positions at the University of Cape Coast have hinted some challenges in the UCC mentoring programme. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the mentoring experiences of female administrators in the University of Cape Coast.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of underrepresentation of females, particularly in management positions of most universities has been a persistent and well-documented phenomenon for many years (Bagilhole, 2002; DiGeorgio-Lutz, 2002; Morley, 2005; Zhang & Hou, 2012). Mentoring has been identified as a vital tool to help in alleviating this challenge and also plays a pivotal role in the career and personal development of females. Females who have mentors are believed to achieve career success, receive more promotion and advance at a faster rate (Palermo, 2004) and this is as a result of the counselling,

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sponsorship, friendship, encouragement and advice provided by the mentors (Gardiner, Tiggemann, Kearns & Marshall, 2007).

In spite of the important role mentoring plays in enhancing the career development and progress of female employees, there is paucity of knowledge on the experiences of female administrators in universities with regards to this phenomenon (Blackwood, 2010; Bleil, 2012). In Ghana, numerous studies have been conducted on mentoring in higher education context, but these studies have been largely skewed towards academic staff to the neglect of non-academic staff. (Asuo-Baffour, Daayeng, & Agyemang, 2019; Bukari & Kuyini, 2015; Kumi-Boateng, 2014). The few studies on mentoring conducted at the University of Cape Coast are no exception (Arkaifie, 2016; Dankwa & Dankwa, 2014).

Further, studies on females in administrative positions within the context of the University of Cape Coast have concentrated on opportunities and challenges of women in educational administration (Addai-Buobu, 2013), experiences with women in administrative leadership positions (Danquah-Djan, 2012), barriers affecting the progress of women faculty towards leadership positions (Koomson, 2012), and coping strategies of female leaders in tertiary education (Nyantakyiwaa, 2013). Even though, the focus of these studies was not on mentoring, they have acknowledged mentoring as playing a vital role in the career development of females but have consistently raised concerns about the UCC mentoring programme. It is therefore necessary to conduct a study to delve into the experiences of female administrators with the UCC mentoring programme.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of female administrators with the UCC mentoring programme in order to contribute to the empirical knowledge which has the potential of subsequently enhancing the mentoring programme.

Research Questions

On the basis of issues raised, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do female administrators understand mentoring as practiced in UCC?

2. What are the expectations of female administrators of the UCC mentoring programme?

3. What are the experiences of female administrators with the UCC mentoring programme?

4. How have the mentoring experiences influenced mentees' career lives?

5. What strategies should be put in place to enhance the UCC mentoring programme?

Significance of the Study

This study is relevant in two ways; its addition to literature and ability to inform practice. The findings of the study would contribute to existing knowledge on mentoring especially on females in universities in Ghana. Again, the findings of the study will add to the empirical evidences of the mentoring programme in UCC which would serve as vital information to Management of UCC in particular, on the mentoring experiences of females and the influence on their career lives. This as a result will enable the

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University to design a mentoring programme that would be tailored to meet the needs of females as well as meet their developmental goals.

Also, the findings of the study are likely to help females who aspire to be administrators in higher ranks in their organisations to gain more insight into the mentoring programme and how the programme could help in their career and personal development.

Moreover, the findings of the study would be of interest to organisations that may not be covered in this study and that management of such organisations might use the recommendations to meet the advancement of females.

Delimitations

The study covered the University of Cape Coast because it is one of the public universities that has a mentoring programme. Also, previous studies on mentoring in UCC have been skewed to academic staff but it will be worthy to know of the experiences of their counterparts in the administrative category since the nature of their work is not the same. Additionally, the study considered female administrators because previous studies on female administrators in UCC have raised some concerns about the university's mentoring programme which the reseacher considered very important to delve into.

Limitations

The study had certain limitations some of which are the following. The researcher's inability to have access to the UCC mentoring policy which would have guided the issues to be explored. This was due to the fact that there was no clear information about which Section of the University was in

possession of the document. Due to this, the mentoring policy document could not inform the design of the research instrument. However, this challenge was addressed by reviewing empirical studies on mentoring in UCC and other institutions.

One weakness of the qualitative approach adopted for this study is its lack of generalisation. This is because the experiences shared were from only female administrators in University of Cape Coast hence the results for this study cannot be extended to other universities in Ghana as well as other organisations. The findings and recommendations will be applied to only female administrators in the University of Cape Coast. However, since an in-depth knowledge has been gained from the phenomenon understudy, universities with mentoring programmes can adopt the recommendations of the study to structure their mentoring programme especially in the case of females.

Definition of Terms

Mentoring: This takes place when a senior and more experienced employee is assigned to act as an advisor, counsellor, or guide to someone who is inexperienced. The mentor is to provide career guidance and counselling to a less experienced member (mentee) in an organization.

Experience: This refers to the nature of the events and observations which leave an impression on the mentee. Experience could be either positive or negative or mixed depending on the nature of the situation that transpired.

Mentoring Experience: This implies the nature of the mentoring exposure a mentee has undergone. This also means the mentees expressing what she went through during their mentoring period.

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Female Administrator: This refers to non-teaching female senior members at the University of Cape Coast.

Organisation of the Study

The study has been organised into five chapters. The second chapter discusses the relevant literature relating to the study. The third chapter deals with the methodology adopted for the study. They are the research design, study area, target population, sampling procedure, data collection instrument, data collection procedures and data analysis. Chapter four looks at the findings and discussion of the findings while the last chapter consists of the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

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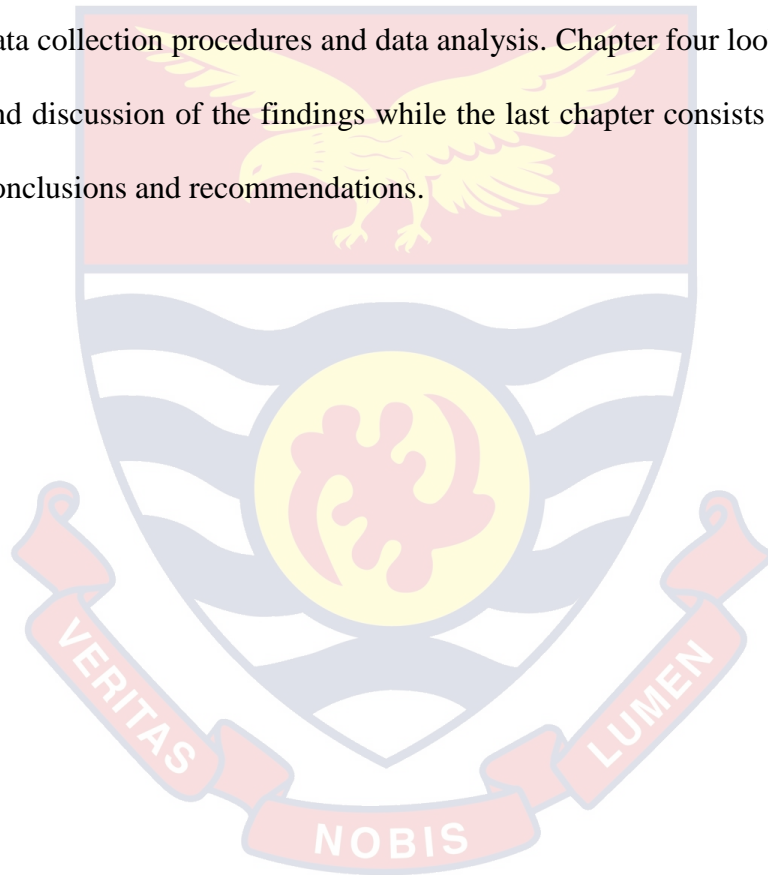
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This section of the study reviews the literature relevant to the topic under discussion. The first part is the conceptual review that looks into the concept of mentoring, how different authors have explained and classified the phenomenon. The chapter further discusses mentoring as a development process in higher education, expectations of mentees of mentoring programmes, experiences of mentees in mentoring programmes, gender issues in mentoring, influence of mentoring programmes on women career, challenges associated with mentoring programmes, and strategies to enhance on mentoring programmes. The final part presents the theoretical explanation of the study.

Concept of Mentoring

The idea of mentoring began after Mentor took the responsibility of taking care of Telemachus, the son of the king of Ithaca in the story Odysseus. The King entrusted his household and his son Telemachus to Mentor, his loyal servant and friend since he was embarking on a decade of travel and adventure (Johnson & Nelson, 1999). Although a mythological Greek story, the support and guidance Mentor gave, resulted in the term mentoring which in other words referred to as a teacher-student relationship (Johnson & Nelson, 1999; Young & Wright, 2001). A study by Mueller (2004) found that Mentor was the actually the goddess, Athena, who hid herself as a male, and she imparted wisdom to Telemachus. This gives the notions that a mentoring relationship goes beyond gender and culture.

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Traditional definitions of mentoring viewed mentoring as a relationship between an older and experienced person who supports a junior who is less experienced to make wise choices in his or her (mentee) career transitions (Kram, 1985). With this definition, the mentor is seen as a person who is older, and with more experience than the mentee. Mentoring was also defined as a relationship in which an experienced person or a senior person who willingly devotes his or her time to teach, support, and encourage another who is a junior or inexperienced (Santamaria, 2003).

However, recent literature has defined mentoring in various ways. According to Zachary (2002), mentoring is a process of imparting knowledge through guidance and advise, which assists in the career development of the mentee. Bell (2000), also defined mentoring as a mentor, helping a mentee understand something that he or she would have understood less well, more slowly, or not at all if left alone. The mentor serves as a role model to the mentee. According to Gibbons (2004), in a mentoring relationship, learning and experimentation can happen, potential abilities are developed, and results measured in terms of competence gained. Mentoring is also a relationship through which mentors assist mentees in their professional development through various means of assistance (Ehrich, Hansford & Tennent, 2004).

In the organisational context, mentoring is used as a training and development method for increasing the potentials of people (mentees) in discharging their duties and also familiarising themselves with new techniques (Ismail, Amir & Khian Jui, 2013). Al-Meshari and Kokal (2007), in their study found that mentoring is perceived as training programme that has a structure, streamlined and phased career path for identified specialties, attracting

qualified candidates and pairing them with appropriate mentors. This strategy ensures candidates obtain the required experience, further education and exposure of their chosen specialty. Mentoring programmes serve as a roadmap for enhancing the professional and advancement of candidates. Mentoring is broader and more holistic; thus, it is concerned with a person's overall development and not only performance (Whitmore, 2002).

Types/Forms of Mentoring

Writers in the field of mentoring make an essential distinction between different types of mentoring arrangements. Two of these are 'informal' and 'formal' mentoring. Informal mentoring happens spontaneously, where the mentor and mentee engage in a mentoring relationship without any intervention or guidance from the organisation. This mentoring develops naturally; hence, it is not initiated by a third party; thus, the organisation (Clutterbuck 2004).

According to Allen, Day, and Lentz, (2005), informal mentoring is initiated by either the mentor or the mentee. The researchers posit that mentor's lookout for mentees who have potentials and they (mentors) try to give them (mentees) guidance and support in their respective fields. In the same vein, mentees also sought for people who can be role models thus, capable of providing them with the support and guidance they may need in their endeavours (Bohlander, Snell & Sherman, 2001). Informal mentoring mostly occurs when both mentor and mentee who happen to have a common goal, decide to work together as a result of similar work or related field they find themselves (Clutterbuck, 2004).

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Formal mentoring is a structured relationship where mentors and mentees are provided with the norms, objectives and time frame of the relationship which they have to adhere to. This mentoring is usually used as a career developmental tool and it is structured and managed by the Human Resource Division of an organisation (Kram, 1985). Therefore, formal mentoring is initiated by an organisation or a third party. In a formal mentoring relationship, some procedures and policies govern the relationship right from its inception to the end of the programme (Hansford, Ehrich & Tennent, 2003).

In formal mentoring programmes, both the mentors and the mentees are informed about the goals and purpose of the programme and this is communicated through a set of guidelines or training. In most organisations formal mentoring programme is used as an induction process for newly recruited employees, where they are given guidance on how they could develop the required skills they would need in the job they find themselves, familiarise themselves with organisation's values and culture, and also develop a good working understanding of the organisation's requirements (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2007). These should be communicated through training or in a mentoring policy document which should be made available to both parties of the mentoring programme.

Nonetheless, parties in an informal mentoring do not have guidelines or policies that guide the mentoring relationship. They discuss work-related issues as and when they arise and the purpose of the relationship may change depending on the needs of either party. Mentoring could be a formal or informal relationship, but it is likely the overall purpose of the relationship

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will be for both parties to learn, engage in knowledge transfer, and support one another's development and growth.

Stages in Mentoring

Since the emergence of mentoring, time has been considered as very important in the success of any mentoring relationship. The mentoring relationship starts at a point which is recognised as the initiation stage and ends at the redefining stage. There are four stages in mentoring: initiation stage; cultivation stage; separation stage and redefinition stage (Kram, 1985).

Initiation Stage

At the initiation stage, two individuals enter into a mentoring relationship (Vikaraman, Mansor & Hamzah, 2017). For an informal mentoring relationship to begin, mentors and mentees try to study themselves before the actual mentoring relationship begins. Usually, informal mentoring develops based on perceived capabilities and interpersonal comfort (Singh, Tharenou, 2006). Potential mentees search for people who are knowledgeable and successful in areas they find themselves. According to Ismail, Jui and Abdullah, (2009), mentees try to associate with people they admire or see as role models, and whom they (mentees) perceive will assist them develop in their endeavours.

With regard to formal mentoring programmes, mentors and mentees are paired by a third party which means that the initiation stage begins the moment both mentors and mentees meet. This contradicts informal mentoring, where the relationship is built on perceived competences and interpersonal comfort. Mentors and mentees in formal mentoring programme

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do not have the chance to choose their mentors, but rather the assignment is done by a third party.

Cultivation Stage

The cultivation stage is the primary stage of learning and development. The mentee learns from the mentor. Two broad mentoring functions are at their peak during this stage. The career-related role emerges first when the mentor guides the mentee on how to work effectively and efficiently (Janssen, van Vuuren & de Jong, 2016). At the cultivation stage, mentees are guided and coached by their mentors through assigning challenging assignments, initiating mentees to the organisation through exposure and visibility and actively sponsoring mentees through promotions and recognition.

The psychosocial function emerges after the mentor and mentee have established an interpersonal bond. Within this function, the mentor accepts and confirms the mentee's professional identity and the relationship matures into a strong friendship. The cultivation stage is generally a positive one for both mentor and mentee. This is when the mentee gains knowledge by learning for the experiences and expertise of the mentors and the mentee, on the other hand, teaches the mentor new technologies, new methodologies, and emerging issues relating the field (Alred, 2014).

Separation Stage

The separation stage generally describes the end of a mentoring relationship (Fairhurst, Bloom & Harvey, 2017). This is where the mentee is considered to be matured and become independent. At this separation stage, the relationship can either become a friendship relationship or the other way around. According to Kram (1983), the separation stage can occur either on a

structural or a psychological disconnection or both. Kram (1983) noted that job rotation and promotion could also result in terminating a mentoring relationship. She explained that because of the change, it might limit the number of times mentors and mentees could interact.

A study conducted by Eby and McManus (2004) found that the main reason for the separation stage is attributed to mentee resignation, dismissal and transfer from the organisation. If both parties do not agree on the termination of the mentoring relationship, this stage becomes stressful as one party may not be willing to accept the loss. According to Pope (2018), mentees may feel abandoned, betrayed, or unprepared if they perceive the separation to be premature. Likewise, mentors may feel divulged or used if the mentee no longer seeks their counsellor support.

Redefinition Stage

During the redefinition stage, both mentor and mentee recognize that their relationship can continue hence will not be the same as a mentoring relationship where guidance and instructions are given but it may develop into a peer-like relationship (Curtin, Malley & Stewart, 2016). Kram (1983) posits that, if the separation stage was successful, thus if the mentoring relationship ended on a good note, the relationship can evolve into a collegial relationship or social friendship. During the redefining stage, the focus of the link is no longer centred on the mentee's career development. The former mentor may establish mentoring relationships with new mentees. Likewise, the former mentee may serve as a mentor to others (Lin, Chew, Toh & Krishna, 2018).

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Mentoring as a Development Process in Higher Education

Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson and McKee (1978) understood that mentoring was extremely underdeveloped in the setting of higher education. In a setting where individuals often work alone and many major resources are shared, there have always been problems with the individuals in acclimatising themselves to the culture of higher education. Mentoring programmes have been identified to deal with such acclimatising issues because of the positive effect it can have on those involved.

According to Rawlings (2002), individuals who go through mentoring, often experience some benefits such as improving on their self-confidence, having access to advice and relevant information, improving on their effectiveness, being aware of the culture, politics, and philosophy of the organization and last but not the least, have access to someone they can trust and share their problems with. Similarly, Wright & Wright, 1987 also mentioned some benefits that can be derived from being mentored as increase job satisfaction, higher salary, faster promotion, firmer career plans, and also increase the possibility that the mentee could one day become a mentor.

With regard to mentoring within higher education, mentoring can address issues like career development, networking, professional development, and personal identity characteristics. With career development, mentors offer guidance on the development of writing, research, and analytical skills. Working on research collectively and then co-authoring publications can assist a mentee to learn all that he or she needs to know about academic research. Also, inviting mentees to professional educational association meetings or conferences allows networking to take place.

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Mentees who go through the mentoring programme instituted in higher education believe their positive socialization into academia is as a result of their mentors' qualities. Mentees believe their mentors were knowledgeable about the culture and expectations within their institution and academia, they were well-respected members of the institution and were seen as outstanding researchers and scholars, and were supportive and accessible to mentees (Dubetz & Turley, 2001).

It is believed that mentees are only the beneficiaries in mentoring relationships, but mentors also reap the rewards in these relationships. For example, the mentor can make use of his or her accumulated experiences to further the knowledge of the mentee (Ragins & Scandura, 1999). Further benefits to the mentor include a revived view of his or her role; enhanced job satisfaction; self-reflection; additional professional relationship and peer recognition (Rawlings, 2002). In as much as mentors and mentees benefit from mentoring, so do higher education institutions also benefit from mentoring programmes. Institutions may experience an increase in commitment and productivity as well as a reduction in employees' turnover. Other institutional benefits may include more profound interaction among colleagues, greater communication, and increased networking (Knippelmeyer, & Torraco, 2007).

Despite the existence of mentoring schemes to benefit all staff across a range of levels in the universities, these schemes tend to focus on academic staff rather than the professional or support staff. In academia, mentoring can contribute to an individual's career development, particularly in the area of research, publications and promotion. Also, issues like career management and

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institutional networking can be benefitted in a mentor relationship (Allen & Eby, 2004; Pololi & Knight, 2005).

A study conducted by Gardiner et al. (2007) on the evaluation of the mentoring scheme at Flinders University, Australia, revealed that staff who had received formal mentoring were more likely to stay at the university; there was a higher rate of promotion since the commencement of the scheme, mentees were successful in receiving external research grants and they (mentees) were productive in terms of publications. Therefore, if mentoring can provide such great benefits to higher education institutions, then those institutions should pay much attention to mentoring and see to the effective implementation of mentoring programmes.

Mentees' Expectations of Mentoring Programmes

Effective mentoring requires more than common sense. Studies have shown that mentors and mentees who develop and manage successful mentoring relationships demonstrate several specific identifiable skills that allow learning and change to take place (Phillips-Jones, 2003). According to Zachary and Fischler (2009), mentors and mentees typically enter the mentoring relationships with assumed expectations of each other. The expectations of mentees include meeting mentors as often as schedules will permit. Mentees also expect mentors to provide help by answering questions on issues relating to the mentee's career goals and progress and talk about skills mentee's could acquire to add value.

Mentees expect mentors to be giving them feedback on their performance. In as much as mentees receive input from a mentor, mentees expect mentors to also provide suggestions and advice on activities that would

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lead to productive and rewarding work at the workplace. Furthermore, mentors should tell stories about how others have made it that might be relevant to the mentees. Mentors are expected to connect mentees to other people who are capable of influencing mentees lives positively. Again, mentees hope mentors to keep any commitments made, keep confidences with mentees and also evaluate the relationship at various points (Milliman, Taylor & Czaplewski, 2002).

According to Swap, Leonard, Shields and Abrams (2001), mentors are expected to teach mentees new knowledge, skills, and attitudes by explaining and giving useful examples, and by asking thought-provoking questions. Mentors are expected to help their mentees gain broader perspectives of their organizations, including history, values, culture, and politics of their organisations. In the case of the female mentees, mentors were expected to keep regular and frequent contacts with their mentees. One of which should be a face-to-face exchange. Further, female mentees expected their mentors to keep the content of their discussions within the mentoring relationship confidential. Also, mentors are expected to assess the mentoring relationship at least annually and should contact the programme Coordinator for advice for any challenges that may arise during the mentoring programme.

Pinho, Coetzee and Schreuder (2005) also conducted a study to investigate the expectations and perceived challenges of mentees and mentors regarding a formal mentoring programme within the South African work context. Results from the study showed that female mentees entered into a formal mentoring relationship because it was suggested by their line management that they join the mentoring programme. Furthermore, the female

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mentees joined the programme for psychosocial reasons such as "balancing work-family life", "gaining confidence in making career decisions", "dealing with personality conflicts" and "learning how to build trust and confidence". Female mentees also indicated that their expectations were not stable but rather dynamic and continually changing. These expectations were established at the onset of the relationship and were reviewed on a regular basis.

Generally, in a mentoring relationship, female mentees expectations may include: becoming more marketable, career development and advancement, gaining business knowledge, being supplied with high level information, getting organisational tips, receiving sound advice, gaining a broader perspective and different viewpoints, being offered direction and a clear vision, receiving support in balancing work and family issues, establishing clear career objectives and targets, regular discussions and progress reviews, guidance and emotional support self-empowerment to make their own career decisions.

Mentees' Experiences of Mentoring Programmes

A study conducted by Dankwa and Dankwa (2014) revealed some experiences of mentees in their mentor relationship. Mentees expressed that they received encouragement on education opportunities as well as their career growth. Also, mentors provided practical suggestions in assisting mentees to improve in their career. Mentees mentioned that their mentors shared personal experiences of how they (mentors) overcame the difficulties in their job to achieve their career goals. Arkaifie (2016) also researched on evaluating the effect of mentoring programme on newly recruited lecturers of the University of Cape Coast. Mentees mentioned that there was flexibility with their meeting

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schedules. They expressed that both parties could convene meetings depending on the availability of either party.

The study also found out that mentees were counselled on their roles and responsibilities in the mentoring programme before the programme commenced. Mentees indicated that their mentors were committed, therefore made themselves (mentors) available to their mentees. Also, mentors allowed mentees to ask questions; listened to mentees suggestions and maintained confidentiality in the mentoring relationship. Even though in the aforementioned studies (Arkaifie, 2016; Dankwa & Dankwa, 2014) mentees were largely positive about their mentoring experiences, there were some negative experiences such as unawareness of the criteria for pairing and limited contact as a result of the busy schedules of mentors.

Similarly, Hansford, Ehrich, and Tennent, (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of the phenomenon in developed countries (United State of America, Canada and Australia). Out of the 115 studies they reviewed, 67.5 percent reported only positive outcomes, 24.5 percent reported mix of positive and negative outcomes whereas 6.6 percent of the studies reported negative outcomes. Some positive outcomes expressed by mentees were: mentors coached them (mentees); gave ideas; feedback and strategies mentees could adopt to progress in their (mentees) career. As a result of the positive experiences, mentees indicated heightened their self-confidence, respect, interpersonal growth as well as their familiarization in the company. The negative outcomes expressed were conformity; limited autonomy and over-protection. Other negative experiences were untrained and ineffective

mentors; lack of interest and support from the mentors and either lack of mentors' time or availability.

With regard to female mentees specifically, Gardiner, Tiggemann, Kearns, and Marshall (2007) conducted a study on mentoring for female academics. The study found that mentees showed great satisfaction with their mentoring relationship. This is because mentees received feedback and guidance from their mentor. Moreover, for the fact that mentees had someone, they could talk to, and trust was an experience they (mentees) enjoyed.

Gibson (2006) also conducted a study on female mentees, underlining both the benefits and the drawbacks of mentoring, and how females feel comfortable to be mentored by other females. Among the benefits were, having someone who cares about one's own career, not feeling isolated, feeling reaffirmed in one's own worth; among the most serious drawbacks are the fact that one participant experienced being confronted with a mentor who reported information back to other senior people in the mentee's department.

Similarly to Bell and Treleaven (2011), Driscoll, Parkes, Tilley-Lubbs, Brill, and Pitts Bannister, (2009), who focused on their own experiences of organising and managing a women peer mentoring group, the underlining positive effects this had was not only in terms of building a network and improving research skills but also understanding the organisation and one's responsibility. Schramm (2004) also reflects on her experience, where she was mentored by three different mentors all along her career path. She mentioned the benefits of being mentored by other women that, she felt comfortable to speak about the discriminations she experienced with the other mentors who were males. Based on the researcher's experience, she reported that gender is

not the only important aspect to be considered in relation to mentoring: ethnicity is particularly important, especially in disciplines where women represent the minority.

Literature investigating the experiences of female mentees stems from different epistemologies and applies different methods: some contributions are based on surveys and use gender as a control variable. The issue is that most of these studies do not further investigate implications for designing mentoring programmes and do not reflect on the issues relating to cross or same-gender matching. For example, Bilimoria, Perry, Liang, Stoller, Higgins and Taylor (2006) research showed the relevance of mentoring for job satisfaction; they pinpoint to some gender differences, that is, men tend to focus on academic resources while women on internal support networks. Ugrin, Odom and Pearson, (2008) also conducted research on the effect of mentoring on scholarly productivity and the focus was on the information system departments in some US business schools. The study revealed that female mentees preferred to be mentored by a male; this contradicts Gibson's (2006) contribution mentioned above. The authors explain that the more individualistic and goal-oriented nature of academia in respect to workplace probably impacted on this result.

Gender Issues in Mentoring

Since females sometimes find it difficult to initiate a mentor relationship due to their exclusion from informal organizational networks and also some male refusing to engage in mentoring women as a result of the fear of sexual harassment issues (Hansman, 2003), most organizations are turning to formal mentoring programmes as a way to decrease the obstacles these

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female face in their career development (Lewis & Fagenson, 1995). In formal mentoring, mentees are either paired with the opposite sex or the same sex as mentors. This gender type mostly refers to as same-gender and cross-gender interaction (Ismail, Jui & Abdullah, 2009; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Young, Cady, & Foxon, 2006).

Same-gender in mentorship is the interaction between male mentor-male mentee and the interaction between female mentor-female mentee (Allen & Eby, 2004; Hegstad & Wentling, 2005; Lyon, Farrington & Westbrook, 2004). Cross-gender in mentorship is the interaction between male mentor-female mentee and female mentor-male mentee (Allen, Day & Lentz, 2005; Gaskill, 1991; Lyon et al., 2004). In mentoring, gender type has been identified to have an influence on mentees progression, especially career and psychosocial development (Okurame & Balogun, 2005, Niehoff, 2006). Many scholars, such as Baugh and Scandura (1999), Kram and Bragar (1991), and Ragins and Cotton (1999), explain that career development is often viewed as assisting individuals to acquire the skills and experiences needed to perform current and future jobs, giving advice, increasing the ability of individuals to influence others positively, and protecting individuals' dignities from being affected by negative environments. In a mentoring system framework, many scholars think that same-gender in mentorship and cross-gender in mentorship are distinct constructs, but highly interrelated. For example, the willingness of same-gender and cross-gender to implement comfortable interactional styles in formal and or informal mentoring programmes (e.g., communication openness and active participation) will provide mutual benefits (Baugh & Scandura,

1999; Hansford & Ehrich, 2006; Hansford, Tennent & Ehrich, 2003; Lyon et al., 2004).

Decisions involve both cognitive and motivational orientations. Hence, the decision to be mentored likely encompasses individual beliefs about the anticipated outcomes of the mentor relationship, such as career development and emotional or psychosocial support. A significant contextual factor that may impact motivational orientation is gender (Buttner, 2001). This is because gender differences are also evidenced in perceptions about career success, career advancement decisions and opportunities, values, and role models. Moreover, studies suggest that women and men have different attitudes about the outcomes of mentoring (Buttner & Moore, 1997; Orser & Dyke, 2009).

This assertion is supported by studies (Burke, 2002; Burke & McKeen, 1997) that reported that women managers face unique challenges in developing and maintaining an effective mentoring relationship such as (potential) sexual tensions in gender-mixed dyads and compromised outcomes associated with gender-mixed dyads. Furthermore, the low number of women in upper management positions, coupled with the fact that the few available female mentors are already overloaded with female mentees, which means that female mentees are often less likely to find female mentors particular at the senior-level positions hence end up having male mentors.

Some scholars have reported that females are at an advantage when their fellow female mentors them. Female role models and mentors provide essential benefits in terms of signalling to other women the 'proof of possibility' when seeking career progression (Sealy & Singh, 2010). Same-sex dyads have been recognised to alleviate the difficulty of mirroring the "male

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behaviours" exhibited by male mentors and increase interpersonal comfort compared to female mentees with male mentors (Cooper & Hingley, 1983). Same-gender is marked by greater interpersonal comfort due to shared identities and experiences. Female mentees who had female mentors are considered to be fortunate since they are able to learn strategies for managing their organisations as well as balancing work-family issues from other women who have experienced what they (mentees) are experiencing (Allen, Day and Lentz, 2005). Female mentees in same-gender mentor relationships are also reported to enjoy after-work social interactions with their mentors (Maccoby, 1990).

A cross-gender relationship has mostly been misinterpreted as a sexual advance and members of such association at times feel reluctant to initiate such relationships. Therefore, parties in cross-gender relationships limit their interaction only to the work environment (Ragins, 1996). Male mentors and female mentees may avoid entering in cross-gender mentoring relationships to avoid office gossip, perceived sexual involvement, accusations of sexual harassment, vague insinuations, jealous spouses, and resentful co-workers (Bowen, 1985; Fitt & Newton, 1981; Hurley, 1996). Even when females do establish mentoring relationships with male mentors, the quality of mentoring may be less than optimal.

Research has found that gender role stereotypes can either consciously or unconsciously cause male mentors to assume that their female mentees lack the skills to grasp complex problems. It is also possible that male mentors may not trust their female mentees which at times can lead to withholding exciting assignments or promotions of female mentees (Elliott, Leck, Orser & Mossop,

2007). Another challenge in cross-gender mentoring is role-modelling. Female mentees in cross-gender mentor relationship often find the advice of their male mentors contradicting their personalities. Since men do not understand the role-conflict issues women have been battling with, the information male mentors may give to their female mentees sometimes may not be relevant to the female mentees. Strategies men used to progress in their career may not apply or real to female mentees (Ibarra, Carter & Silva, 2010). Due to the challenges associated with cross-gender mentoring, most women will not be benefitting from mentoring since they actively choose not to be mentored by men (Leck, Orser, & Riding, 2009). Even though cross-gender mentoring has been associated with a lot of challenges, nevertheless, a study conducted by Van Leuvan (2016) on the influence of mentors on female development among higher education administrative professionals, revealed that female mentees had no negative experiences with their male mentors, however several with female mentors.

Influence of Mentoring Programmes on Women Career

Mentoring has been acknowledged as a developmental tool that provides the necessary support for females in their career lives. Ragins and Cotton (1999), asserted that mentoring provides employees with critical resources which female are no exception. According to Okurame and Balogun (2005), mentoring is a powerful tool of career management because of its enormous advantages. These advantages comprise skills development, easy access to organizational resources, career satisfaction and clarity of goals for the mentees (Hughes & Sheerin, 2016).

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Even though literature has mentioned some benefits of mentoring on female, its effectiveness depends on the nature of the working environment. Ely and Padavic (2007) proposed that in investigating the effectiveness of mentoring relationships, the context of the working environment should be taken into consideration. There have been varied definitions for mentoring but the key premise is that mentoring is a relationship between an experienced person and an inexperienced person which focuses on the long-term development of the inexperienced person (Gold, Holden, IIes, Stewart & Beardwell, 2010; Gold, Thorpe & Mumford, 2010; Stewart and Rigg, 2011).

According to Gold et al. (2010), the role of mentoring is not restricted to just development for the current role, but it has other benefits which assist in the learning and career development of a mentee, providing both psychosocial and career facilitation benefits. Mentoring serves as an opportunity to learn from more senior experienced colleagues. Stewart and Rigg (2011) also claim that mentors play vital roles in the exposure and visibility of females through networking within the organisation. Paddison (2013) argued that whilst the development of female mentees is very noble, it is not enough and more direct focus is required to ensure that talent is actually promoted. She also identified sponsorship as one of the distinct roles involved in mentoring. The concept of sponsorship is singled out by Paddison (2013) as not just being an element of mentoring that focuses on developing individuals but instead, assumes that individuals already have the necessary skills and are empowered and supported by sponsors who enable them to access networks and advance their careers. Similarly, Titleman (2016) advocates the need for

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sponsorship to boost women's careers and contends that sponsors provide authorisation for individuals and thereby enhance career opportunities.

Mentoring, specifically for women, is an issue that has extensively been argued in the existing literature. Mentoring has been proposed as necessary support and the foundation for career success for most women who find themselves in male-dominated fields (Tharenou, 2005; Ramaswami, Dreher, Bretz, and Wiethoff, 2010). According to Ely and Padavic (2007), mostly in organisations where females are underrepresented, they are encouraged to develop mentoring relationships. Desimone, Hochberg, Porter, Polikoff, Schwartz and Johnson (2014); Chun, Sosik and Yun (2012) and Ragins and Cotton (1999) concur that in examining the effectiveness of mentoring, it is crucial to consider the work environment. They asserted that critical attention should be given to both the informal and formal mentoring within the work settings. Even though, there are merits in a structured mentoring approach, it is not without its flaws. Notably, the issue of availability of suitable mentors has been raised as a concern with formal mentoring. Other drawbacks associated with formal mentoring are: limited contacts as a result of time constraint; conflict with work schedules and physical distance.

Chen and Krauskopf (2013) also highlighted the issue of matching and the importance of appropriate mentors to ensure employees receive valuable support from their mentors. Matching in terms of mentoring is an essential antecedent for a productive mentoring relationship, as is the importance of trust in the relationship between the mentor and mentee (Stewart & Rigg, 2011). According to Groysberg (2008), the lack of appropriate mentors and

role models in male-dominated sectors for females may cause them to lose the most valuable services mentors provide thus access to a network of relationships.

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine implemented a range of initiatives to address the underrepresentation of women in senior academic from 1990 to 1995. This multifaceted intervention is perhaps the most notable and included mentoring, leadership development, education of faculty to the nature of gender-based obstacles and motivation for change, and academic rewards (Fried, Francomano, MacDonald, Wagner, Stokes, Carbone, Bias, Newman & Stobo, 1996). Results showed more junior women being retained and promoted with a 50 percent increase in the number of women at the associate professor rank over five years (from four in 1990 to 26 in 1995). Furthermore, between half and two-thirds of female faculty members reported improvements in the timeliness of promotions; manifestations of gender bias; access to information needed for faculty development; isolation and salary equity. Female mentees experienced an increase in career motivation which comprised three components: career resilience, career insight, and career identity (Day & Allen, 2004).

This increased career motivation showed a connection to Donaldson and Grant-Vallone's (2002) study that examined the effects of high quality mentoring relationships on non-professional women and minorities and reported increases in both organizational commitment and organizational citizenship. Organisational commitment involved an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Organizational citizenship behaviours included characteristics like

helping co-workers with job-related problems, tolerating short-term impositions without complaining, and promoting an overall positive work environment (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1993).

Van Leuvan (2016) studied on the influence of mentors on female development among higher education administrative professionals. The author indicated that leadership is a socially constructed concept that has been seen as a masculine quality; because of this, women struggle reaching leadership positions and face many challenges when holding leadership positions. Hence, the study investigated the development of leadership styles and qualities of selected female administrative leaders at Rowan University through survey and interview data. The study specifically looked at the influence of mentoring on these women's leadership development. The findings revealed how mentors played a crucial role in the leadership development and confidence of women in higher education.

Tran (2014) researched the role of mentoring in the success of women leaders of colour in higher education. The main aim of the study was to examine how mentoring affects the development of women leaders of colour in higher education. While their experiences may vary, all of them attributed their professional success to having mentors in their lives and the extent to which these mentoring experiences influence their work at their workplace. Arkaifie (2016) also conducted research on evaluating the effect of mentoring programme on newly recruited lecturers of the University of Cape Coast. The researcher further found out three outcomes of mentoring as personal development, professional development and mixed development (personal development and professional development). On the whole, the majority of the

mentees made up of both male and females indicated that the mentoring process had a positive effect on them. Mentees mentioned that the mentoring programme helped them to learn how to write articles for publications; they had improved on their teaching skills; they had developed a cordial relationship and also developed a positive personal lifestyle. However, a few of the mentees mentioned that their mentoring relationship did not influence their career lives because of the non-availability and unwillingness of their mentors to accept the task they were assigned to do.

Challenges Associated with Mentoring Programmes

Amid the broad scope of research touting the influence of mentoring relationships, researchers have documented adverse outcomes associated with bad mentoring relationships (Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby, Butts, Lockwood & Simon, 2004). Negative interactions between mentors and mentees could prove detrimental to the mentor, mentee and the organization because dysfunction in a mentoring relationship could affect performance appraisals, impede succession planning when the mentee did not receive adequate coaching to prepare him or her for the next position, and could negatively influence the performance of both the mentor and the mentee (Scandura, 1998). Several studies have been conducted to examine the relationships between men and women in cross-gender mentoring (Cox & Nkomo, 1991; Ensher & Murphy, 1997). Reports show that these relationships have their own unique challenges which include issues like perceived sexual attraction between male mentors and female mentees and the belief that women lacked managerial skills and are not suited for certain positions (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). Van Oostende, Chiercia & Martens, (2012) reported findings which

indicated that while some company leaders advocated on behalf of mentoring programmes that supported women's development, other corporate leaders viewed such programmes as unnecessary and potentially counterproductive.

In an organizational context, it would be ideal for the mentor and mentee to be at the same physical location. Unfortunately, in the global workplace, the physical presence of a mentor is not always possible and is often impractical (Johnson, 2015). Furthermore, the act of mentoring involves a relationship between mentor and mentee built on trust. When people do not trust each other, communication can be distorted, or mentee can choose to ignore the mentor's efforts to teach. While the credibility of the mentor is always important, when the distance spans thousands of miles, the lack of physical interaction and the possibility that the mentee has not previously known, or knows little of the mentor beyond the supplied resume, increases the difficulty of mentoring and, correspondingly, learning from the mentor. Without the opportunity to observe the mentor on an ongoing basis, the mentee is likely to have little beyond that resume to determine if the mentor is truly competent and can be trusted.

Moreover, appointing a mentor creates little value if the mentee is disinterested or unable to use information from the mentor, so operating in a global environment, challenges the organization to assess the willingness of the mentee to participate in a mentoring relationship. Mentee unwillingness to change or to communicate with a mentor creates barriers that are difficult for any mentor to overcome (Matuszek, Self, & Schraeder, 2008).

Another drawback that is often noted by an overwhelming number of potential mentors or mentees is the time and energy that such relationships

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involve. In formal mentor relationship interaction between mentees and mentors is limited and this is as a result of time constraint, conflict with work schedules and physical distance. Also, some mentors are reluctant to open up to their mentees. They (mentors) are of the fear that if they develop their mentees to their highest potential, they (mentors) may be replaced by the up-and-coming mentees. However, organizations can ease the burden associated with this thought by demonstrating that both individuals develop throughout the process, and replacement is highly unlikely within the organization due to mentoring. Also, mentors and mentees should be made to understand what is required or expected of their role in this interpersonal relationship (Alderman, 2000). Organizations, mentors and mentees should consider mentoring as a development tool for their succession planning (Ragins & Scandura, 1999).

Strategies to Improve upon Mentoring Programmes

For a mentoring programme to be effective, the tactics of action and resources that will be required to ensure the formulation, implementation and evaluation of such programme need to be identified and utilised (Lawrie, 1987). This section presents some of the strategies that will assist improve upon a mentoring programme.

Planning and Organization

From extant literature (Perrone, 2003), the first component in establishing and developing an effective mentoring programme is by identifying the vision and goals of the programme. Perrone (2003), posits that setting a clear vision and objectives serve as a guide in future mentoring initiatives. Thus, senior management and other stakeholders in the mentoring programme need to work together in a bid to design an overall strategy. This

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includes defining objectives and developing and executing plans to ensure the success of such programmes. Excellent formal mentoring programmes must aim at promoting informal mentoring relationships as an aspect of the organisational culture. This is because the informal component of mentoring tends to serve as a critical component to a formal mentoring programme (Williams, 2000).

Successful mentoring programmes must also be aligned with overall organisational goals such as improving employee retention rates; increasing employee commitment, loyalty and satisfaction; enhancing employee-job fit; embracing corporate culture, values and standards as well as facilitating the career development of mentees (Williams, 2000). At the planning stage of the mentoring programme, it is prudent for management to give sufficient time (at least six months) to get "buy-in" from the other stakeholders in the programme It is also important to create a dynamic task force that will have an oversight responsibility in developing the programme (Phillip-Jones, 2003).

Input and Collaboration

It is difficult to have an effective mentoring programme without the support of the entire organisation. Organisational support means the encouragement and assistance of a programme by the organisation as a whole (Douglas, 1997). The success of any mentoring programme depends on the support from the various levels of the organisation. However, senior management acceptance and support is essential because they have shown the direction in policy statements, provide the financial and human resources needed and also demonstrate by public speeches the progress and achievements of the programme (Williams, 2000).

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Apart from the support of top management, it is essential to hold meetings in the form of focus group discussions to solicit the views and opinions of all relevant stakeholders. Requesting for inputs at the developmental stage of the programme is critical for a successful mentoring because it reduces apathy at the implementation stage. Also, the active support of the administrative staff of the organisation provides the foundation needed for a successful formal mentoring programme (Godshalk & Sosik, 2000).

Training Mentors

For a mentoring programme to succeed, organisations have to train mentors according to their unique aspirations. A professional who understands the industry must do this. A typical training of mentors should address the mentoring history, the roles of participants in a mentoring programme, the critical success factors to consider in pairing mentors and mentees, practical suggestions and tips and the likely expectations of both mentors and mentees (Ragins, Cotton & Miller, 2000). The training should also address the overview of the structure of the mentoring programme, policies, guidelines, goals and the criteria for evaluating the success of the programme (Williams, 2000). Although, training mentors is very important, it is also believed that mentors willingness to undertake such training for the role (mentor) must be a requirement for the mentoring programme (Tovey, 1999).

Another pertinent issue that needs to be looked at is whether mentees also need training or not. Certainly, they need to be involved in the discussions of rules and expectations. At the training session, the aims of the programme, roles of participants and the rules of engagement should be articulated to both parties (mentor and mentee). In support of this, Douglas (1997), recommends

that the aims of the programme should not only be defined but rather they should be communicated to the relevant individuals involved in the programme. It is believed that such communication would reduce the likelihood of misunderstanding surrounding roles and expectations of programme participants. Effective communication is vital to mentoring; hence, it will be necessary to include a communication expert as a facilitator in the mentoring training (Williams, 2000). Organisations must strive to train all their members in mentoring. While communication and interpersonal skills are most required by mentors and mentees, programme coordinators must also be trained in ways that they can effectively support the programme with their time and resources. The absence of training can lead to the failure of a formal mentoring programme (Benabou & Benabou, 2000).

Pairing Mentors and Mentees

Mentoring is not always successful and unsuccessful pairing can be worse than no mentoring at all. Selection of mentors can be a difficult task. Therefore, the effective pairing of mentors and mentees is a critical strategy that needs attention in other to ensure a successful mentoring programme. There are different ways of pairing mentors and mentees. First, formal mentoring relationships usually come into existence when a third party assigns members to such relationships (Ragins, Cotton & Miller, 2000) and this must always be done on the goals of the programme. In addition to the above, sometimes a mentor advisory team and the programme coordinator are given the responsibility for pairing the mentors and mentees.

Gathering the right type of experienced employees to serve as mentors is a crucial ingredient of a successful mentoring programme. There are two

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principal ways of getting mentors. It could either be by relying on existing mentors or finding new ones through the management of the organisation. However, it is important to pay much attention to selecting mentors (either existing or new) because people who could serve as good mentors may not always be obvious (Benabou & Benabou, 2000). Having relevant expertise in a particular field is not adequate qualification for the role of mentor. Tovey (1999) recommends a number of characteristics for successful mentors as: ability to build and manage relationship; willingness to share knowledge; organisational knowledge; expertise in the field; commitment to the facilitation of learning and willingness to commit the time and effort required.

Williams, (2000) also posits that personality differences must be examined in pairing decisions. The mentor and mentee must have similar values and career goals to facilitate communication among them. They must have respect and care for each other; willing to listen to each other; and co-operate with each other in engaging with mutually beneficial assignments. Mentors and mentees must trust each other to create the right atmosphere for transfer of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours. Similarly, issues like position in the firm, similar interests, personalities, accessibility, geographical location and functional areas should be considered in pairing decisions (Douglas, 1997).

Implementation

This is the stage where the mentor begins mentoring the mentee by engaging in different types of functions. According to Inzer and Crawford, (2005), the mentor will usually start with the "career" or professional function. This is where the mentor trains the mentee in the technical skills required in

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carrying out the mentee's job. The second is a "role modelling" function where the mentee learns the soft skills, attitudes and behaviours appropriate for his or her career. The next is where the mentor tries to become the friend and confidant of the mentee by caring about the other needs of the mentee. This is known as the "psychological" function. The final function, termed as "political" function, is where the mentee learns how to become influential in the work environment.

At the implementation stage, the mentor and mentee must communicate more openly and frequently. Mentors and mentees should have schedule for meetings, indicating when they would be meeting as well as the duration for each meeting. They have to set an agenda for each meeting and have to come to meetings prepared to discuss issues in an honest manner. Mentors and mentees should take into consideration a suitable meeting place which must be geographically accessible and must make both mentors and mentees comfortable (Goodlad, 1999).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation procedures must be clearly defined and articulated during the developmental stages of the programme. The mentoring coordinator needs to check on progress, encourage the participants, and make sure the relationship is working. The coordinator is an impeller, liaison, and the administration's representative. The coordinator monitors the relationship and helps the parties to bear fruit, meets one-on-one with the participants, and publishes a monthly newsletter to provide mentoring tips, programme updates, and spotlights on particular participants or occurrences (Williams, 2000). The coordinator must have a relationship with all the mentees and mentors to head

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off problems before they become severe. These relationships are not to betray confidences, but to point out problems. Identification of any critical issue needs the coordinator, mentor, and the mentee to be involved in addressing the issue. The coordinator must also maintain confidentiality.

Evaluation of the programme is critical. It determines whether to consider the mentee an exceptional candidate, whether to prolong or change the programme and its components and to evaluate the mentors for future involvement. Results are assessed by assessing behavioural changes, comparing costs, and doing a cost-benefit analysis (Benabou & Benabou, 2000). Kram (1985) states that the evaluation of training and development efforts includes pre- and post-tests as well as long-term follow-up with participants and control groups. These tests can be interviews, questionnaires, and surveys to reveal participants' attitudes toward mentoring, their understanding of the mentoring process, and their perceptions of the organizational climate.

Dankwa and Dankwa (2014) studied the mentoring programme of the University of Cape Coast. In their study, mentees suggested some strategies that could enhance the University's mentoring programme. These include: quarterly evaluation of the programme; mentees participation in choosing their mentors; an extension of the mentoring period and allowing mentees to work closely with their mentees throughout the probationary period.

Theories on Mentoring

Mentoring theories range from couching mentoring purposes, activities, and effects in everything from goal-setting, personal development, career development, self-organized learning, and social capital to networking

(Blank & Sindelar, 1992; Kay & Wallace, 2009). For the purpose of this study, the social learning theory, mattering and marginality theory and the relational cultural theory will be considered.

Social Learning Theory

The Social Learning Theory (SLT) was developed by Albert Bandura in 1986 to provide a framework for understanding and predicting factors which influence change in human behaviour. In SLT, Bandura theorizes that for a person to take a particular action, individuals must have the necessary skills to execute an action, believe that the action will lead to a desired outcome and that they are personally capable of performing the action (Bandura, 2001). The major tenet to the theory is the belief in one's personal capability, known as self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy is defined as the individual's beliefs about his or her ability to perform a specific behaviour (Bandura, 1982). He asserts that self-efficacy is considered as a primary determinant of the extent to which individuals initiate and maintain desired behaviour changes.

The degree of self-efficacy influences how much effort a person will invest when taking an action, and how long he or she will persevere in the face of difficulties or disappointing results. An individual accumulates feedback from four primary sources in order to develop self-efficacy with respect to a particular action or behaviour. These four feedbacks are performance accomplishments; vicarious experience; verbal persuasion and physiological states (Bandura, 2001). Among these four sources, the first one being successful performance of behaviour, also referred to as "mastery" experience, is considered as the most potent in raising the level of self-efficacy (Bandura,

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1986). A person requires frequent and extensive practice to be proficient with a new behaviour. Ideally, practice occurs with the help of extensive guidance, encouragement, and feedback.

Maximum level of self-efficacy can be attained by an individual if practice is structured so that the person approaches progressively more challenging situations followed by the gradual removal of external aids and increased opportunities for self-guided practice. Repeated failures, particularly if they occur early in the course of trying out the new behaviour, can have devastating effects on self-efficacy. To minimize this problem, the individual should start with realistic, achievable sub goals and working gradually towards the ultimate behavioural goal. However, there is no need to completely avoid failures and difficulties since they constitute an important ingredient in the learning process. Bandura (1991) suggests that people build strong and resilient sense of self-efficacy by overcoming setbacks through perseverance.

Learning by modelling which is the second source of self-efficacy asserts that people judge their capabilities in comparison to others whom they regard as similar to themselves (Bandura, 1990). This source is the most common way by which humans acquire new behaviours. High degree of similarity increases one's personal relevance of the observation on his or her judgment to undertake an action. For instance, an individual who is afraid to undertake an action or behaviour benefits from seeing others in the same situation and this may help to overcome his or her own fears and the difficulties associated with the process.

The source of feedback is verbal persuasion which provides encouragement and suggestions that can lead an individual to believe that he

or she is capable of performing a desired behaviour. However, verbal persuasion might have weaker self-efficacy expectations than personal mastery experiences because persuasion does not provide a direct experience of capability. The impact of verbal persuasion on self-efficacy varies according to the perceived credibility of the persuaders (Bandura, 1986). The last source of feedback posits that individuals may rely partly on their state of physiological arousal to judge their ability to perform desired behaviours. High arousal usually interferes with performance and therefore individuals are more likely to expect success when they feel relatively free of internal agitation or tension. People can strengthen their self-efficacy by acquiring skills for reducing uncomfortable physiological reactions, such as tension and agitation, and by learning to interpret these reactions as normal rather than as signs of inefficacy (Bandura, 1990).

One of the major limitations of the Social Cognitive Theory is the fact that it ignores the role played by social norms and values in the development of one's self-efficacy. In certain situations, social norms and values can make it impossible for someone to develop the needed skills to achieve outcomes. Furthermore, the theory fails to recognize the effects of genetic, biological and emotional factors in an individual's life (Pervin & John, 1999).

Mattering and Marginality Theory

Schlossberg's (1989) theory of Mattering and Marginality covers these five areas: attention, the feeling that one is noticed; importance, a belief that one is cared about; ego extension, the feeling someone else will be proud of what one does or will sympathize with failures; dependence, a feeling of being needed; appreciation, the feeling that one's efforts are appreciated by others

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(Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). These are all areas that mentoring addresses. Rosenberg and McCullough (1981), coined the term mattering to refer to the feeling that one is of concern to one's parents and others, that one is wanted and that their feelings and opinions count. Mattering has been said to correspond to self-esteem, a concept explained by the psychologist William James as how one feels about their worth, tested by educator Stanley Coopersmith, and used to help explain almost every human behavior (Coopersmith, 1981).

Other researchers believe perceived mattering is distinct from self-esteem, stating that mattering has to do with the perception that others are interested in oneself, whereas self-esteem has to do with the personal evaluation of oneself (Marshall, 2001; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). Mattering has been tied to identity, feelings of interest and appreciation (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981; Chickering, Lynch, & Schlossberg, 1989) and belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Mattering is related to Maslow's levels three and four of his hierarchy of needs, those of belongingness and self-esteem, but goes beyond belongingness to the more powerful feeling of relatedness (France, & Finney, 2009).

In very basic terms, mattering is about feeling that one counts (Prilleltensky, 2014). Often the term marginality is used in conjunction with mattering. Marginality refers to being excluded from something and has been shown to negatively affect feelings of mattering (Draus, Roddy, & Greenwald, 2010; Phillips, 2005). Marginality often has to do with transition periods of life where one is not integrated into a group yet. Marginality elicits feelings about mattering on the negative side; the marginal individual feels they are

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invisible and insignificant. Similar to the broader concept of marginality is the practice of individual shunning that is enacted as a punishment for violators of an organizational or societal code. This withdrawal of any type of attention makes the individual feel they do not matter and the effect of no attention has been shown to be more hurtful than negative attention (Elliott, Kao, & Grant, 2004). Perhaps easiest to understand and most telling of why some people have a stronger feeling of worth and positive outlook than others is the definition of mattering meaning that one makes a difference in the life of others and has a sense of purpose for life (Elliott, Colangelo & Gelles, 2005; Mak & Marshall, 2004).

Relational Cultural Theory

Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) is a theoretical framework that was initially developed to provide an explanation for how healthy psychological development is achieved. The framework was originally developed in response to the predominant psychological developmental theories that were limited because they were based on the experience of white males. While acknowledging the need for individuation and autonomy as a unique person, RCT emphasizes connections and relationships with others as key to healthy psychological growth. RCT is based on the work of Jean Baker Miller (1986) and her colleagues (Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991; Jordan, 1997) and Gilligan (1982) and her colleagues (Gilligan, Rogers, & Tolman, 1991).

Beginning in the 1970s Dr. Jean Baker Miller and her colleagues, met together regularly and began to construct a beginning theory that they referred to as "self-in-relation" theory, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal

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relationships as key to healthy psychological development. Over time, the theory was expanded and was referred to as relational cultural theory based on the recognition that cultural contextual issues were crucial aspects of one's development and that relational development went beyond only self, but instead encompassed self and others. Perspectives from women of colour, from lesbian women, and from men were actively integrated into the developing theory (Bergman & Surrey, 1997; Coll, Cook-Nobles, & Surrey, 1997). The term, self, was no longer part of the name of this theory because the emphasis was directed toward people in interaction with others rather than on individual autonomy, whether that refers to the workplace, the family, or others.

The emphasis of RCT is on power with rather than power over in relationships and on individuals working together to achieve social change. Ultimately, RCT focuses on the development of interpersonal relationships that are growth-fostering to all involved in the relationship. These relationships are not simply a means to eventually becoming autonomous, but they are ends in and of themselves. These newer models do not reject the notion of individuation, but they moderate such separateness with connectedness, contributing to a more complex and insightful understanding of adult development, both male and female. "In short, the goal is not for the individual to grow out of relationships, but to grow into them. As the relationships grow, so grows the individual" (Miller & Stiver, 1997).

Relational theory incorporates context and culture into this theoretical approach. Based on RCT, it is clear that relationships are key factors in healthy psychological development. Applying RCT to mentoring is highly

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relevant since mentoring occurs within the context of a relationship between the mentor and the new faculty member. It is also critical that these relationships be healthy, in order to be growth-fostering, as evidenced by several key factors that are part of these relationships. These factors include: mutuality, authenticity, reciprocity, empathy, and connectedness. These factors are not mutually exclusive, as the existence of one often depends upon the existence of the totality of these factors that comprise healthy interpersonal relationships.

Mutuality is a dynamic condition in which two or more persons share an experience together, albeit to different degrees. One person does not experience something in complete isolation from another person. Although no two persons experience something in exactly the same manner, mutuality occurs when persons are both experiencing a situation together and can share with one another their descriptions of their individual experience so that each can understand better the other's experience (Miller & Stiver, 1997).

Authenticity is a condition in which a person is able to know herself or himself through self-reflection and, in turn, can present herself to others in a manner that truly represents her genuine thoughts and feelings. In addition, a degree of comfort exists in being genuine with others, which is related to having a strong sense of oneself. In order for authenticity to exist, the relationship must be perceived as safe for one to disclose their true feelings (Miller & Stiver, 1997).

Reciprocity is very similar to mutuality in that there is a sense of experiencing something together. Reciprocity, however, emphasizes and highlights the back-and-forth nature of a relationship, or the give and take that

occurs in relationships. Reciprocity highlights the importance of individuals working together within relationships, leading to consensus as they share back and forth (Miller & Stiver, 1997).

Empathy is related to connectedness in that it refers to a sense of sharing subjective feelings with another person. While one person can never exactly feel and know how another person is experiencing something, a person can have a sense of sharing some of the experience and can express this sense through an approach of communicating and relating to another person. This is what is referred to as an empathic approach in relationships (Miller & Stiver, 1997).

Connectedness refers to the notion that individual persons do not live and function in isolation from other. Furthermore, healthy relationships involve a sense and perception of being a part of (as opposed to apart from) another person, feeling connected to the other person whether that be sharing certain ideas and values or sharing certain feelings (Jordan, 1995; Jordan, 1999; Miller, 1986; Miller & Stiver, 1997). There is certain subjectivity in the definition of connectedness, which makes it difficult to define clearly, but this subjective sense of being connected to someone else is a very important part of being in a healthy relationship with another person. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule (1986), emphasized connectedness in relation to ways of knowing, with direct reference to women and how women come to know and make meaning of phenomena in their lives. Knowing, making meaning and developing healthy psychological selves occur within the context of connected relationships with others.

Application of RCT to the process of mentoring in academic settings frequently need strong mentoring in order to learn to effectively navigate the complex system of a university and to make career choices that will lead to success. However, the academic setting poses challenges to mentoring. Academia, while ideally being a setting in which diverse viewpoints and perspectives are embraced, is also an individually focused system in which individuals are rewarded as they rise to the top. Paradoxically, while collaboration and interdisciplinary work are encouraged, it is still individuals who are generally rewarded. Mentoring is time consuming for those individuals who assist new faculty members. In order for mentoring to be a truly rewarding experience for all, a greater emphasis on the good of the whole should be emphasized. In fact, the process of mentoring based on a framework of relationships leads to growth not only in the new academician, but in the mentor as well (Lewis & Olshansky, 2016).

Applying RCT to the mentoring process will achieve several important outcomes. First, it will assist individuals who are seeking to be successful in an academic setting, and therefore they will be motivated to receive the mentoring. Second, it will be growth fostering for both the new faculty member and the mentor, leading to greater overall strength within the organization. Third, it will contribute to creating a more effective culture of collaboration, likely leading to greater productivity. Such an approach to mentoring embraces a broader view of success in academia compared to how it has been traditionally defined. That is, traditional success in academia emphasizes individual attainment of goals. An RCT approach emphasizes success as the development of growth-fostering relationships within an

academic setting that will continue to encourage ongoing scholarship and innovation. According to this framework, the ongoing process of working collaboratively with colleagues who each contribute a unique dimension to the collective work of the academy is a measure of success in addition to individual attainment of goals (Lewis & Olshansky, 2016).

Conceptual Framework

The study proposes a conceptual framework on the influence of mentoring experiences of mentees. The framework describes the influence of mentoring experiences on the mentoring programme at large. The framework also embraces the complex nature of mentoring relationships and how these relationships if managed properly could influence the professional and personal lives of mentees. As shown in Figure 1, the model first focuses on mentees understanding of the phenomenon mentoring and their expectations prior to the mentoring relationship, namely; personal benefits desired by the mentees from the mentor and the mentoring programme (structure). Indubitably, the process of mentoring begins with the mentee having a fair understanding of the phenomenon mentoring. Subsequently, this shapes mentees expectation of the mentoring programme before it is initiated.

As in every formal mentoring programme, there are three key players; the mentee, the mentor and the institution with the responsibility of pairing and regulating the mentoring relationship between the mentee and mentor. Mentees expectations are usually focused on first, the personal benefits which describes what the mentees expect to achieve at the end of the mentoring programme. Next, expectation from the mentor where the mentee expects the mentor to perform his or her responsibilities competently by exuding some

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qualities of mentors. Lastly, the expectation from the structure which encompasses the interventions the institutions have in place to make the mentoring relationship effective. These expectations are carried into the mentoring relationship and forms part of the mentoring objectives for the mentees which are measured against the actual mentoring experiences at the end of the process.

The actual mentoring experience describes the phase where the mentee actually encounters the mentor and the institutional structures governing the mentoring process. The mentoring experiences could either be positive or negative which form the basis of the recommendations given at the end of the evaluation period with the potential of enhancing the programme. Equally, if the mentee experiences both the mentor and institution in a well-structured manner, it could possibly influence the career and personal development of the mentee which is usually the outcome of most institutional mentoring programmes. In other words, the entire process leads to the benefits derived by both the mentee and institution.

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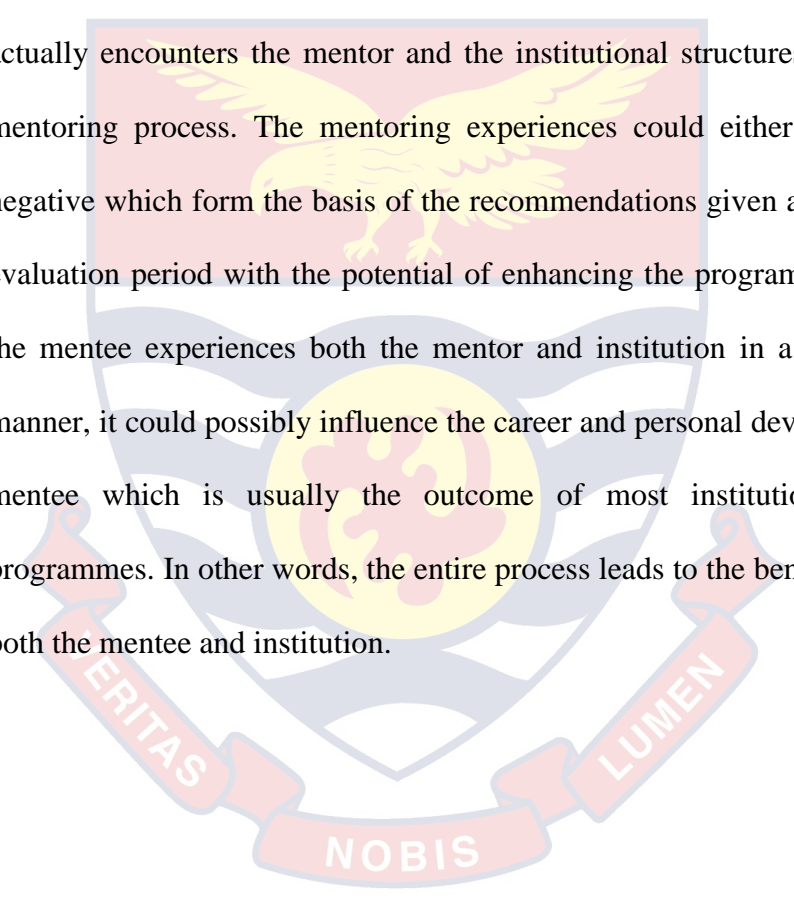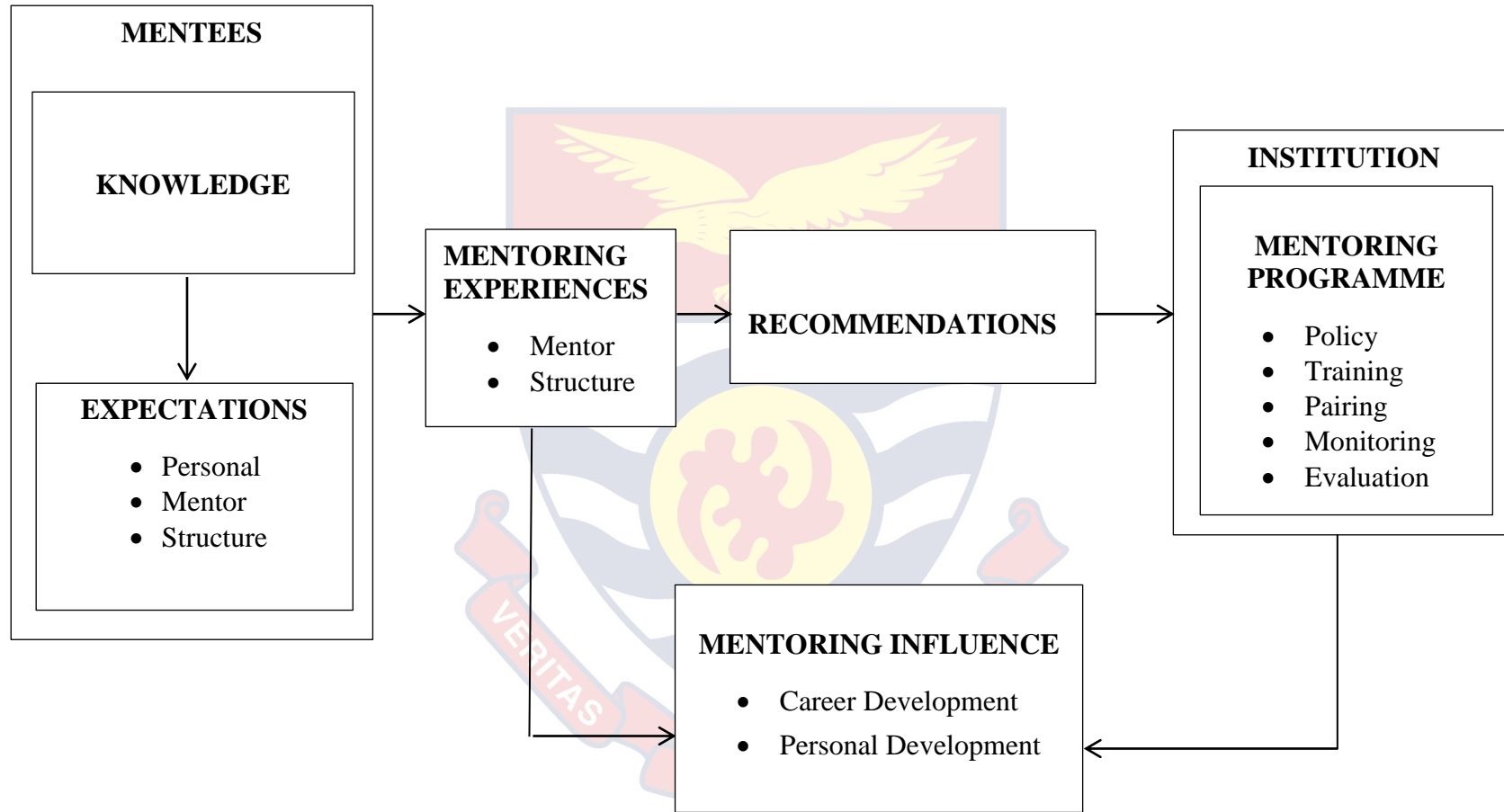
Figure 1. Conceptual framework on the influence of mentoring experiences on mentees and mentoring programme

Source: Author's construct, 2017

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methods adopted by the researcher for the study. Specific issues addressed include research design, study area, target population and the sampling procedure used. It also discusses, the research instrument used, how the instruments were developed, pre-tested and procedures used in gathering the data and how the data was analysed.

Research Design

There are several research worldviews in social science hence none of the worldviews is better than the other. Instead, the purpose or objective of the study will determine the appropriate worldview to adopt (Creswell, 2003). The philosophical underpinning for this study is interpretivism. The basic assumption of this philosophy is that individuals are seeking to understand the world in which they live; develop subjective meanings about objects and things out of their interactions in their world (Creswell, 2009). This philosophy emphasises the subjectivity of knowledge. Kim (2001) posits that individuals create meaning through their interactions with each other and with the environment they live in.

Qualitative research approach is underlined by interpretivist philosophy. The focus of qualitative research is on participants' perceptions and experiences and the way they make sense of their lives (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993). According to Dawson (2002), qualitative research explores attitudes, behaviour and experiences through such methods as interviews, observation or focus groups. Golafshani (2003) posit that qualitative research

uses naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings, such as real world setting in which the researcher does not manipulate the phenomenon of interest and only try to unveil the ultimate truth. Qualitative research seeks to understand how people make meaning through the richness of their own words.

It is used when a detailed understanding of an issue is needed, and the level of detail is gained by talking directly to people who experience the phenomena being studied (Creswell, 2009; Klenke, 2008). Therefore, through the use of the qualitative approach, the researcher believes rich information would be obtained from female administrators since there were allowed to share their own experiences with the UCC mentoring programme. Unlike quantitative data, qualitative studies do not require data to be analysed statistically. The data from qualitative studies is often derived from face-to-face interviews, focus groups or observation and so tends to be time consuming to collect. Samples are usually smaller than that of quantitative studies.

Out of the various approaches to qualitative studies, the researcher adopted the case study approach for the study. According to Zainal (2007), case study method enables the researcher to closely examine the data within a specific context. Case study is usually based on an in-depth investigation of a selected small geographical area, single individual, group, or event. Additionally, case studies may be suitable for knowing and learning more about issues which are poorly understood or issues about which little is known. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), case study provides a unique example of real people in real situations in order for people

to understand ideas more clearly. It encourages the use of several different techniques to get necessary information, ranging from personal observations, to interviewing people who might have information about the study. Therefore, case study is simply one of the best ways to get a richer account of what is happening.

Researchers can adopt either a single or multiple case methods but in the context of this study, the researcher used the single case. Single case method has exceptional qualities and also promotes understanding or informs practice for similar situation (Leedy & Ormorod, 2010). Accordingly, the case study design was favoured since the study focused on the mentoring experiences of female administrators in the University of Cape Coast. In spite of the strengths of the case study design, it was realized during the study that it is time consuming.

Study Area

The study was carried out at the University of Cape Coast (UCC). UCC is located in the Central Region of Ghana. It is a public university established in October, 1962 and situated 5 kilometres west of Cape Coast. It is one of the rare sea front universities in the world, strategically located along the shores of the Gulf of Guinea, which spans along the West Coast of Africa. The core mandate of the University at its inception was to train graduate professional teachers for Ghana's second cycle institutions and the Ministry of Education to meet the manpower needs of the country's education programme. However, over the years, the University has diversified its programmes, expanded its faculties and colleges and currently has the capacity to meet the manpower need of all sectors of the country. The staff strength of

the UCC as at November, 2017 distributed by gender is shown in table 1.

Table 1

Representation of Males and Females in the Various Categories of Staff   in UCC by November, 2017

Category	Men		Women		Total
	N	(%)	N	(%)	
Senior Members (Academic)	606	(80)	152	(20)	758
Senior Members (Non-Academic)	114	(70)	50	(30)	164
Senior Staff	840	(60)	560	(40)	1400
Junior Staff	2275	(83)	460	(17)	2735
Total	3835	(76)	1222	(24)	5057

Source: UCC Directorate of Finance (2017)

Table 1 revealed that females are the minority with regard to the various categories of staff in the University. The males dominate almost all the staff categories in the University. Females constitute 24% whereas the males cover 76% of the entire staff population of UCC. However, only 16.5% of the entire female population can be found within the senior member rank. This means, in the context of UCC, females are underrepresented at the top level position.

The choice of University of Cape Coast as the study context is because the institution has a mentoring programme for newly appointed senior members (both academic and administration), yet this is less explored. Therefore, it presents a unique setting for exploring the mentoring experiences of female administrators in UCC. The University of Cape Coast mentoring programme has been in operation over the years and it is as a result of the University's mission to motivate academic and administrative staff (senior

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members) to respond effectively to the developmental needs of a changing world. Based on an interview with the University's Directorate of Human Resource, the purpose of the mentoring programme is to provide newly appointed academic and administrative staff in the senior member position, with professional guidance and support to enable them to cope with the challenges they would face at the workplace and also advance in their personal and career lives.

Population

The population of the study was female administrators (senior members) in the University of Cape Coast who had served their probationary period, thus have completed the mentoring programme as at the time of the data collection. Attention was given to this category of female administrators because they were considered to have experience and could provide the requisite information to the phenomenon understudy. The total number of female administrators (senior members) who had gone through the mentoring programme was 44 according to the records from the Senior Members Section of the Directorate of Human Resource. The population comprised five (5) Junior Assistant Registrars, twenty-five (25) Assistant Registrars, nine (9) Senior Assistant Registrars and five (5) Deputy Registrars.

Sampling Procedure

The snowballing sampling technique was employed for this study. Snowballing sampling technique is usually used when participants are difficult to locate, especially, in qualitative research. With snowballing sampling, one participant is identified and he or she gives the researcher the name of another participant, who in turn provides the name of a third participant, and so on

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(Vogt, 1999). The snowballing sampling technique was employed to reach out to all the female administrators since their personal details was not disclosed to the researcher in compliance with the university's policies. Thus, the researcher had to rely on referrals in order to reach participants.

Individual participants identified through referrals were interviewed based on their availability and willingness to partake in the study. The researcher had to rely on saturation of information to end the data collection after the 17th participant. Saturation in qualitative research according to Dawson (2002) is a point in the data collection period where no new information emerges from the participants. This means by the time the researcher got to the 17th participant, there was no new information emerging which was different from the information from the earlier participants.

The motive of the researcher was not to generalize the findings, but rather to get a deeper understanding of the phenomenon understudy. Therefore 17 female administrators were interviewed and they comprised two (2) Junior Assistant Registrars, eleven (11) Assistant Registrars and four (4) Senior Assistant Registrars.

Data Collection Instrument

The instrument for the study was an interview guide. An Interview guide is a face-to-face method for data collection which allows for in-depth information to be collected. The interview guide involved series of open-ended questions which were developed based on the research questions and issues emanating from literature on mentoring experiences of females. The open-ended nature of questions provided both the researcher and participants the opportunities to discuss the topic in detail. The open-ended questions

allowed the researcher to probe into other issues that were of interest, and also allowed participants to express their thoughts freely about the topic under study.

One main advantage of this method, which made it suitable for this study was that it created a platform for people to interpret the world they live in and express how they felt about issues from their personal point of view (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). This was in line with the focus of the study which sought to explore the mentoring experiences of female administrators (senior members) in UCC. However, this method is time-consuming (Sarantakos, 2005).

After developing the interview guide, copies were submitted to supervisors for their inputs and suggestions. This ensured that the items in the interview guide were adequate and comprehensive to cover all aspect of the research questions. Also, the essence of this exercise was to find out whether the instrument was devoid of ambiguity in the wording of the questions. The interview guide began with an introductory statement about the researcher, purpose of the research and also assured the participants confidentiality of their responses. The interview guide had 6 sections with allowances for further probing. Section A solicited for the socio–demographic characteristics of the participants. Section B explored participants' understanding about mentoring practiced in UCC. Section C looked at participants' expectations about the mentoring programme. Section D delved into their experiences with the mentoring programme. Section E examined the influence of the mentoring experience on mentees' career lives and the final section assessed the strategies to enhance the mentoring programme.

The research instrument was pre-tested at the University of Education, Winneba campus. The pre-test exercise helped the researcher explore and obtain information on likely problems that may occur in the actual study. It also helped the researcher bring sanity to the instrument (interview questions) and the approach to be used in collecting the data. University of Education, Winneba Campus, was chosen for the pre-testing because it is one of the public universities which share similar characteristics with the study area. The University has a voluntary mentoring programme for its senior members both academic and administrative staff. According to Creswell (2009), pre-test is expedient and that it should be conducted in similar situations and conditions as the study area.

Pre-testing prepares the researcher for data collection. In pre-testing, there is no number of people to participate, the number of people is left at the researcher's discretion but the number should be sufficient (Zucker, 2001). Five registrars participated in the pre-test and they comprised two (2) were Senior Assistant Registrars and three (3) Assistant Registrars. The duration for the pre- test interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 45 minutes. The discussions were audio-taped after which the recorded responses were transcribed verbatim and analysed using the thematic analysis. Female administrators shared both positive and negative experiences with regards to the university's mentoring programme. They largely expressed positive influence of the mentoring programme on their career lives. However, the result for research question two after the analysis, helped the researcher to rephrase the question to reflect what it was intended to measure in the main study.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher presented an introductory letter (received from the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration) to the Senior Members Section of the Directorate of Human Resource at the University of Cape Coast to seek permission to undertake the data collection exercise. The section gave the researcher the number of female administrators who had gone through the mentoring programme and further granted the researcher the permission to undertake the data collection. Because the Senior Member Section could not give the researcher information on where she could locate the participants, the researcher had to rely on referrals in order to reach participants. The researcher first contacted an Assistant Registrar who was one of the participants, who directed the researcher to another participant. This process continued till the last participant was interviewed.

The researcher considered a host of ethical issues in the data collection. According to Wolcott (2009), the subjects of our studies are humans, not objects. Therefore, researchers need to maintain respect for the participants they study by not taking them or their stories and experiences lightly. Ethical standards require that researchers do not put participants in a situation where they might be at risk of harm as a result of their participation. The participants' privacy and time must be respected when conducting interviews and research at their convenience, not the researcher's (Babbie & Mouton, 2006).

In line with the aforementioned assertions (Wolcott, 2009; Babbie & Mouton, 2006), the researcher showed the introductory letter to participants and sought their consent upon which interviews were scheduled at the

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participants own convenient date, time and location before engaging them in the interview. Participants were informed about the topic as well as the purpose of the study. They were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and also the anonymity of their identity. Some participants showed apathy but others willingly expressed their interest in participating in the research without compulsion. Participants who wished to withdraw from participating in the study were permitted to do so.

Interviews were conducted in participants' office during office hours. In interviews, it is important for the researcher to record as much detailed information as possible (Deem, 2002). Therefore, to capture detailed notes during the interviews, permission was sought from the participants to use audio-tape recorder to record the discussions as well as note taking. For the two (2) participants who declined the recording of the interviews, the discussions were manually written in a field notebook. The researcher guided the discussion in order to limit participants deviating from the questions on the interview guide. There was some flexibility in the questioning. This process enabled participants to make some statements which were not directly related to some questions but the researcher saw them as providing some valuable insight into the study. The researcher managed to control those who were deviating by bringing the discussions back to the main issues under discussion. Probe questions were also asked during the interviews and this helped to elicit more information from participants.

After the interviews, the researcher thanked the participants for participating in the study and again assured them of the confidentiality of their responses, anonymity of their identity and also using the responses for the

intended purpose. The researcher had to rely on saturation of information to end the data collection after the 17th participant. This was because by the time the researcher got to the 17th participant, there was no new information emerging which was different from the information from the earlier participants. In all, 17 female administrators were interviewed and they comprised two (2) Junior Assistant Registrars, eleven (11) Assistant Registrars and four (4) Senior Assistant Registrars. The data collection took eight weeks and the average duration for each interview session was 40 minutes. Data collection for the study was conducted between May to August, 2018. All the interviews were conducted by the researcher. To ensure the anonymity of participants, all personal details linking responses directly to the participants were identified with codes and pseudonyms. Likewise, to ensure the confidentiality of the responses, the data was held in high confidence. Under no circumstance was the data disclosed to other persons not directly involved in the data collection process or analysis. Finally, the interview transcripts file was saved in a computer folder and protected with a password known to only the researcher.

The researcher encountered some challenges during the interview period. Some participants refused to be recorded. Therefore, their responses were written verbatim in the field notebook which prolonged the interview time. Also, even though it was said that UCC had a mentoring policy, it was difficult tracing this document throughout the entire data collection process. This was due to the fact that there was no clear information about which Section of the University was in possession of the document. Hence, it limited

the researcher's ability to compare the findings of the study to the issues stipulated in the document.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data analysis commenced after the first interview was conducted. This was done to enable the researcher familiarize with the responses and new insights that were emerging. This formed the basis of probe questions that were asked as the data collection progressed. The data was analysed based on the steps suggested by Braun and Clarke's (2006) on thematic analysis.

In step one which is familiarising one's self with the data, the recorded interviews were manually transcribed verbatim by the researcher using Microsoft Word 2010. The transcripts were compared to the recordings to ensure that they were accurate. Also, the researcher sent the transcribed interviews to the participants to verify whether what had been written reflected accurately the views they had expressed during the interview. This process of member checking helped the researcher to maintain credibility and trustworthiness of the study. The transcripts were printed, read over severally line-by-line and this enabled the researcher to acquaint herself with data. As the researcher read through the transcripts, she searched for all the patterns and the recurring thoughts in the transcripts.

The second step is generating initial codes. The researcher coded using the manual coding system. As the transcripts were read severally, notes were made in the margins of each transcript after which highlighter pens with different colours were used to code the different responses whereas similar colours were used for similar responses. During the next step, that is searching of themes, the codes were organized into categories. The recurrent codes were

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regrouped into main themes and subthemes. Again, some of the subthemes were collapsed in each other to form main themes. These main themes and subthemes further became the headings of results presented in the study. In the final step, a narrative approach was adopted in presenting and discussing of the results. Direct quotes relevant to the discussions were used to support the findings.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the study area as well as the method adopted for this study. The interpretivist philosophy and the case study approach were adopted for the study, population, sampling procedure, data collection method and the instrument were also discussed. Field work issues including the challenges that were encountered were articulated. Lastly, the thematic networks and steps followed to process and analyse (the interview data) were also discussed.

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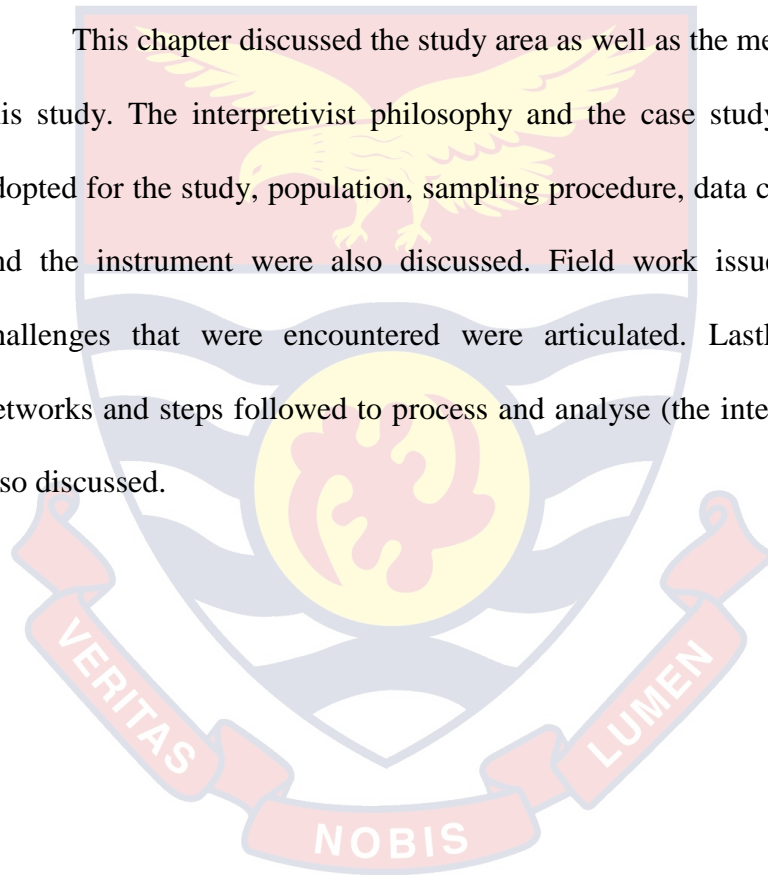
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore the mentoring experience of female administrators (senior members) in the University of Cape Coast. This chapter first presents the socio-demographic information of the participants. The chapter further describes the processes of analysing data gathered from 17 female administrators who had gone through the mentoring programme, using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis process. Also, the chapter discusses findings based on the five research questions that the study employed. Participants' quotes were heavily relied on to explore the phenomenon understudy and pseudonyms were used to replace the real names of participants.

Socio-demographic Characteristics

This section presents a summary of the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants interviewed. In all, seventeen female administrators participated in the study. Age, length of service, number of years served as senior members, duration of mentoring period, and the sex of mentors were some of the background characteristics of the participants that data were collected on. For the sake of anonymity, the real names of the participants have been replaced by pseudonyms. The following (Table 2) is the tabular presentation of their socio-demographic characteristics.

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Table 2

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Pseudonym	Status	Age	Length of service (years)	Years served as SM	Mentoring period (years)	Sex of mentor
Bella	AR	40-50	6	6	2	M
Mary	AR	30-40	6	6	1	M
Lard	JAR	30-40	14	3	2	M
Joy	AR	40-50	12	5	2	M
Emma	AR	50-60	22	6	1	M
Nora	SAR	40-50	6	6	2	M
Lina	JAR	30-40	8	3	2	M
Dora	SAR	50-60	39	8	1	M
Eve	SAR	40-50	20	8	1	M
Fafa	AR	30-40	11	4	2	F
Naa	AR	30-40	7	4	2	M
Maggie	AR	30-40	12	4	2	F
Ama	AR	40-50	12	5	2	M
Emmy	AR	50-60	20	4	2	M
Lois	SAR	40-50	6	6	1	F
Grace	AR	30-40	10	4	2	M
Esi	AR	30-40	8	8	2	M

Source: Field survey, Ansong (2018)

Note: SM- Senior member, SAR- Senior Assistant Registrar, AR- Assistant Registrar, JAR- Junior Assistant Registrar

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Three ranks were identified, namely Senior Assistant Registrar, Assistant Registrar, and Junior Assistant Registrar. Most of the participants were Assistant Registrars and the remaining few were Senior Assistant Registrars (4 participants), and Junior Assistant Registrar (2 participants). The age of the participants ranged from 30 to 60 years. Eight of them were between the ages of 30 to 40 years while six of them were in the age cohort of 40 to 50 years.

Participants' length of service to the University mostly ranged from six years to 39 years as indicated in Table 2. The study found it worthwhile to find out the number of years participants had worked in the university before becoming senior members and the years they had served as senior members. The study was premised on the fact that years of service could influence participants' views and mentoring experiences. It was found that some of the participants were recruited directly as senior members which suggests that they were likely not to be familiar with the university setting whereas some had risen through the system thus from the junior level through to senior member position.

The sex of their mentors was also considered as important because of the gender issues that have been associated with mentoring relationships as literature claims (Bleil, 2012; Giddis, 2003). Out of the 17 participants, 14 were assigned to male mentors and the remaining (three) assigned to female mentors (Table 2). This confirms other studies on females in administrative positions in UCC which observed that there were few female mentors in UCC which has necessitated more of cross-gender mentoring relationship and a few same-gender relationships (Koomson, 2012; Nyantakyiwaa, 2014). Perhaps,

this may be as a result of the underrepresentation of females at the senior positions in the university. It is worth mentioning that the participants had had a mentoring experience for either a year or two.

Research Question One: How do Female Administrators Understand Mentoring as Practiced in UCC?
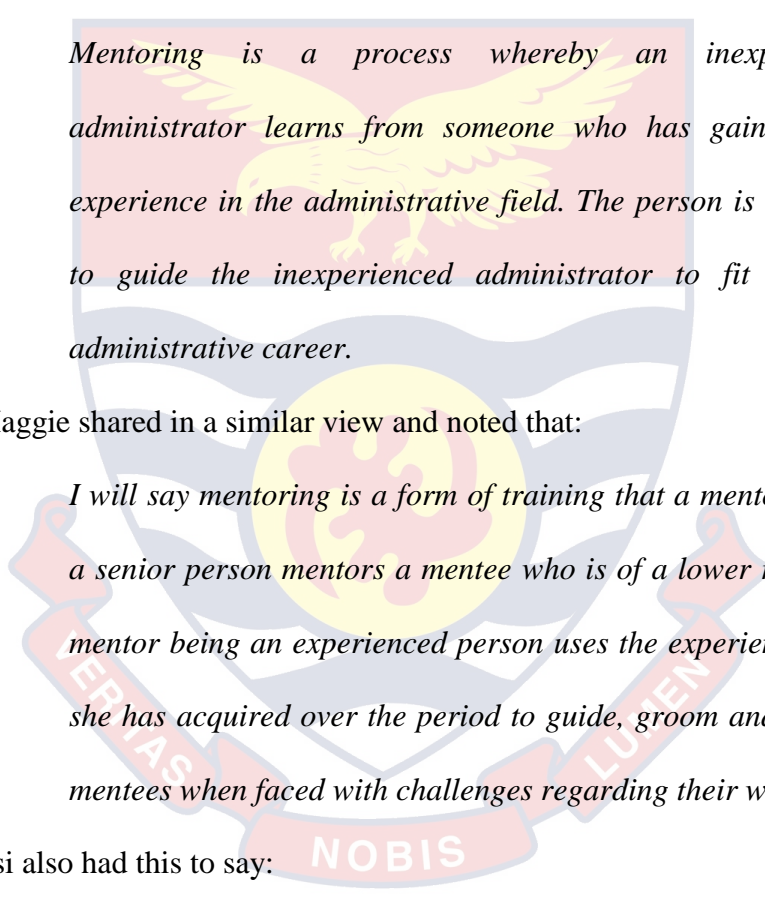
The first research question sought to find out female administrators' views on mentoring practices as practiced in the University of Cape Coast. Scholars like Johnson and Nelson (1999) have argued that the definitions of mentoring have transformed over the years and differ from one person and place to another. Hence, it was important to first elicit the meanings the participants ascribed to mentoring in general. Further, Pierce (1998) posits that parties in any mentoring relationship will effectively manage the programme if they really understood it.

Unsurprisingly, as has been found in literature, all the participants of the current study gave varied but related meanings to the concept, "mentoring". From the responses, three themes emerged with regards to the participants' understanding of mentoring, which are mentoring as an experiential learning, mentoring as an induction process and mentoring as a performance enhancer.

Mentoring as an Experiential Learning

The first theme centred on mentoring as experiential learning. It is frequently claimed that mentoring is the most effective way of passing on knowledge. Indeed, it ought to be because it is one-to-one and has all the dimensions of creating learning situations in a trusting environment. For instance, two people who have agreed to work together should be able to

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experiment with developing knowledge and explaining complex issues in a language that both understand. In such a context, mentoring is seen as helping the mentee to learn from a variety of life experiences as well as planning and rehearsing future encounters. This was no different from the responses from the participants. Ten of the participants understood mentoring as a form of training where an inexperienced person understudies an experienced person with a deliberate aim of acquiring knowledge. Lina remarked that:

Mentoring is a process whereby an inexperienced administrator learns from someone who has gained much experience in the administrative field. The person is supposed to guide the inexperienced administrator to fit into the administrative career.

Maggie shared in a similar view and noted that:

I will say mentoring is a form of training that a mentor who is a senior person mentors a mentee who is of a lower rank. The mentor being an experienced person uses the experience he or she has acquired over the period to guide, groom and counsel mentees when faced with challenges regarding their work.

Esi also had this to say:

Mentoring is a learning process where a junior understudy a senior who has experience in relation to the field the junior finds himself or herself.

The finding indicates that in mentoring relationship, there is an experienced person who transfers knowledge to an inexperienced person. And it is through experience sharing that mentees could learn. The finding

corroborates what Eby and Allen (2008) stated in their research that, mentoring involves the transfer of knowledge from an experienced person to a less experienced person. In support of this claim, Fowler and O'Gorman (2005) also posited that a mentor is an experienced and knowledgeable person and he or she gives guidance to a junior person who is trying to find assistance and support in his or her career, personal and professional development. This implies that the participants understood that mentoring is an avenue for equipping themselves with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to function properly in their chosen careers. Thus, they could acquire the knowledge and skills from a senior colleague on the job.

Mentoring as an Induction Process

Secondly, six of the participants also thought that mentoring is a process used to orient and help a new person on the job to settle in. New recruits are also given directions towards the transition in their career. The participants expressed varied views which identified mentoring as an induction process. To further substantiate this position, Grace was of the view that:

> *I think in mentoring there is someone who is considered to be knowledgeable and another person who is new in the terrain she finds herself. And the essence is to give some kind of guidance to the new entrant to be able to fit and work effectively within that environment.*

In a related view, Joy remarked that:

> *Mentoring in an organisation begins from the onset when you have been appointed for a new position where you will need*

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support. And the basis is for you to fit in the work you have been assigned with. Mentoring looks at how a mentee progresses in his/her new working environment and also understanding how the institution's system works.

The findings affirm the claims of Cummings and Worley (2009) that organisations use mentoring as a developmental intervention for new recruits to be assisted and guided by experienced persons. This the mentors do by working closely with mentees through their first year in their profession. It is implied that mentoring helps pass knowledge of subjects, facilitates personal development, encourages wise choices, and helps the mentees to make transitions. According to Arkaifie (2016), mentors offer mentees the opportunity to share their thoughts and concerns which helps them (mentees) to adapt to the organisation as well as achieving their career goals and development. If newly recruited employees are not assisted to familiarise themselves with their new working environment, they may become frustrated and may end up quitting their jobs.

Mentoring as a Performance Enhancer

The third theme which arose from the discussion was mentoring as a performance enhancer. Not only did the participants indicate that mentoring is experiential learning and/or as an induction process, but most of them iterated that mentoring also serves as performance enhancer. They indicated that the mentee is the learner or protégé who lacks experience, knowledge, or skills in a specific area and hence looks to another individual (mentor) to fill the gap. They further elaborated that this makes mentoring a career developer and career enhancer that promote skill performance.

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Naa for example said:

> *Mentoring brings a lot of improvement on the job therefore, enhances one's performance. This is as a result of the sharing of ideas and experiences that goes on during the mentoring period.*

Lois also iterated that:

> *Mentoring is very important because it really enhances one's performance which helps in one's promotion at the workplace. The mentor imparts some kind of knowledge which enriches your overall performance.*

These findings are consistent with the findings from other similar studies. Gold et al. (2010) found that mentoring facilitates the learning and career development of a less experienced mentee, and also serves as an opportunity to learn from more senior experienced colleagues. The finding is also in line with the claim by Adentwi (2002) that, teachers' competencies, quality and effectiveness have direct bearing on the students' performance. It implies that, the kind of knowledge the mentors share with the mentees consequently impacts the job performance of the mentees. Hence, it is likely that the inadequacies of the mentor in managing the mentoring relationship may later reflect in the job performance of the mentees, because they could influence the mentoring relationship negatively.

In addition to the aforementioned delineations, one participant on the other hand also saw mentoring as an educative medium beyond these three qualities. To her, although most participants connect mentoring to career life, mentoring could go beyond career life to personal and social lives of people.

The participants explained that mentorship creates social capital which makes it possible for a social relationship where one can fall on the other in times of difficulties. This is probably why Chen and Krauskopf (2013) highlight that the importance of appropriate mentoring is to ensure that employees receive valuable support from their mentors. In respect to this, Nora mentioned that:

> *Mentors are there to guide and advise you, but mentoring goes beyond your work. It can be extended to your personal and social lives depending on the kind of relationship between a mentor and the mentee.*

Inferences can, therefore, be made from the responses of the participants that with the University of Cape Coast mentoring programme, newly recruited senior members are paired with experienced and higher-ranking senior member. In the relationship, the experienced person is to share his or her experiences through the transfer of knowledge in providing professional and personal support to the new recruit who is assumed to be less experienced. The mentoring programme of UCC is in line with the various definitions for mentoring by both early and recent researchers of mentoring who recognised mentoring as a relationship between an experienced individual who serves as a guide, an advisor and a role model to a less experienced person (Eby & Allen, 2008; Kram, 1985; Lester & Johnson, 1981; Steinmann, 2006). Thus, the focus of mentoring programme is to provide the mentee with the necessary guidance and counselling to become valuable to the organisation.

Research Question Two: What are the Expectations of Female Administrators of the UCC Mentoring Programme?

It is argued in the literature (Hughes & Sheerin, 2016; Sealy & Singh, 2010) that female role models and mentors provide essential benefits in terms of signalling to other female the proof of possibility when seeking career progression. It was also found that mentoring highlights the symbolism of role models, particularly in male dominated fields. Hence, mentoring programmes are important in tackling wider societal barriers about what is men's work versus women's and stereotypical attitudes towards certain occupations. Hence, Hughes and Sheerin (2016) posited that mentoring has the advantages of developing skills, providing easy access to organisational resources, career satisfaction and clarity of goals for the mentee.

Further, mentoring similarly provides an essential support for female negotiating career paths and progression and offers powerful tool of career management because of its enormous advantages. In view of this, participants were asked to specify their expectations of the UCC mentoring programme. Participants mentioned several expectations that could explain the phenomenon. From the shared views of participants, it was evident that their expectations of the UCC mentoring programme could be grouped under three themes; personal, mentor and structure expectations. For each thematic group of expectations identified, the participants presented varied views.

Personal Expectations of Mentees

Research works (Paddison, 2013; Zachary & Fischler, 2009) show that the quality of workers' learning is higher when they have effective mentors. It is also established that mentoring activity ensures better cognition and

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comprehension of social relations and improvement of communicative skills, as well as guarantees self-satisfaction and emotional well-being which has a substantial influence on human development. As per the personal expectations, almost all the participants articulated that they wanted to gain in-depth knowledge and skills in their career and the institution in which they find themselves and this also translates into their personal growth. Typical were the narratives of Fafa, Nora and Bella:

> *My expectation was that at the end of the programme I will become more conversant with what is expected of me as a registrar* (Fafa).
>
> *I was expecting that I will probably have in-depth knowledge about my job and the organisation I'm working with* (Nora).
>
> *I was expecting to acquire some administrative skills which I was not familiar with* (Bella).

Such in-depth knowledge for the participants was essential in helping them execute their administrative duties effectively. In addition, learning the skills of writing a memo and writing a research paper for publication which were essential for gaining career progression stood out as a major expectation for most of the participants. Emmy indicated that:

> *I was expecting to develop the requisite administrative skills needed for the position I have been promoted to.*

In a similar vein, Ama said:

> *I was expecting that by the time the mentoring period will be over I would have written a memo and published a paper by myself for my promotion.*

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Lois who by the time of mentoring had just been appointed to the university also shared that the mentoring period could assist her to familiarise with the new work environment and position. She stated:

As someone who was new in the system and also coming from a smaller institution, I had some fear which I was expecting the mentoring programme to help me overcome those fear. I mean, the mentoring programme will help me acclimatise easily to my new environment.

With regard to personal expectations, mentees laid emphasis on what they hoped to gain after going through the mentoring process. Mentees expected that at the end of the programme they would have acquired some experiences and skills which would enable them to progress in their profession. These findings corroborate the previous research (Dubetz & Turley, 2001; Ragins & Scandura, 1999). These studies reported that mentees are mostly beneficiaries in mentoring relationships, hence reap rewards in these because the mentor is able to make use of his or her accumulated experiences to further the experience of the mentee. It is, therefore, not surprising that these mentees anticipated to accumulate in-depth knowledge and experience from their mentors in order to perform their duties to expectations.

Mentees' Expectations from their Mentors

The second theme in relationship to the participants' expectations bothered on their mentors. Majority of the participants generally, expected that their mentors will guide, coach and train them in relation to their job performance. For the mentees, such guidance and coaching are essential in

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making them successful in their everyday life activities. Examples of this view was shared by Grace, Bella and Esi:

> *I was expecting that my mentor would be coaching me. My mentor should share with me some basic errors that I could commit at the early stage of my work so I will avoid them. This is because my mentor has some experience with regard to what I would be going through as a Registrar. So, my mentor should share with me some information that would help me cope with my new position* (Grace).

> *I was expecting my mentor to help me know what the job entails, what I should do, what I shouldn't do as an administrator, what is expected of me, what my clients and bosses expect from me* (Bella).

> *I was expecting that my mentor would guide me as to what to do if I go to her with a problem and also enlighten me about the rules that govern my profession* (Esi).

Regarding the nature of the coaching or guidance, seven participants expressed that they expected to have frequent contacts with their mentors. Perhaps the participants felt that frequency of mentoring meetings would make the process more effective. In respect to this, Naa had this to say:

> *My mentor would have more time for me thus I will have the chance to meet him more often so that I get to know much about my work.*

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Mary and Emmy also iterated:

> *I was hoping my mentor and I would have a lot of time together*
>
> *where we could talk about my work as a Registrar. Probably,*
>
> *my mentor will tell me what is expected of me so far as my job*
>
> *was concern* (Mary).
>
> *I expected my mentor would convene regular meetings so that*
>
> *we could have discussions about how I'm doing in the work,*
>
> *what is going on, what my challenges are, what I have learnt*
>
> *so far on the job* (Emmy).

Aside coaching or guidance, feedback was greatly expected from mentors. Five of the seventeen participants expressed that they expected feedbacks from their mentors. To them, the feedback process during training and mentorship helps employees learn through action and experience and help them to evaluate themselves if they are on track or not. They expressed getting feedbacks from their mentors might confirm they are well integrated into the new system and probably their ideas are put into practice. Also, the participants indicated that part of the feedback process should involve a mentor suggesting modifications into their ideas and telling the mentees how they are faring. Joy indicated that:

> *My expectation was that, my mentor will give me feedback on*
>
> *my performance. From time to time he will tell me about how I*
>
> *am performing. Whether I am improving or not.*

Mary also expressed that:

I was expecting that from time to time, my mentor will call me and inform me about how I was faring on the work and whether I'm performing to expectation.

These findings in relation to the participants' expectations from their mentors highlight Zachary and Fischler (2009) research which established that mentors and mentees typically enter in to their relationships with assumed expectations of each other. According to them, the expectations of mentees include meeting the mentor as often as schedules permit. Mentees also expect mentors to provide help by answering questions, serve as a learning broker and be a sounding board for issues relating to the mentees career goals and development and talk about skills mentees could acquire to add value to themselves and their jobs. Mentees further expect that discussions are made in order to get feedbacks and help mentees look for information on impact they are having.

The findings of the study also corroborate the findings of Dankwa and Dankwa (2014) who found that mentors played a role in the career and academic development of the mentees by assisting them to acquire skills and competences. Mentors do this through sharing of advice regarding mentees progression and at times sharing of personal experiences of the challenges they encountered and how they were able to go through those challenges to achieve their career goals.

Structural Expectations of Mentees

The focus of this theme was on the expectation of mentees about the structure of the mentoring programme. To benefit from the mentoring

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programme, participants indicated that the programme should be structured in such a way that there is training for mentees and mentors before the commencement of the mentoring relationship, the mentoring process should be monitored and above all the programme should be backed by a mentoring policy. The existence of all these will help shape mentees expectations of the mentoring programme as a whole.

For the training aspect, almost all the participants expected the mentoring programme to commence with a training session which would address issues concerning the "purpose of programme", "expectation of the programme" and "expectations from mentors and mentee" (their roles and responsibilities):

Fafa said:

My expectation was that the unit in charge of the programme will organise training for us, tell us what we should expect from the mentors so that when they are doing something different from what is expected we will know.

Grace affirmed this:

I was expecting that my duty as a mentee would be spelt out to me. This information could be given during a training session which will be organised for both mentees and mentors.

Similarly, Eve noted that:

I was expecting that a training programme would be organised for both mentors and mentee so that the purpose and the expectation of the programme would be spelt out to both mentors and mentees.

The discussions above affirm Clutterbuck (2004)'s assertion that formal mentoring occurs where the organisation provides support structures to ensure that participants have clarity of purpose and the support they may need to make a success of the relationship. The ability of mentors and mentees to understand the mentoring programme, why they had to participate in the programme as well as understand the expected role they had to play could make a mentoring relationship very effective. Also, if parties of the mentoring programme understand how the programme is structured and the expectations of the programme as well as the parties involved, then the programme goals could be achieved.

Also, most of the participants also indicated that they expected a mentoring policy which would serve as a guide to the mentoring process. They were of the views that the purpose of this mentoring policy is to position mentoring as a key activity within the overall approach to staff learning and development, mentoring relationship and how each should be undertaken. To them, the mentoring scheme will develop, support and monitor workers learning and development. Therefore, the participants indicated that they expected a policy that would effectively guide the mentoring programme. This was an expression by Ama:

> *Well, I was expecting that, there would be a policy on the*
> *mentoring programme that would guide the process.*

Emmy stated that:

> *My expectation was that there would be a guide for us to*
> *follow, I mean a mentoring policy documented. This would give*
> *a clear picture of what the programme is about.*

Also, under the structural expectations, one of the participants was of the view that there should be some form of monitoring scheme that monitors and controls the activities of the programme. Lina expressed that there should be periodic monitoring of the mentoring process by the unit in charge of the mentoring programme. This is what she had to say:

Oh, I don't have any expectations apart from monitoring of the programme. At least the unit in charge of mentoring will write to mentees or visit us to find about how we are faring in the mentoring programme. Also, whether the purpose of the programme is being achieved, whether parties involved are playing their roles effectively.

The finding is in line with Hansford and Ehrich's (2006) suggestion that formal mentoring relationship must have a specific process it should follow and a time period in order to achieve a well-developed objective. It is assumed that when there is a mentoring policy it would serve as a guide for both mentors and mentees to follow thus none of them could do whatever they like. Likewise monitoring the mentoring programme may help in checking the effectiveness of the programme. It would assist in finding out whether parties are adhering to the principles of the mentoring programme.

Conclusively, mentoring relationships are known to be initiated with high expectations from both parties (Pinho, Coetzee & Schreuder, 2005). Mentees usually perceive the benefits they are likely to derive from the mentoring programme prior to the actual mentoring process. It is, therefore, not surprising that participants within the UCC settings also had expectations

about the UCC mentoring programme before the mentoring relationship began.

Research Question Three: What are the Experiences of Female Administrators with the UCC Mentoring Programme?

The study's third research question sought to find out the lived experiences of the participants in relation to what they expected from the mentoring programme. The study sought to explore the experiences of female non-academic staff of the mentoring programme at UCC. From the responses of the participants, two issues emerged; participants' experiences with their mentors and participants' experiences with the structure of the mentoring programme.

Mentees' Experiences with Mentors

With respect to the experience of the mentees with their mentors, the participants shared several positive and negative experiences. The encounters are categorised under the following: accessibility of mentors, open communication, extent of the mentoring relationship and gender issues.

Accessibility of Mentors

Mentoring relationship is typically founded on accessibility of mentors and open communication. This obligates the mentor to keep an open communication and show more commitment towards the mentoring responsibilities. It also implies that if the mentor fails to avail him or herself, the relationship would be jeopardised. Especially, the non-availability of a mentor will inhibit the mentee's development in his or her career.

The expressions used by the mentees indicated that mentors were not readily available and committed. As a result, most of the mentees had very

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limited encounters and interactions with their mentors. In other words, their mentors did not make the time for them to meet. Lard gave her experience as follows:

> For a month or two, I had not seen my mentor to discuss issues with and also to talk about what I was doing. I think it was because of his busy schedule that was why we couldn't meet frequently. I would go to his office and seeing the volume of documents on his table, I just knew I had to go and come back another time.

Emmy revealed:

> He was always busy with work and attending meetings. Most at times I go to his office and he is not available. He would schedule an appointment with me and when I go, he is not there. Sometimes I call and I don't get him but once a while if he is less busy, we manage to meet.

In the same vein, Lois also experienced the following:

> My mentor was always busy that sometimes when I book an appointment with her, I go and she is busy doing something else. But anytime she gets time, she tries to meet me. I know it was because of the unit she was heading that was why we couldn't meet more often.

As a coping mechanism, three of the mentees stopped visiting their mentors and rather turned to other senior colleagues for guidance and assistance. This was often the case for the newly appointed employees.

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Bella had this to say:

> *I was new in the system when I was appointed. So, at the initial stage, I thought my mentor would help me to familiarise myself with my new environment but anytime I went to my mentor, he was busy attending to other schedules. I therefore decided not to go and see him again. I had another person who helped me to acquaint myself with the University System. He served as my informal mentor.*

Mary expressed that:

> *I had to talk to other senior members since my mentor wasn't making time for me. I needed to learn. If one does not get help from the original source, one tries to get it from another source, and that is exactly what I did. This other source really imparted my life and I am grateful to them.*

Ama also remarked:

> *Since my mentor and I were not meeting frequently, I had someone who informally took me as his mentee. People even thought he was my official mentor. For me I will say, I benefitted more from the informal mentoring than the formal one. I will ascribe who I am today to the training, guidance and the exposure my informal mentor gave me.*

On the other hand, four of the participants highlighted some positive experiences they had with their mentors in terms of ability to access them (mentors).

Nora disclosed:

> *His doors were always opened. I could go to him as often as I*
> *wanted to discuss my challenges with him. Whenever he was*
> *busy at the office, he would invite me out for lunch and there,*
> *we discussed issues that were bothering me.*

Maggie expressed this:

> *I was not seeing my mentor frequently but as and when I had*
> *issues to discuss with her. I could go to her anytime I wanted*
> *to. In fact, she was always there for me. She was a busy person*
> *but in spite of her busy schedule she made time for us to meet.*

It is assumed that, mentors in a formal mentoring relationship must willingly accept the responsibility to mentor a junior colleague to safeguard the success of the mentoring relationship. This will ensure that they avail themselves regularly for meetings even though they may have other engagements. According to Allen and Eby (2003), for mentors to be committed in their mentoring relationship, there is the need for the mentors to enter the mentoring relationship willingly.

Inferring from the mentees' narratives, the mentors had busy schedules and could not hold frequent meetings with their mentees albeit a few of them having frequent interactions with their mentees. The finding is in line with Arkaifie (2016) study which revealed that some mentees of the UCC mentoring programme had limited or no contact with their mentors as a result of the non-availability of their mentors.

More so, the finding highlights what Schulze (2010) found in his study that mentors struggled to make time for mentoring. This could probably be

that mentors had other responsibilities they had to attend to and perhaps, mentors valued those responsibilities as more important than the mentoring programme. It could also be that mentors were not contacted before they were assigned as mentoring roles or perhaps during the mentoring period monitoring was not done to check the effectiveness of the mentoring process. This suggests that those mentees who had limited or no contact with their mentors are likely not to have benefited fully from the mentoring programme.

The method adopted by the mentees to make up for their mentors' unavailability accentuates the definition of informal mentoring where the relationship is not initiated by a third party but is naturally initiated by both the mentor and mentee (Eby, 2007). Informal mentoring relationship is usually effective because parties enter into the relationship voluntarily, which perhaps increases the commitment of the mentors particularly. The finding further confirms Arkaifie's (2016) study that found that mentees had to consult other senior colleagues anytime they had challenges, and this was because their mentors were not available.

Open Communication

Mentees also highlighted the presence of open communication and mentors' willingness to share their knowledge and skills with their mentees irrespective of the limited contact reported earlier. Eleven mentees highlighted that their mentors were willing to share their (mentors) knowledge and skills with them (mentees). Typical examples were the narratives of Nora, Emmy and Emma:

> *My mentor was ready to share what he had with me. He took*
>
> *me through article, memo and report writing which I was not*

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really familiar with. I took his guidance seriously because these were some of the requirement for my promotion. In other sense my progression (Nora).

He kept reminding me of how I could develop in the area I found myself. He was always sharing with me what he had gone through before becoming who he was (Emmy).

Whenever we met to discuss issues concerning my work, he spent time to educate me on the 'do's' and 'don'ts' of my position. He even took me through the university statute and some other university policies. I will really say his guidance made me to understand the university system better (Emma).

In addition, phrases used by the mentees indicated mentors' supportive feedback and relationship, and willingness to listen. Six of the participants indicated that their mentors always gave them feedback on their performance: Lois stated that:

She was always informing me about how I was doing on the programme. She would tell me where I performed better and where she thought I could improve on. With this kind of evaluation, I could see I was improving every day.

Also, Esi narrated this:

He wasn't someone who was just observing the mentoring process. Where he needed to applaud me, he did and when needed to be correction, he didn't hesitate at all. He would let me know my progress and flaws.

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Four out of the seventeen participants also shared that their mentors were good listeners thus they were never swift in giving responses. Emma had this to say:

> *My mentor was always ready to listen to whatever I had to discuss with him. What he does was that he first listens to my complaints and after that he tried to give solutions in a form of suggestions to my problems.*

Similarly, Dora expressed that:

> *He didn't shun my suggestions whenever we were discussing issues. Rather, he listened to me first and after I had finished, he brings in his suggestions which he did not imposed on me.*

On the contrary, six of the participants had an undesirable experience to share. They did not enjoy open communication and feedback. These were examples of their comments:

> *I never had any form of feedback on my performance neither was I being encouraged. I thought once a while my mentor would say something like 'oh you are doing well in A and B but you need to work on C and D' but nothing like that came up. So, in this case was he interested in my progression? (Eve)*
>
> *I sent him a paper I had written for him to look at and make input. Up till now I haven't received any form of feedback from him regarding my drafted paper (Naa).*
>
> *There wasn't any day I visited my mentor and he opened up to me. How on earth could he have done that since it looked like I was bothering him anytime I went to him? (Lina)*

Largely the findings discussed above showed that some mentors were committed to the programme and that they tried to fulfil their duties as mentors by exuding good qualities. They performed their responsibilities in order to maximise the mentees benefits from the mentoring programme, albeit a few of them going contrary to the norm. The finding is in line with Arkaifie (2016) study that found that mentors of the UCC mentoring programme were committed to the programme. Thus, they had time to call mentees, articulated effective instructional strategies, allowed mentee to ask questions, listened to questions of mentees and offered constructive critiques.

Mentoring someone requires extra time and it calls for open communication and feedback on performance. It involves sacrificing time and effort as investment in the success of another person. This means the mentor should be willing to make that sacrifice. While some mentors showed more commitment and interest in the welfare of their mentees, others were quite reluctant and relented on their efforts. Other studies have cited communication and availability of mentors as important mentoring qualities and interpersonal commitments of the mentoring relationship (Haggard & Turban, 2012; Wilson, Brannan & White, 2010).

However, the commitment of mentors could be affected by the way the mentoring relationship is initiated. This is evidenced from Bella's expression, that when she approached her mentor for the first time, her mentor lamented that he just received a copy of her (mentee) appointment letter identifying him as her mentor. Similarly, Eve recounted that her mentor was reluctant to go through the mentoring relationship. It may be that some mentors were not ready to take up the responsibility as mentors. And perhaps their consents

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were not sought before the role assignment which made it difficult for the

mentors to freely open up and foster good communication with the mentees.

Extent of the Mentoring Relationship

The third theme on which the mentees shared their experiences was on

the extent of their relationship with their mentors. Almost all the participants

expressed that their mentoring relationship was about their career and that

mentors hardly showed any concerns about their personal lives. They said

their mentors did not discuss with them anything apart from their work. Lard

remarked that:

> *...we didn't discuss anything apart from my work. It was all*
>
> *about my career which I felt was not good enough. Mentoring*
>
> *is concerned with the entire development of an individual and*
>
> *not career only.*

Emma also had this to say:

> *Oh, our interaction was solely about work. All we talked about*
>
> *was my work and that was all.*

However, one participant who expressed that her mentor was interested

in her career life as well as her family life was Nora. She narrated that:

> *He would always ask about my family and how I was*
>
> *combining work with family life and even gave me guidelines*
>
> *as to how to combine work and family life.*

This finding suggests that most of the mentees yearned for healthy

personal relationships beyond the discussions on work related issues only.

They expressed the need for long term support and guidance related to all

aspects of their lives. Other studies on mentoring in UCC also reported that

mentors were principally concerned about the career lives of the mentees and not their personal lives (Arkaifie, 2016; Dankwa & Dankwa, 2014).

Gold et al. (2010) noted that the role of mentoring is not confined to just facilitating the learning and career development of a less experienced mentee but by providing both psychosocial and career facilitation benefits. Also, findings by Pinho, Coetzee and Schreuder (2005) on the study conducted on female mentees in South Africa, showed that female mentees enter into a formal mentoring relationship for two reason. One, because it was suggested by their line management that they join the mentoring and two for psychosocial reasons such as "balancing work and family life", "gaining confidence in making career decisions", "dealing with personality conflicts" and "learning how to build trust and confidence". Probably, mentors could have shown a little concern about mentees personal lives. And this, mentees would have enjoyed both psychosocial and career development at the end of the mentoring process.

Nonetheless, it has been established that the main purpose of any formal mentoring relationship is to influence the career progression of mentees (Blackwood, 2010). Therefore, it could be argued that since UCC practices formal mentoring, it was not out of context that the mentors limited their interactions to the career development of mentees. In spite of that, if mentors promote open communication, mentees would be willing to let them into their personal lives. It is indeed true that personal life of an individual may be secret and private, and mentors may be reluctant to invade that personal space. However, mentees regard this as one of the important mentoring qualities and must be encouraged in mentoring relationships.

Gender Issues

Scholars (Hegstad & Wentling, 2005; Orser & Dyke, 2009, Scandura & Williams, 2001) have argued that the gender of a mentor has the tendency to affect the outcome of the programme. Interestingly, a further observation of the mentoring relationship reveals that interaction between gender type in mentorship may have a significant impact on mentees' advancement, especially career and psychosocial which is one's psychological development in and interaction with a social environment (Okurame & Balogun, 2005; Niehoff, 2006). In view of this, participants were asked to share how the gender of their mentors shaped their mentoring experience. Almost all the participants who were paired with male mentors expressed the following:

> *Despite I being a woman, my mentor was friendly and was open to me. He was my confidant. He cared about my welfare at work and even my family life. In fact, everything about my development was his concern. Our relationship was very cordial* (Nora).

> *My mentor recognised me as his colleague. So, he gave me the respect he gave to all his colleagues both male and female. As it has also been perceived as men looking down on women, no, he was not like that. He believed in me and always told me I could do it. In fact, he was like a father to me* (Emma).

> *He was so concerned about whatever I was doing. My work, publications, I mean everything related to my career progression* (Dora).

A follow up question was asked to find out whether people misconstrued their relationship as sexual relationship and also whether there were some sexual advances from their mentors. The participants however indicated in the negative: Examples of the narratives were as follows:

Well with people having negative thought about our relationship, I wouldn't know because I cannot read what was going on in their minds and even if they were thinking like that I didn't care because it was strictly work issues and nothing else. He was like a father so he couldn't have made any sexual advances on me (Nora).

There were no sexual advances. He was professional and all he had in mind was how he could help me progress in my career. We were not doing anything suspicious like going to his office after working hours, being with him all the time, no. So, I don't think people could have thought of something going on between the two of us (Lard).

Nonetheless, Mary, one of the participants who was paired with a male mentor recounted how her mentor blatantly expressed his displeasure with being paired with a female mentee. She indicated her mentor felt reluctant to perform his mentoring responsibilities. According to Mary, her mentor even questioned why a female mentee was assigned to him. She shared her experience by lamenting:

because he was a male and I was also a female, he was somehow always being cautious. One day he even asked me

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why a female was assigned to him. After that, he didn't warm

up to me any time I approached him.

On the contrary, the participants who were assigned female mentors were all happy to have met those female mentors. They had a cordial relationship with their mentors irrespective of the gender stereotyping. The participants indicated that:

Even though, it is always said that females are difficult to work with or interact with, I didn't experience that. She was so nice, very friendly… she was always ready for me whenever I approached her (Maggie).

In fact, she liked me from the first day we met. She had both male and females as her mentees, but she treated us all equally. She didn't discriminate against her mentees. She was like a mother to us all (Fafa).

I was excited when I saw her name as my mentor. I think the idea of pairing me with a female was great. She understood me and was always there for me. She was always ready to listen to me (Lois).

The findings challenge the claims of most researchers on cross-gender mentoring. These studies claim that cross-gender relationship initiation can negatively affect the relationship and thus it can be misconstrued as a sexual advance. As a result of this, members of the opposite sex may be reluctant to initiate relationships in a work setting (Scandura & Williams, 2001; Ragins 1996). The findings further disagree with the claims of Deaux and Emswiller, (1974) and Noe, (1988) that when female mentees establish mentoring

relationships with male mentors, the quality of the mentoring may be less than optimal. Also, gender role stereotypes can either consciously or unconsciously cause male mentors to assume that their female mentees lack the skills to grasp complex problems. Inferring from the narratives, it could be deduced that UCC presents a different perspective on cross-gender mentoring debate with female mentees being very comfortable and recounting very cordial relationship with their male mentors.

With regard to the same-gender mentoring relationship, the findings confirm Allen, Day and Lentz, (2005) claim that female mentees are at an advantage when they are mentored by female mentors. They argued that female mentees need female mentors who can act as role models. Additionally, female mentees with female mentors are reported to receive more psychosocial and career development support than do female mentees with male mentors (Scandura & Williams, 2001).

However, beyond the benefits of same-gender mentoring, the narratives on gender issues in this study connotes some underlying vulnerability of mentees and their desire for safe and comfortable mentoring relationship which they pre-empted was possible with same-gender pairing, although the study did not solicit from the mentees why they were excited over same-gender mentoring particularly in the case of Lois.

Notwithstanding, in some cases, the consent of the parties could be sought regarding their gender preferences. It is possible that some mentors and mentees may feel more comfortable being paired with the opposite gender as compared to same-gender, whereas others may also have different views.

To conclude, the participants were asked to rate their overall assessment of their encounters and experiences with their respective mentors. More than half of the participants registered their displeasure. They mentioned that even though they received some form of guidance and coaching, their encounter was not holistic because they could not meet frequently. The following were some of the comments made.

In general, I was not happy with what I went through with my mentor. I was not satisfied with the experience I had with my mentor. In all, I will say my expectation was not met. This is with regard to what I was expecting my mentor to do for me (Eve).

I was displeased with my experience with my mentor. Whatever I expected to get from my mentor didn't happen (Bella).

Irrespective of these unpleasant experiences, five of the participants shared that they enjoyed the time they had with their mentors and they were satisfied with the outcome and thus their expectations were met. Some of the responses were:

In fact, I really enjoyed the period I spent with my mentor. My experience with my mentor was a memorable one. I really appreciate the time we spent together thus the mentoring period (Emma).

My relationship with my mentor was very cordial and I will never regret working under him (Nora).

Every relationship has positive and negative experiences so is mentoring. The findings indicated that mentees generally recounted or rather focussed on the negative experiences with their mentors. The most common themes were communication and accessibility of mentors which basically influenced the mentoring relationship negatively. Arkaifie (2016) stated that some mentees were disappointed with their mentors because of the inability of their mentors to have time for them and also how they handled the mentoring programme.

Experience with the Structure of the Programme

The focus of this theme is on the structure of the mentoring programme. From the interviews, it emerged that almost all of the participants had some challenges with the structure of the mentoring programme. They pointed to major lapses in the structure of the programme that stemmed from the lack of training for both mentors and mentees, pairing of mentors and mentees, mentoring policy, monitoring of the programme and evaluation of the programme.

Training

In connection with the prior training given to mentees, all the participants said there was no specific training on mentoring but alluded to the fact that orientation was organised for all newly recruits. They were, therefore, oblivious of the purpose of the programme, roles and responsibilities of both mentors and mentees and resultant outcomes of the programme. Most of the participants confirmed the absence of training and its impact on the mentoring programme when asked to share their experiences. Mary indicated:

So far as I'm concerned, there was nothing like training on mentoring. We were not informed about anything. The training we had was just orientation for new recruits. And at the training session nothing was mentioned about mentoring.

Ama stated that:

Because there wasn't any training where we could have been informed about what was expected from me and my mentor, the two of us tried to come up with something to direct us. This is because he himself didn't know what he was supposed to do likewise myself. But with the little knowledge about mentoring, we managed to do something to represent mentoring.

Grace also disclosed:

The system didn't appear to lay a lot of importance on the mentoring programme. If they had considered the programme as important there would have been some sort of training, telling us about the purpose of the programme and our roles as participants. Maybe it is just fulfilling all righteousness that there must be mentoring and there is mentoring.

The findings contradict the findings of Arkaifie (2016) who found out that mentees of the UCC mentoring programme had training on mentoring prior to the commencement of the programme, received counselling on the objective of the programme and were informed about their roles and responsibilities. This could be explained by the differences in the target group for mentoring.

The provision of training before the commencement of the mentoring programme where mentees are informed about the objectives of the programme and their roles and responsibilities have been acknowledged by most researchers as increasing mentees understanding and appreciation of the mentoring programme (Allen, Eby & Lentz, 2006; Eddy, Tannenbaum, Alliger, D'Abate & Givens, 2001). This suggests that if mentees are not given the needed prior training on the objective of their programme and their roles and responsibilities, it becomes difficult for them to manage their expectations and maximise the benefits of mentoring that they could possibly have.

Monitoring

The participants admitted that in theory, UCC practices mentoring but when it comes to the structure of the programme, there are challenges. This comment stemmed from the fact that the participants found it extremely difficult to even find out the section in the university responsible for assessing and monitoring the smooth implementation of the programme. They further indicated that it appeared strange because no one cared about the programme and no one asked about how the programme is being executed. Bella, Naa and Eve's narrations were examples of some of the comments made by the participants.

> *During the mentoring period, there was nothing like monitoring. I don't even know which section of the University was responsible for the mentoring so who could I go to in times of difficulties. Nobody came to me or invited me to ask about how the mentoring period was going. I mean my challenges and progression* (Bella).

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> *I didn't have anyone visiting me and asking how I was faring in the mentoring process. I am not too sure whether it is the T&D Section or the Senior Member Section that is responsible for the mentoring. Maybe the T&D section but the bottom line is monitoring was not done* (Naa).

> *No monitoring was done. I believe there could have been some form of monitoring. But how can the programme be monitored. I mean with what yardstick. There is nothing there for us to measure the mentoring process against let alone monitoring of the programme. We are just doing something to represent mentoring* (Eve).

This finding confirms the experiences of some participants with their mentors. Perhaps the mentees had negative experiences as a result of the lack of monitoring in the programme implementation. They had assumed their mentors were the problem when in fact it was the non-existence of programme structure to streamline their interactions. It is possible that with monitoring, problems such as non-availability of mentors would not have persisted. Also, other issues experienced by the mentee could have been averted.

Monitoring has been recognised as the best technique for checking the effectiveness of mentoring. In any formal mentoring programme, it is important for the programme coordinator or the third party to check on progress, encourage the participants, and make sure the relationship is working (Williams, 2000). It may also be assumed that monitoring the mentoring programme would put both mentors and mentees in check compelling them to conform to the programme guidelines.

Mentoring Policy

Another shortfall of the mentoring programme was the absence of mentoring policy. All the participants attested to the non-existence of documented policy regulating the programme. Typical examples of the comments were the narratives of Fafa and Grace.

> *They just gave me a letter mentioning somebody's name as my mentor. There is no policy which is spelt out the guidelines for the programme. Thus, how the programme should be carried out. I mean nothing was there to be followed. No documentation of guidelines* (Fafa).
>
> *There are no clear guidelines which were documented as policy on the mentoring. The University statute states that after you have been appointed as a senior member you are assigned a mentor but what should be done during the mentoring process is not documented. There was no policy backing the programme* (Grace).

The non-availability of mentoring policy could perhaps have caused the variation and discrepancies in mentees experience with their mentors and the structure. Since there was no documented policy guiding how the mentoring programme should be carried out, the effectiveness of the programme was left to the discretion of the mentors.

Majority of the participants further expressed that because of the flexibility of the mentoring programme as a result of lack of policy, they were stressed out especially as to what time and the venue to meet their mentees because there was no clear-cut information as to what to do next after the

orientation. The participants mentioned that they were always taking the initiative of going to see their mentors since there was no schedule determining their meeting times.

Lard remarked that:

I was always the one making the move of seeing my mentor for discussions since we did not have any schedule we were following.

In the same vein, Dora expressed that:

I had to be going to my mentor every time because if I had said I was waiting for him to call me then forget it because I would never have met him, so I was always going to look for him.

Also, Lois pointed:

You know mentoring is not like your mentor sitting you down on regular basis like you are attending lectures. At lectures it is the lecturer's responsibility to be calling for meetings but in mentoring, it is not like that. I will say you need the mentor more than he or she needs you. So, I took it upon myself to convene some of our meetings since I was the one in need of his directives.

On the contrary, Bella felt that it was her mentor's responsibility to call for meetings even though there were no specified guidelines. She expressed that she expected her mentor to give a schedule she could follow and which could also state the dates possible for them to meet. Bella remarked that:

Every time my mentor saw me, he would say "you don't even come to look for me" but who should call who? Is it the mentor

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> *calling me or me rather going to see my mentor? I don't know*
>
> *his schedule so he should have been inviting me not me going*
>
> *to look for him.*

Pairing

All the participants had issues with the pairing of mentors and mentees. They complained that their input was not considered in the pairing process likewise their mentor's. Participants indicated that their mentors' names were stated in their appointment letter and that was all. Eve narrated that:

> *I received my appointment letter and in it, it was stated that I*
>
> *had to go through a mentoring process during my probationary*
>
> *period and I saw my mentor's name.*

Naa also stated that:

> *It was when I received my appointment letter that I saw my*
>
> *mentor's name.*

Ama affirmed:

> *I was not told anything about my mentor until I received my*
>
> *appointment letter and I saw the name of my mentor in the*
>
> *letter.*

Four of the participants also reported that their mentors shared the same concern. They stated that their mentors had wanted their consent sought before being appointed as mentors: Lina and Grace's narrations reflect some concerns from mentors:

> *I didn't receive any prior information about this assignment. At*
>
> *least they could have sought for my consent before giving me a*

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letter. They could have inquired about my readiness for the

mentoring programme (Lina).

University always gives us (mentors) letters for this mentoring.

But at least once a while, they should ask whether some of us

have the time to go through the programme (Grace).

From the narratives, it could be deduced that both parties were not involved in the pairing process and this perhaps affected the mentoring relationship in one way or the other. Mentors raising concerns about their readiness could have meant that some were busy and if their consents were sought, they could have declined the offer which would have not resulted in they (mentors) not having time for their mentees.

Another important issue that is worth mentioning is the criteria used for pairing the mentoring parties. Two of the participants narrated that they were not aware of the criteria for pairing. Naa remarked that:

The criteria for the pairing were not spelt out to us. We didn't

even know whether we were paired based on our specialization

or otherwise. We don't know.
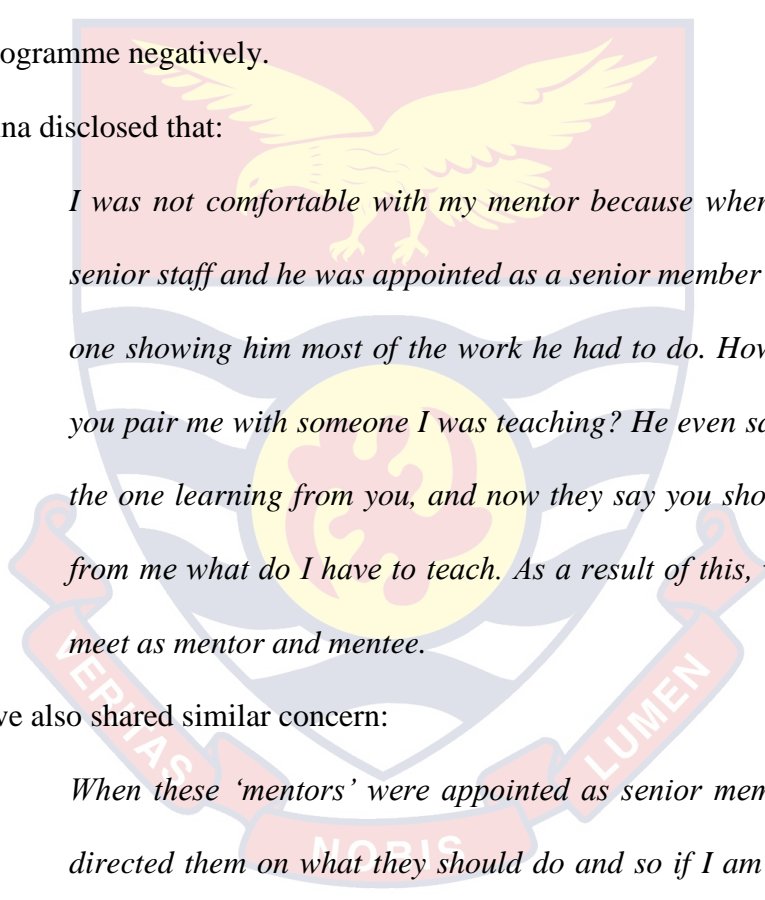
Similarly, Ama said:

Well how the assignment was done. I didn't know but I realized

my mentor's area of specialization was different from mine so I

don't know why we were paired may be there were other things

they looked at which I was not aware of.

Still on the issue of criteria for pairing, two of the participants narrated that they had worked for a number of years in the university before their mentors were recruited as senior members. They also expressed that they

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played a role in their mentors' familiarisation with their new working environment by guiding them in some of the work they had to do as registrars. Hence, the participants believed that they were more experienced than their mentors. Thus, some of the mentors chosen for them did not qualify to be their mentors. Because of the familiarity with their mentors, it became a challenge for them to have a regular relationship with their mentors. Therefore, this mindset of feeling competent than their mentors, affected the mentoring programme negatively.

Lina disclosed that:

> *I was not comfortable with my mentor because when I was a senior staff and he was appointed as a senior member I was the one showing him most of the work he had to do. How then do you pair me with someone I was teaching? He even said, I was the one learning from you, and now they say you should learn from me what do I have to teach. As a result of this, we didn't meet as mentor and mentee.*

Eve also shared similar concern:

> *When these 'mentors' were appointed as senior members, we directed them on what they should do and so if I am assigned to such a person to mentor me, how will he go about it. My mentor was not comfortable with me at all because of this.*

The finding on pairing was expected because UCC mentoring is construed as a typical formal type. With formal mentoring, pairing is usually the responsibility of a third party with little or no input from parties. Also, the criterion for pairing is typically implemented by the third party who initiates

the programme rather than the mentees and mentors (Wong & Premkumar, 2007). This indicates that in formal mentoring mentors and mentees are typically not involved in the selection process likewise the criteria for pairing is not revealed to both parties.

However, for formal mentoring to be more effective literature notes that formal mentoring should be flexible and espouse some principles of the informal mentoring (Chao, 1997, Wanberg, Welsh & Hezlette, 2003). It is believed that when both mentor and mentee are involved in the selection process and having a fair appreciation of the criteria used for pairing, they will exhibit positive attitude. Hence, they will judge the pairing process as fair which will elicit better participation and commitment in the mentoring relationship.

Evaluation

Usually with UCC, after the mentoring programme, the mentor is required to assess the mentee using an evaluation form attached to the mentee's appointment letter. This evaluation process is an official responsibility and forms part of the requirement for the confirmation of mentees' appointments. After the mentor had completed the form, both the mentor and mentee must append their signatures. In this study, it was revealed that most of the participants discredited the evaluation process.

The narratives suggested that even those who did not complete the mentoring process were equally appraised by their mentors at the end of the official mentoring period. Their accounts also showed that the evaluation process was not the true reflection of what they experienced, but they were compelled to agree with the reviews given by their mentors in fulfilment of the

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requirement for their confirmation. Again, majority of the participants thought that the evaluation process should have been a shared responsibility and not the sole responsibility of the mentors. This consequently casts the accuracy of the evaluation process into doubts. Bella lamented that:

> *My problem was with the evaluation process. The evaluation was done by the mentor alone. The two of us went through the process so the two of us must assess the mentoring process but it was not like that. Rather, the mentor did the evaluation alone.*

Similarly, Lina bemoaned that:

> *My mentor asked me to write something for him to sign which I saw as not right because we didn't go through the mentoring process so what was his evaluation based on? I should have also been given the chance to assess my mentor.*

And for Mary:

> *at the end of the probationary period, he had to write a report for my confirmation. So, I went to him. He asked me to write what I had done which I did. Together, we filled the mentoring report form. After that he signed and I also signed but as to whether it was the true reflection of what transpired, I cannot tell.*

On the contrary, three of the participants narrated that the evaluation process was fair. They expressed that their mentors went through the evaluation forms with them and pointed out their strengths and weaknesses which they all agreed on and appended their signatures. Nora expressed this:

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> *For me I will say the assessment was fairly done. We all agreed*
>
> *on the assessment before we signed the evaluation form.*

Emma also had this to say:

> *I was convinced the assessment was the true reflection of what*
>
> *we went through. He did his work well and I also performed*
>
> *my responsibility as expected.*

The finding shows that evaluation is an important aspect of the UCC mentoring programme, which is in line with what literature considers appropriate. Evaluation is very crucial in every programme but should be carried out in a fair and accurate manner. Evaluation involves gathering and analysing of information in a way that the resulting information can be used to determine the effectiveness of the programme. Thus, whether the programme effectively carried out its planned activities, and the extent to which it has achieved its stated objectives and anticipated results. According to Benabou and Benabou, (2000) evaluating a mentoring programme determines whether to prolong or change the programme and its components, and also considering the mentors involvement for future mentor. The narratives suggest that the mentees focussed on the need for a more accurate evaluation process. This highlights the flaws in the process that requires attention from authorities involved in the implementation of the mentoring programme.

In conclusion, the experiences shared by the seventeen participants on their experiences with UCC mentoring programme were both negative and positive, however the negative sentiments surpass the positive experiences. The mentees shared varied opinions which question the basic purpose for which the mentoring programme is carried out. Nyantekyiwaa, (2014) made a

similar observation that there are no recognised guidelines for monitoring UCC mentoring programme. In formal mentoring programmes, the purpose of mentoring is likely to be articulated in a set of guidelines or via training that is provided for both parties, where they are informed of the goals and purposes of the programme. Poor planning of the mentoring process, unsuccessful matching of mentors and mentees and lack of understanding about the mentoring process could probably affect the effectiveness of the mentoring programme. A mentoring programme that is not effective can be detrimental to the mentor, mentee or both (Long, 1997).

Research Question Four: How have the Mentoring Experiences Influenced Mentees' Career Lives?

Mentees in mentoring relationships have often been identified as beneficiaries of the mentoring relationship. A wide range of benefits exist but the most common ones include improved self-confidence, exposure to relevant information, advice and encouragement and awareness creation on the culture, and philosophy of the organization.

Career development has been identified as one of the benefits mentees enjoy as a result of being mentored. In mentoring, mentors are resources who positively influence by assisting their mentees in the career path they choose. In view of this, question four was to explore the influence of the mentoring experiences on the mentees career lives and three themes emerged from participants' responses; skills development, exposure and visibility, career awareness and promotion.

Skills Development

Eight out of the total number of the participants expressed that their mentoring experience has helped them to develop some requisite skills in their administrative work, especially with their writing skills. They indicated that the improvement in their writing skills had reflected in their publication, memo and minutes and letter writing.

Lois asserted that:

The mentoring relationship has really helped me to improve on my writing skills. I mean memos and letter writing. My mentor advised me about the ability to capture and communicate the intended message in order to win the understanding of majority of my audience. I have been able to polish my writing skills and even my boss always commends me for that.

Likewise, Nora shared this:

He really helped me with the publications. In fact, there were several publications that we did together. He was there any time I needed clarification on papers I had to write. I would start something, go and show it to him, he makes his input and then I continue. My mentor always insisted I did an excellent job. In fact, he made me improve on my writing skills.

Emmy narrated that she had improved on her communication skills and her confidence level. This is what she had to say:

I was a reserved person and very shy but during the mentoring period, my mentor made me serve on some committees he was serving on. Through that I had the chance to interact with

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different people occupying higher positions. This has helped

me to improve on my communication skills. Now I can

communicate effectively with people without feeling shy. These

skills (writing and communication skills) that I acquired during

the mentoring period have boosted my confidence. I now have

command over the work I do because I know I have what it

takes to make me more efficient.

Exposure and Visibility

Three out of the seventeen participants expressed how the mentoring programme has increased their exposure and visibility in the university. This has helped them build informal networks with some influential position holders of the university through committees and boards they were privileged to serve on. Esi had this to say:

Because of the committees he made me serve on, I had the

opportunity to meet people I did not know in the university.

And, because he gave me the chance to work with the

committee, I have always been highly recommended by people

to serve on other university committees. I always say I am

indebted to him for the exposure he gave me.

Similarly, Emmy said:

My relationship with him has seriously exposed me to people I

wouldn't have known or met if I was on my own. He was

always putting me on Board meetings where he was either a

member or secretary and at times, he would ask me to

represent him at some meetings. This exposure has taken away

the fear of interacting with some influential people in the University. It has also created an opportunity for me: now I can go to these people for guidance and assistance in relation to my work or other aspects of my life.

Career Awareness

On the issue of career awareness, three of the mentees indicated how the mentoring programme has helped them sharpen their administration skills. They said this has helped them settle well in their administrative career which they approached with a lot of uncertainties. They uttered the following:

In fact, before the mentoring relationship, there were some administrative issues I wasn't conversant with and this was because of the office I worked with. I realised there was more to the work than I had anticipated. My mentor patiently took me through the administrative duties. She was always reminding me of what the profession entails. Also, whenever there was training or workshop either on campus or outside, she encouraged me to attend. This has really helped me to acquire some in-depth knowledge about the profession. I can also say that as a result of the awareness in my career, I am always alert and on top of my game as an administrator (Maggie).

I was new in the system and so I didn't know how the system worked. So, anytime I went to my mentor for clarification on issues relating to my work, he would refer me to the University's statute and some University policies. He would

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tell me that, the university has its own governing principles and these policies and the statute would answer most of my questions. I will say heeding to this advice has really helped me to know how the university system works and also it has made my stay in the university very relaxing (Nora).

...where I worked before my appointment into the university was not as big as the university so I was not sure whether I could fit in the university. But because of the exposure she gave me, by letting me know the culture and at times the politics in university administration has helped me to abreast myself with the university system. At times she shared with me some challenges I might encounter in the quest of performing my duties as a registrar and how I could overcome those challenges, relieved me from the fear I had when I was appointed into the University. For now, I don't have the intention of leaving the university (Lois).

Promotion

Promotion also emerged as one of the benefits identified by two of the mentees. They further indicated that what they learnt during the mentoring programme contributed to their promotion. They mentioned that the advice, guidance and the support their mentors gave them elevated them to their current positions. Nora said:

...the skills he imparted, the guidance and assistance he gave me made me reach my current position. I did not know all that he was teaching me was to prepare me for a higher position. I

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am a Senior Assistant Registrar all because of his guidance and support.

Lois also shared this:

Much of the mentoring process was on how you could write a memo or publish an article. These skills were the most prerequisite for our promotion. Because she had the time to take me through these skills and I was also ready to learn from her, I had two publications before the end of the mentoring process which I used for my promotion. These skills helped me to acquire the Senior Assistant Registrar position within the shortest period.

As participants narrated how the mentoring had influenced their career lives, four of them made mention of some traits they had observed and copied from their mentors which have made them more professional in their career endeavours. These traits were being time conscious, assertive, optimistic, receptive, transparent and gaining self-respect. In expressing their views on this experience, Lois, Emma, Joy and Lard narrated these:

I learnt from her how I could gain respect for myself without necessarily forcing people to respect me. She told me that how a person carries himself makes people respect him or her. I have always had this in mind, and it has really worked for me (Lois).

He taught me to be accommodating, listen to everybody's opinions and views. I mean respect people. I had my own thought about people, and this had always affected my human

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*relations. I easily got angry with people but after my relationship with my mentor l have learnt to accept and be nice to people. He has influenced my human relations (*Emma).

One thing I learnt from him during the mentoring process is transparency. He always told me to be transparent and open in my career endeavours. He was someone who said things as they were. He didn't cover up on anything especially if the issue was not in line with the university's policies. He will say let your yes be yes and no be no. let your thought be always clear and your dealings with people be clean. He kept on saying that you always win people's trust when you do that. In fact, this has also been

my philosophy which I am living with (Joy).

My mentor saw every problem as an opportunity to bring out something positive. Sometimes I will give up on issues when they come, and he calls my name and say you can really build something out of this issue. This encouragement he gave has shaped my way of thinking when confronted with issues (Lard).

On the contrary, five of the participants who could not go through the mentoring relationship had opposing views concerning how the mentoring programme has affected their career lives. They indicated that they did not see any impact or effect of the programme on their progression because the relationship was either not initiated or completed. They clearly pointed out

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that there was nothing like mentoring between them and their mentors. Bella asserted this:

> The mentoring programme didn't influence my career life in anyway. I did not benefit from it in anyway because for me nothing like mentoring went on.

Lina also mentioned that:

> There was no mentor-mentee relationship between my mentor and myself. Nothing went on. So automatically I never benefitted from the mentoring programme.

The findings largely indicate that mentors provide a means to accomplish career and personal goals. That is mentoring is a personal and professional relationship where an experienced individual or leader helps another person in developing their skills and knowledge to accomplish their tasks efficiently. The finding on career advancement and development is in line with other studies on mentoring among females (Bynum & Young; 2015; Bleil, 2012). In these studies, participants reported some changes in their career endeavours having gone through the mentoring programme.

Skills development has been recognised as an important area that needs attention for a mentee's progression in his/her career (Bleil, 2012). In support of this claim, Catalyst, (2004) posited in his study that most females would love to exceed performance expectation and this they recognise as a strategy they could use to advance in their career. It is assumed that during mentoring, mentors transfer knowledge they have acquired onto their mentees. This helps them to sharpen their skills and advance to higher levels in their career. This presupposes that mentors should be experts in their career fields.

Also, the finding emphasises Stewart and Rigg (2011) claim that mentors provide an important role in assisting female mentees with networking within the organization and increasing their organizational visibility. Exposure involves the mentor assigning responsibilities to mentees and inviting them (mentees) to meetings or conferences within or outside the organisation. This exposure provides networking opportunities for the mentees.

There is also enough evidence suggesting that the mentoring programme has increased the confidence level of the mentees. This finding supports earlier findings which reported some boosts in the confidence level and efficacy of females in discharging their duties at the workplace after they had gone through mentoring (Catalyst, 2003; Giddis, 2003; Reich, 1986).

The study has also confirmed that mentoring helps facilitate and speeds up the process of the career advancement of female mentees (McDowall-Long, 2004; Simonetti, Ariss, & Martinez, 1999). Thus, mentees advance more quickly in their careers as a result of mentoring. Nonetheless, if the mentoring relationship is not effective, the mentees will accrue very little benefits which would go against the very objectives of any mentoring programme.

Research Question Five: What Strategies Should Be Put in Place to Enhance the UCC Mentoring Programme?

In view of the experiences shared by the participants, particularly, with their mentors and the structure of the UCC mentoring programme, research question five requested the participants to suggest strategies which could enhance the mentoring programme in UCC. Participants focus was mainly on

the structure of the mentoring programme. The strategies have been discussed under the themes that captured the experiences such as training, policy, pairing, monitoring and evaluation.

Mentoring Policy

Firstly, all the participants suggested that there should be a policy that would guide the implementation of the mentoring programme in UCC. They emphasised that without proper documented guidelines, the mentoring rules and decisions would be left to the discretion and knowledge of the mentors. They reiterated that UCC should gravitate towards the best practices stipulated in the literature. The participants further added that the policy should explicitly mention schedule of meetings as well as the roles and responsibilities of both mentors and mentees. Ama recommended that;

There should be a guideline that would spell out properly the expectations of both mentors and mentees for them to work harmoniously. Because we don't have anything like that, we are just doing something to represent mentoring.

Grace equally noted that:

There should be a kind of schedule so that both mentors and mentee would know the number of times they have to meet during the mentoring period.

Bella was also with the view that:

I think roles and responsibilities of both mentor and mentee should be spelt out in the mentoring policy. This will help streamline things so that everybody knows what is expected of him/her.

In addition, Naa suggested that:

> *Well the programme needs proper structuring and this boil to having a policy document which will help in streamlining the whole programme. However, if there is a policy, I think it would be better if the document is made available to us (mentor and mentee) before we enter the relationship. So that we would know the rules and regulations governing the relationship we are entering.*

Training

Again, the participants indicated that intensive mentoring training for both mentors and mentees should be organised by the university so that both parties would know what the university requires of them. The mentees congruently stated strongly that the University did not organise training on mentoring for them prior to the commencement of the mentoring programme. They, therefore, suggested that for mentors to execute their duties and mentees to fulfil their part effectually, the authorities should provide training for both parties before the programme commences. Mary suggested that;

> *There should be training for both mentors and mentees. And during the training session the responsibilities of both parties should be spelt out clearly. Thus, the Do's and Don'ts.*

Sharing in Mary's viewpoint, Esi narrated that;

> *There should be training specifically on mentoring for mentors and mentees stating clearly their roles and responsibilities, the programme objectives, I mean everything we need to know about the programme should be communicated to us before we*

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even start. And if possible, we could be given manuals on

mentoring during the training session as well.

Pairing

Eight of the participants suggested that pairing of the mentoring parties should be approached in an acceptable and transparent manner. Participants indicated that mentors' preparedness and availability should be considered during the pairing phase. They iterated that experience alone should not form the basis of the appointment. The mentor should be willing to devote his/her time to train, advice and ready to attend to mentees and provide feedback. They added that a person appointed as a mentor should have a minimal workload so that he or she could have time for his or her mentee. Typical were the narratives of Lard, Joy, Lina and Mary:

I think the workload of mentors should be considered during

the pairing process. Mentors workload could be reduced. I

believe if my mentor had less workload, he would have had

time for me whenever I went to see him (Lard).

For those who have accepted the responsibility as mentors,

their work schedule should be reduced. They shouldn't be

made to serve on so many committees. They should be relieved

of some University assignments so that they would have time to

perform the mentoring task assigned to them (Joy).

Mentors preparedness should be considered during the pairing

process. They should find out from mentors if they are ready to

take up the responsibility as mentors even before they are given

letters for the assignment (Lina).

I think mentors' consent is paramount at the pairing stage. The mentors must be aware of the appointment as mentors before they are even given letters officially. Whoever does the pairing should consult the mentors first, find out their willingness to take up the task. I think this will really help (Mary).

Additionally, two of the participants recommended that they (mentees) should be involved in the pairing process. They expressed that they should be allowed to choose their mentors. Eve remarked that:

I think it would have been better if they had involved me in the pairing. Thus, allowing me to choose my mentor than just stating my mentor's name in my appointment letter without any prior information of who my mentor was.

Similarly, Lina suggested this:

Mentees should be allowed to choose their own mentors and I think this will help.

However, the rate of success while implementing this recommendation in particular is very slim. This is because some of the selection would be highly influenced by personal relationships thereby breeding nepotism and cronyism. Also, some mentors would end up having more mentees selecting them leaving some mentors not selected at all.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All the participants also recommended that the programme should be periodically monitored and evaluated. They explained that there should be a unit with the responsibility of supervising the programme. The mentees should

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be able to channel their grievances and misunderstandings through that unit should the need arise. Bella remarked that:

...there should be a specific section responsible for the monitoring of the programme because as at now I don't know which office I could go to discuss the challenges I faced during the mentoring processes. I did not know who I could talk to whenever I had challenges. There should be an office which will be responsible for the mentoring programme and such an office should be made known to all persons involved in the mentoring programme.

Naa had this to say:

The unit in charge of the mentoring programme occasionally should visit us or write to us to find out how our mentoring relationship is going, whether we (mentor and mentee) are doing what is expected of us, find out the challenges we are facing. I mean anything.

Ama was also of the view that:

There should be periodic monitoring. I mean there should be a form of mechanism to monitor the process. Since there wasn't anything on mentors' roles, how could we have known what the mentors were supposed to do. I don't even know where to check whether the mentor was doing his work or not. Likewise, if a mentee really met her mentor or not. I think there should be a kind of periodic monitoring.

Seven out of the seventeen participants were of the view that there should be regular reports to be completed by both mentors and mentees to aid in the evaluation of the programme at the end. In addition, some of them recommended that mentees should be given the chance to assess their mentors as well. They indicated that since both the mentor and mentee were engaged in the mentoring process, it would have been appropriate if they both assessed the programme they undertook to have a holistic report on the mentoring programme. This they believe would go a long way to enhance the programme and help achieve its goals. Some of the suggestions were:

> *...mentees should be contacted or written to quarterly or less for information about their experiences with their mentors during the probationary period. This would help the university assess the programme even before the period ends. And it would help with the acceptance of the mentoring report submitted by the mentors* (Mary).

> *I think if a person is assigned a mentor, that person should also be given the chance to write a report on the mentoring period. The mentee should write a report on their mentors too so that the university would really have a true reflection of what transpired during the mentoring period. I believe when the mentees reports are added to the mentors' assessments, it could bring out the gaps in the programme* (Bella).

> *The assessment should be a two-way affair, the mentees should also participate in the assessment. I mean they should also be allowed to give a report on their mentoring experiences. This*

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will let mentors know how they are impacting mentees' lives

and the university would also know how the mentoring process

is going (Lard).

Finally, one of the participants suggested that as part of the evaluation process, mentors should pay regular visits to their mentees at their respective offices since this could help the mentors get adequate information about the mentees that could also support in the evaluation of the mentees. She explained that most of the mentees did not work closely with their mentors, so it would be necessary to keep mentees closer by monitoring their attitude and performance at office. Fafa suggested this:

Since most mentees do not work closely with their mentors,

they should sometimes visit mentees in their offices to find out

how they are doing. Some of us were either at the new site and

our mentors were at the old site or vice versa. They need to

come to our offices so that they would get to know the realities

on the ground. They need to know how mentees carry out their

work in their offices and even how they relate to other staff in

the offices so that they (mentors) can give a comprehensive

report about their mentees.

The strategies mentioned by the mentees to enhance the mentoring programme are not completely different from and accentuates the recommendations made by other studies on the UCC mentoring programme. Arkaifie (2016) in his study recommended that the provision of a mentoring policy could guide the actions of both the mentors and mentee during the mentoring programme in UCC. Again, there should be a training programme

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on mentoring for both mentors and mentees before they begin with the mentoring process. He also recommended that there should be a periodic evaluation of the programme. Hence, the University should not wait till the end of the programme to evaluate the mentees for confirmation. Meanwhile, the mentees studied by Dankwa and Dankwa (2014) had suggested earlier that future mentoring in UCC should incorporate quarterly reporting in the mentoring programme.

These recommendations draw attention to the important issues that require attention from the authorities in order to enhance the UCC mentoring programme. On the other hand, these similar recommendations arising from this study only suggests that probably UCC authorities have not addressed the issues raised by the earlier research conducted on the UCC mentoring programme. There is also the probability that the findings and recommendations were not properly disseminated to the authorities in question. All in all, UCC could leverage on these strategies to introduce some level of control and ensure uniformity and effective administration of the mentoring programme.

Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed and discussed the findings of the study. It was realised that female administrators had varied views on how mentoring is practiced in UCC. It was also realised that mentees had expectations before they entered the mentoring relationship which were personal, mentor and structural expectations. Also, their experience with their mentors was mixed, where some had positive experiences while others had negative experiences. It was also realised that the mentoring programme had lapses which was a

concern to all the mentees. The mentoring programme influenced both the career and personal development of the mentees. Nonetheless, some did not benefit from the programme. Finally, mentees gave some recommendations to enhance the UCC mentoring programme. The next chapter summarizes the study's major findings, draws conclusions and make relevant recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study. It specifically looks at the study's methodology, major findings, conclusion and related recommendations for policy and practice. The chapter concludes by looking at the study's contribution to knowledge and areas for further research.

Summary

The study sought to explore the mentoring experiences of female administrators in the University of Cape Coast. To achieve this purpose, five research questions were explored:

1. How do female administrators understand mentoring as practiced in UCC?

2. What are the expectations of female administrators of the UCC mentoring programme?

3. What are the experiences of female administrators with the UCC mentoring programme?

4. How have the mentoring experiences influenced mentees' career lives?

5. What strategies should be put in place to enhance the UCC mentoring programme?

The philosophical underpinning for the study was interpretivism. The basic assumption of this philosophy is that individuals seek to understand the world in which they live; develop subjective meanings about objects and things out of their interactions in their world. The study adopted the qualitative

approach for data collection. Interviews were conducted to solicit information from the female administrators. Data was gathered from seventeen participants through snowball sampling technique. The female administrators interviewed were two Junior Assistant Registrars, eleven Assistant Registrars and four Senior Assistant Registrars. The data were analysed manually, and results presented based on the themes emerged from the interviews and the research questions for the study. The following are the main findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Main Findings

In relation to the first research question, it emerged from the study that mentees had three major understanding of mentoring. These were mentoring as an experiential learning, mentoring as an induction process and mentoring as a performance enhancer. Further, the mentee was positioned as the learner or protégé who lacks experience, knowledge, or skills in a specific area and hence looks to another individual (mentor) to fill the gap. Even though mentoring was always connected to career life, it was also found that mentoring could go beyond career life to the personal and social lives of people.

The study further found in relation to research question two that mentees had three major expectations of the UCC programmes. These expectations could be grouped under personal, mentor and mentoring structural issues. For the personal expectations, mentees sought to gain in-depth knowledge and skills in their career and the institution in which they find themselves. Invariably, mentees expected their mentors to guide, coach and train them (mentees) in relation to their job performance. Also, they

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(mentees) expected that they would be meeting their mentors more often and would receive feedback from the mentors with regard to their performance during the mentoring period. In terms of the structure of the mentoring programme, training for mentees and mentors before the commencement of the mentoring relationship, monitoring of the mentoring process and the availability of a mentoring policy were anticipated.

With regards to the third research question, the study revealed that mentees' experiences with their mentors were both positive and negative whereas majority of the mentees reported some lapses in the structure of the mentoring programme. The experiences with their mentors bordered on accessibility of mentors, open communication, extent of the mentoring relationship and gender issues. The study revealed that majority of the mentees were assigned male mentors because of the low numbers of females in the position to discharge mentoring responsibilities. Nevertheless, the mentees were comfortable with the pairing (cross-gender) and had very cordial relationship with their male mentors. In relation to the structure, mentees indicated the following concerns; lack of training for both mentors and mentees before the commencement of the programme, unavailability of mentoring policy, non-involvement of mentors during the pairing process, lack of monitoring and non-involvement of mentees in the evaluation process.

With respect to research question four, it emerged from the study that the mentoring experiences had influence on the mentees' career lives in terms of their acquisition of requisite skills and professional conduct in administrative work, increased exposure and visibility in the university. These benefits, eventually contributed to their promotion (thus, their career

development). However, there were some mentees who did not benefit from the mentoring programme because the mentoring relationship was either not initiated or completed.

Finally, on research question five, mentees suggested five main strategies for enhancing the current mentoring programme of UCC. These strategies focused on the creation of mentoring policy to guide the mentoring programme in UCC, intensive mentoring training for both mentors and mentees before the commencement of the programme, periodic monitoring of the mentoring programme and involvement of mentors and mentees in the pairing and evaluation processes.

Conclusions

Based on the study's research questions and the ensuing findings presented, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Mentees understanding of mentoring conforms to the general understanding shared by many in the knowledge domain. Mentoring is a training opportunity for mentees to acquire professional and personal support from their mentors to function optimally in their new positions and subsequently progress in their career.

It can also be concluded that, mentees had different expectations from the three key players in the mentoring relationship (i.e. mentee, mentor and the institution). They expected to enjoy some professional benefits from the process. In addition, they expected their mentors to exude some key qualities and carry out specific responsibilities with the aim of imparting knowledge and skills necessary for the job position. Finally, the mentees expected some

institutional provisions specified in a mentoring policy to guide the mentoring relationship.

It can further be concluded that the mentees had both positive and undesirable experiences. This mixed experience could partly be attributed to the non-availability of a mentoring policy leaving the implementation and resultant outcomes of the mentoring programme to the discretion of the mentors. Also, despite the known challenges associated with cross-gender mentorship, in UCC, cross-gender pairing does not pose any major issue. Mentees rather placed more premium on the benefits they are likely to derive from the mentoring process than the sex of the mentor.

Findings from the study pointed to the fact that mentoring has a potential of positively influencing the career endeavours of the mentees. Mentees capitalized on the advice, guidance and the support of their mentors to progress in their careers. Further, traits mentees had imbibed from their mentors such as time consciousness, self-respect, assertiveness, optimism, receptiveness and transparency had contributed to their professional attitude towards work.

Finally, it can be concluded that, UCC mentoring programme's effectiveness hinges on the adoption of four key strategies. In addition to a documented mentoring policy to guide the programme, there should be the involvement of mentors in the pairing process and mandatory training for both mentors and mentees before the commencement of the programme; periodic monitoring during the programme and an evaluation (stressing on feedback from mentees) at the end of the mentoring programme.

Recommendations

Based on the main findings and conclusions derived from the study, the following recommendations are made:

The study has highlighted the important benefits accrued from mentoring, which calls for a continuity of the mentoring programme. However, for the programme to be effective and attractive to the parties involved, Management of the University of Cape Coast should take the necessary steps to develop a mentoring policy to guide the implementation of the programme. The mentoring policy should incorporate issues of training, monitoring and programme evaluation to address and avert the occurrence of future problems.

Drawing from the lack of training before the commencement of the mentoring relationship, this study recommends that there should be a training programme for both parties before the mentoring relationship commences. The Training and Development Section of the University should be responsible for the training since most training programmes for staff development in the University are handled by the section, of which mentoring is no exception. The training should elucidate the aim and purpose of the programme, selection and pairing process, and responsibilities of both mentors and mentees. This type of training may help both the mentors and mentees to shape their understanding and expectations of the mentoring programme. Consequently, the mentors and mentees would have a better appreciation of the relevance of the programme before it commences.

Again, the inaccessibility of mentors as a result of their busy schedules and other experiences expressed by the mentees caused them to be sceptical

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about the final evaluation of the programme which is largely undertaken by the mentors. However, it is recommended that mentors should write back to the university declaring their intentions to decline the offer as mentors as a result of their unavailability before the mentoring process commence. Nevertheless, if mentors do not communicate back to the university and they allow the mentoring process to commence, it is recommended that Management of UCC should have an effective periodic monitoring system to ensure that mentors make time out of their busy schedule to avail themselves to their mentees.

Management should consider a proper monitoring and evaluation process which will solicit feedback from both parties during and after the mentoring programme. Unlike the usual evaluation practice, the Senior Members Section of the University's Directorate of Human Resource should endeavour to make available monitoring and periodic evaluation forms which would be completed and signed by both mentors and mentees, and submitted to the section at a stipulated time (i.e. quarterly). The monitoring form will serve as a check for both parties which will compel them to carry out their roles and responsibilities as expected. This will also help in dealing with issues promptly before they escalate. In addition, the periodic evaluation form will serve a means of feedback generation to the Management of the University which would be used to track the effectiveness of the programme before the end of the mentoring period.

Suggestions for Further Research

Although insightful findings emerged from the study, the following suggestions are made for further research:

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This study focused only on the experiences of mentees with regard to UCC mentoring programme, without the involvement of their mentors and the University Management, hence, does not constitute a comprehensive evaluation of the mentoring process. It is therefore recommended that further research considering the views of mentors and Management of UCC should be conducted to give a comprehensive picture of what pertains in UCC regarding the mentoring programme.

Again, the study adopted a qualitative approach to understand the experiences of female administrators, which make generalisation of the findings almost impossible. Further study is therefore needed to approach the topic quantitatively involving the participation of both males and females in administration to give holistic information on the experiences of all administrators.
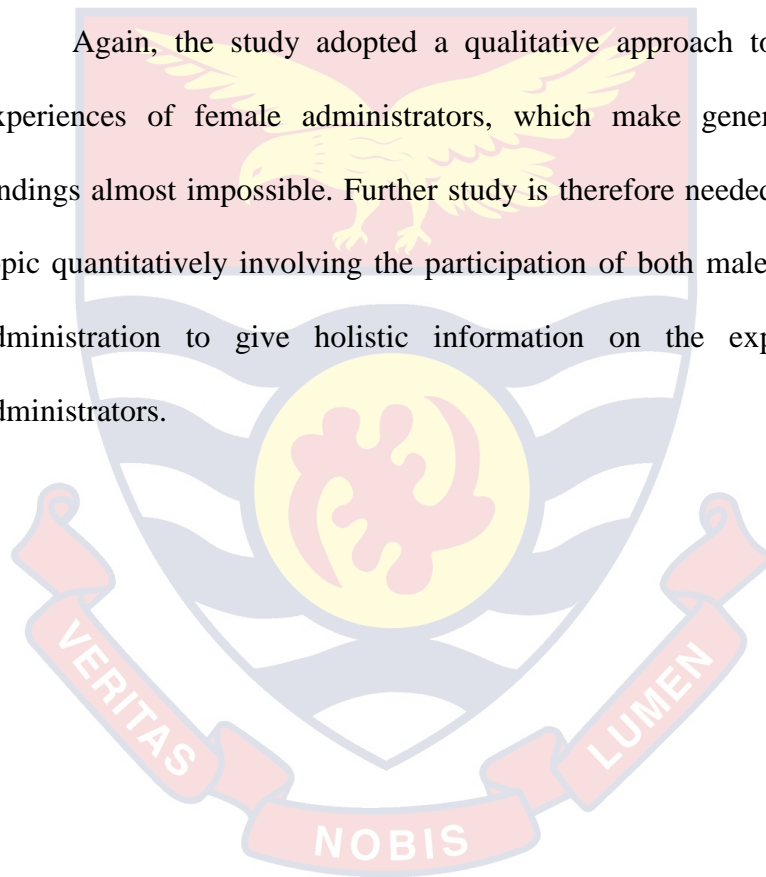
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE ON MENTORING EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE ADMINISTRATORS IN UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey on the mentoring experiences of female administrators. It is conducted by an MPhil candidate in Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast. This research is part of the academic requirements for the award of an MPhil. You are assured that all responses provided would be strictly confidential and used for academic purposes only. Your anonymity is guaranteed. For further enquiries, please contact Linda Obeng Ansong on 0242234130.

Profile of Interviewee:

Age:

Marital status:

Rank:

Length of Service in the University:

Number of Years Served as Senior Member:

Duration of Mentoring Period:

Sex of Mentor:

Research Question One: How do Female Administrators Understand Mentoring as Practiced in UCC?

1. What is mentoring as being practiced in UCC?

Research Question Two: What are the Expectations of Female Administrators of the UCC Mentoring Programme?

1. Did you have any expectations before the mentoring process began? What were they?

Research Question Three: What are the Experiences of Female Administrators with the UCC Mentoring Programme?

1. What were your experiences with the mentoring programme?

2. Did gender influence your relationship with your mentor? How?

3. What is your general impression about the programme?

Research Question Four: How have the Mentoring Experiences Influenced Mentees in their Career Lives?

1. Did the mentoring programme influence your career life? How?

Research Question Five: What Strategies Should be Put in Place to Enhance the UCC Mentoring Programme?

1. In your opinion, what should be done to enhance the mentoring programme?