THE ROLE OF MENTORSHIP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL KNOWLEDGE AND LONG-TERM INTENTIONS: EVIDENCE FROM TRADITIONAL APPRENTICESHIP PRACTICES

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Abstract
The study examined mentorship's impact on Nigerian entrepreneurial knowledge and long-term intentions through traditional apprenticeship practices, examining mentorship style, support, and outcomes. A cross-sectional research design is employed, and data was collected from 848 apprentices in vocational training centres and apprenticeship facilities in Ibadan, Nigeria, using a self-administered questionnaire. The internal consistency of the instrument was carried out with an acceptable Cronbach alpha of 0.7 and above. The findings indicate positive correlations between mentorship factors and entrepreneurial outcomes, highlighting the importance of effective mentorship programs within the apprenticeship. The results also revealed that mentorship qualities, have the greatest impact on entrepreneurial knowledge, while mentorship factors contribute significantly to long-term entrepreneurial intentions and business startup success. The study provides valuable insights for the development of tailored mentorship programs within traditional apprenticeship practices in Nigeria.
Keywords: Entrepreneurial Knowledge, Traditional Apprenticeship, Training, Mentoring,

Background

Mentorship is characterised by a relationship between more experienced and less experienced individuals with the objective of fostering the development of the less experienced individual's skills and character (Okoli, Nwajiuba, Binuomote, Ehiobuche, Igu, & Ajoke, 2021). Mentors are known to provide guidance, encouragement, and support to their mentee i.e their apprentice through a variety of interactions, including sponsoring, teaching, mentoring, counselling, and energising (Nakayama & Kroeker, 2019). The concept of mentorship has been broadly grouped into: formal mentorship which is characterised by an organised and systematic relationship, whereas informal mentorship is more flexible and impromptu (Sakamoto & Tamanyu, 2020). Several studies have highlighted the benefits of mentorship programmes, such as increased job satisfaction, decreased resignation rates of employees, increased productivity, and enhanced communication within organisations (Barnett, 2011). In both mentorship and apprenticeship programmes, a more experienced individual guides and supports the professional and personal growth of a less experienced individual.

Mentorship is deemed essential for facilitating learning, enhancing self-efficacy, and providing support in entrepreneurship. Theoretical perspectives on mentorship emphasise the significance of a dynamic and situational approach, in which mentors assume a variety of roles to target specific learning modalities (Caza, Vough & Puranik., 2018). Self-efficacy mediates the effects of mentoring relationships on the intangible outcomes of entrepreneurship, such as satisfaction of the need for autonomy, work satisfaction, and intention to remain self-employed (St-Jean, Baluku, Matagi, & Otto, 2010). In addition, mentoring relationships result in a variety of outcomes, such as skills transfer, knowledge transfer, entrepreneur resilience, and business outcomes, which are attained at various stages of the mentoring relationship (Kunaka & Moos, 2020). In the context of entrepreneurship, mentoring has shifted from a tool for career development to a supportive mechanism for new ventures, offering numerous roles to aid entrepreneurs on their journey (Begum, Teraman, & Sinem, 2016). Mentoring is viewed as a means to reduce business failure rates and enable entrepreneurs to thrive in a competitive business environment, making it a crucial factor in the entrepreneurial development of economies such as Nigeria (Deepali et al., 2016).

Apprenticeship programmes are intended to equip young learners with essential skills and fill skill gaps in specific industries, such as the construction industry (Oyedele, Owolabi, & Ajayi, 2018). These programmes seek to increase the graduation and employment rates of individuals and businesses. While apprenticeship programmes have been evaluated using models such as the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) model, more rigorous evaluations are required, especially in developing nations (Smith, 2021). Mentors play a crucial role in apprenticeship programmes by providing apprentices with support and direction, thereby fostering their learning and development. The Igbo ethnic group in Nigeria has a successful apprenticeship programme known as Igba-boi. Mentors guide and train apprentices at various phases of talent identification, learning, and settlement/start-up (Okoli et al., 2021). Career training with mentoring (CTM) programmes in Nigerian higher education institutions contribute to the career development and employability of students through the provision of career counselling, guidance, and mentoring services by mentors (Oluwafemi, 2021). Parents and guidance also play a role in identifying the entrepreneurial aspirations of children and providing capacity development, including the identification of suitable mentors (Okoli et al., 2021). However, according Mouammer & Bazan (2021) Positive mentoring experience depends on the mentor's credibility and connection in the business world and the mentee's perception of similarities between themselves and their mentor.

In Nigeria, the impact of mentoring on entrepreneurial outcomes, including its influence on entrepreneurial expertise, long-term entrepreneurial intentions, and business startup success, has been studied. However, the relationship between mentorship qualities, support, and intensity and these outcomes in the context of traditional apprenticeship practices in Nigeria is still poorly understood. Traditional

apprenticeship practices are ubiquitous in Nigeria and provide individuals with valuable opportunities to acquire occupational skills and knowledge. In order to understand the efficacy of mentorship in fostering entrepreneurship skills in the context of traditional apprenticeships, it is crucial to investigate the relationship between mentorship (quality, intensity, and support) and outcomes within traditional apprenticeships.

The study examined the relationship between mentorship style, including mentorship qualities, support, and intensity, and diverse outcomes within traditional apprenticeship practices in Nigeria, such as entrepreneurial knowledge, long-term entrepreneurial intentions, and business startup success.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide valuable insights into the effect of mentorship (quality, intensity, and support) in developing entrepreneurial skills and outcomes within traditional apprenticeship in Nigeria. The findings bridge the gap in existing literature on mentorship qualities, support, and intensity in relation to these outcomes in traditional apprenticeship settings in Nigeria, which will further enhance the development of effective mentorship programmes tailored to the requirements of Nigeria's traditional apprenticeship practices.

The specific research objectives are:

1. to examine the relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and entrepreneurial knowledge among apprentices in traditional apprenticeship practices;
2. to examine the relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and Long-term Entrepreneurial Intentions within traditional apprenticeship practices; and
3. to examine the relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and Business Startup Success within traditional apprenticeship practices

Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and entrepreneurial knowledge in entrepreneurship among apprentice in Nigeria;
2. There is no significant relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and long-term entrepreneurial intentions within traditional apprenticeship practices in Nigeria; and
3. There is no significant relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and Business Startup Success within traditional apprenticeship practices in Nigeria.

Methodology

The study used a cross-sectional research design to investigate the relationship between mentorship style and a variety of outcomes within traditional apprenticeship practices in Nigeria, including entrepreneurial knowledge, long-term entrepreneurial intentions, and business founding success. Utilising quantitative data collection and analysis techniques allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the research objectives. The research was conducted at a variety of vocational training centres and apprenticeship facilities in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. Ibadan is one of Nigeria's largest cities and has a significant presence of traditional apprenticeship practices as part of its rich cultural heritage. The city offers apprenticeships in a variety of disciplines, such as craftwork, trade, and specialized professions. This abundance of apprenticeship practices makes Ibadan an ideal location for investigating the relationship between mentorship and outcomes in conventional apprenticeships.The population of interest for this study comprises Nigerian apprentices participating in traditional apprenticeship practices. The study included apprentices from various vocational disciplines, including artisan, hairdressing, nursing, mechanic, and fashion design. The population consisted of both male and female apprentices of various ages, ranging from 15 years and up. Participants were selected using a technique of purposive sampling based on their participation in apprenticeship programmes and their commitment to participate in the study. The study's sample size of 848 was determined using Cochran's formula (William, 1953). Data collection was conducted by administering structured questionnaires to the selected apprentices. The questionnaires contained demographic information including gender, age, occupation, and duration of mentorship. The mentorship qualities, mentorship support, mentorship intensity, entrepreneurial knowledge, long-term entrepreneurial intentions, and business startup success were evaluated using Likert scale items. To assure accurate data collection, questionnaires were administered by trained research assistants. All participants provided informed consent emphasising voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the demographic characteristics of the participants in the study. (Examining the correlations between mentorship factors and entrepreneurial outcomes using Pearson's correlation coefficient). The individual and combined effects of mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity on entrepreneurial outcomes within the traditional apprentice practices were tested using the multiple regression analysis.

Result

Table Reliability Statistics for Construct

Constructs	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Mentorship Intensity	3	0.751
Mentor Qualities	4	0.824
Mentorship support	4	0.804
Entrepreneurial Knowledge	4	0.836
Business Startup Success	5	0.84
Long-Term Entrepreneurial Intentions	5	0.864

The reliability statistics provide information regarding the consistency and dependability of the study's measures. Higher Cronbach's Alpha coefficients indicate greater internal consistency among the items, indicating that they measure the intended constructs in a consistent manner. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for numerous constructs indicates good internal consistency or reliability among the items measuring Mentorship Intensity, Mentorship Support, Entrepreneurial Knowledge, Business Startup Success, and Long-Term Entrepreneurial Intentions. A Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.70 is generally accepted for measuring measurement consistency. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ranging from 0.75 to 0.86 indicate that items in each construct measure the intended concept consistently.

Results

Table: Descriptive Statistics: Gender, Age, Vocation, and Mentorship Duration

Gender			
	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	364	42.9	42.9
Female	484	57.1	100.0
Total	848	100.0	
Age			
	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
15 - 24	121	14.3	14.3
25 - 34	109	12.9	27.1
35 - 44	226	26.7	53.8
45 - 54	167	19.7	73.5
55 and above	225	26.5	100.0
Total	848	100.0	
Vocation			
	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Artisan	110	13.0	13.0
Hairdressing	165	19.5	32.4
Nursing	120	14.2	46.6
Mechanic	228	26.9	73.5
Fashion Designing	225	26.5	100.0
Total	848	100.0	

Vocation			
	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	139	16.4	16.4
2	125	14.7	31.1
3	106	12.5	43.6
4	150	17.7	61.3
5	122	14.4	75.7
6	206	24.3	100.0
Total	848	100.0	

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the study participants. A total of 848 respondents participated in the study. There were 364 males, which accounts for 42.9% of the total sample and were 484 females, which accounts for 57.1% of the total sample. The age distribution as describe in Table 1, is relatively balanced, with the "35- 44" age group having the highest frequency and cumulative percentage. The second-largest age group is "55 and older," with 225 individuals. The smallest age group is 25-34 years old, with 109 individuals. The age categories "15-24" and "45-54" have lower frequencies and proportions. The most prevalent occupation category in the survey is "Mechanic," with 26.9% (228) of the total sample. There are 225 (26.5%) instances of Fashion Designing. The category with the fewest instances is "Artisan," with 110 (13%) instances. The frequencies of hairdressing and nursing are 165 (19.5%) and 120 (14.2) respectively. Duration of mentoring relationships with 206 instances, "6 years" is the category with the highest frequency, comprising 24.3% of the total sample. The second-largest duration category is "4 years" with 150 (17.7%) "3-years" with 106 occurrences, representing 12.5% of the total sample. The frequency of the duration categories "1 year," "2 years," and "5 years" is, respectively, 139 (16.4%), 125 (14.7%), and 122 (14.4%).

Table: Summary of Mentorship and Entrepreneurial Outcomes

	Mentorship Intensity	**Mentor Qualities**	**Mentorship Support**	**Entrepreneurial Knowledge**	**Business Startup Success**	**Long-term Entrepreneurial Intentions**
Mean	2.7756	3.5699	3.3228	3.2161	3.2175	3.0969
Std. Deviation	0.84852	0.98073	0.96443	0.88388	0.83945	0.94928
Variance	0.72	0.962	0.93	0.781	0.705	0.901

Apprentices perceive moderate levels of mentorship intensity (Mean= 2.7756), mentor qualities (Mean= 3.5699), mentorship support (Mean= 3.3228), entrepreneurial knowledge (Mean= 3.2161), business startup success (Mean= 3.2175), and long-term entrepreneurial intentions (Mean= 3.0969) according to Table 1. There is also some variation in these participant perceptions, with a variance ranging from 0.705% to 0.962%. The means of each variable indicated that mentorship characteristics have a significant influence on entrepreneurial

knowledge, business success, and long-term entrepreneurial intent.

Correlation between Mentorship Factors and Entrepreneurial Outcomes

		1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	**Mentor Qualities**	1					
2.	**Mentorship Support**	.317**	1				
3.	**Entrepreneurial Knowledge**	.445**	.264**	1			
4.	**Business Startup Success**	.384**	.273**	.590**	1		
5.	**Long-Term Entrepreneurial Intensions**	.453**	.311**	.551**	.560**	1 .	
6.	**Mentorship Intensity**	.359**	.291**	.41.4**	3.71**	3.74**	1

There are positive correlations between all variables, as shown in the table. This indicates that mentorship factors are typically associated with successful entrepreneurial outcomes. The highest correlation (r = 0.551) exists between entrepreneurial knowledge and long-term entrepreneurial intentions. This suggests that apprentices who acquire a deeper understanding of entrepreneurship are more likely to have long-term aspirations to launch their own company. The correlation between mentorship qualities and entrepreneurial knowledge is the second strongest (r = 0.445). This suggests that apprentices who have mentors with superior qualities are more likely to acquire entrepreneurial knowledge. The remaining correlations are also significant, but their strength is weaker. This indicates that mentorship factors can have a positive effect on entrepreneurial outcomes, but other factors also play a role.

Hypothesis One

H_o: There is no significant relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and entrepreneurial knowledge in entrepreneurship among apprentice in Nigeria.

The Relationship between Mentorship and Entrepreneurial Knowledge among Apprentices in Nigeria

	Coefficients	**Sig.**	**Collinearity Statistics**		**Model Summary**	
			Tolerance	**VIF**	**R**	.527[a]
Intercept	1.140	.000			R Square	.278
Mentor Qualities	.288	.000	.822	1.217	Adjusted R Square	.275
Mentorship Support	.076	.009	.864	1.158	Std. Error of the Estimate	.75236
Mentorship Intensity	.287	.000	.836	1.196	Durbin-Waston	1.925

The output shows that there is a significant positive relationship between mentorship and entrepreneurial knowledge among apprentices in Nigeria with p-value less than 0.005. This means that apprentices who have mentors with high-quality characteristics, who provide support, and who have frequent and intense interactions are more likely to have greater entrepreneurial knowledge. The coefficients for mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity are all statistically significant, which means that they all have a significant impact on entrepreneurial knowledge. The coefficient for mentorship qualities is the highest, which suggests that the characteristics of the mentor have the greatest impact on entrepreneurial knowledge. The Durbin-Watson statistic is 1.925, which is also within the acceptable range of 1.5 to 2.5, indicating that there is no autocorrelation in the data, which means that the residuals are not correlated with each other.

Hypothesis Two

To examine the relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and long-term entrepreneurial intentions within traditional apprenticeship practices

H_o: There is no significant relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and long-term entrepreneurial intentions among apprentice in Nigeria.

The Relationship between Mentorship and Long-term Entrepreneurial Intentions among Apprentices in Nigeria

	Coefficients	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics		Model Summary	
			Tolerance	VIF	R	.524[a]
Intercept	.817	.000			R Square	.275
Mentor Qualities	.320	.000	.822	1.217	Adjusted R Square	.272
Mentorship Support	.142	.000	.864	1.158	Std. Error of the Estimate	.80971
Mentorship Intensity	.239	.000	.836	1.196	Durbin-Waston	1.766

The analysis results demonstrate that the null hypothesis (H0) can be denied. The R-squared value of 0.275 suggests that mentoring accounts for approximately 27.5% of the variance in long-term entrepreneurial intentions. This implies that other factors also contribute to long-term entrepreneurial intentions. The coefficients for mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity are all statistically significant, indicating that they all have a substantial influence on long-term entrepreneurial intentions. The coefficient for mentorship qualities is the highest, indicating that the mentor's qualities have the greatest influence on entrepreneurial intentions over time. These findings highlight the significance of

effective mentorship programs in promoting and fostering long-term entrepreneurial aspirations among apprentices in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three

To examine the relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and Business Startup Success within traditional apprenticeship practices

H_o: There is no significant relationship between mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity and Business Startup Success among apprentice in Nigeria.

The Relationship between Mentorship and Business Startup Success among Apprentices in Nigeria

	Coefficients	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics		Model Summary	
			Tolerance	VIF	R	.471[a]
Intercept	1.413	.000			R Square	.222
Mentor Qualities	.221	.000	.822	1.217	Adjusted R Square	.219
Mentorship Support	.104	.000	.864	1.158	Std. Error of the Estimate	.74168
Mentorship Intensity	.240	.000	.836	1.196	Durbin-Waston	1.669

The result shows a statistically significant relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable with a p-value of 0.05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant positive relationship between mentorship qualities, support, and intensity and the success of business startups. The R-squared value of 0.222 suggests that mentorship accounts for approximately 22.2% of the variance in business venture success which indicates that additional factors, also contribute to the success of a business establishment. The coefficients for mentorship qualities, mentorship support, and mentorship intensity are all statistically significant, indicating that they all have a substantial effect on the success of business startups within the traditional apprenticeship practice. The coefficient for mentorship qualities is the highest, indicating that mentor characteristics have the greatest impact on the success of business startups. Furthermore, The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.669 indicates that the data lack autocorrelation.

Discussion of Findings

The results indicated that there are positive correlations between all variables, highlighting the association between mentorship factors and successful entrepreneurial outcomes. The result from the study as well align with the literature, which emphasizes the role of mentorship in facilitating learning, enhancing self-

efficacy, and providing support throughout the entrepreneurial journey (Caza et al., 2018; St-Jean et al., 2021; Kunaka & Moos, 2020; Baluku et al., 2020). It demonstrates that the function of mentorship in formal entrepreneurship is comparable to its role in Nigerian apprenticeship. The highest correlation between entrepreneurial knowledge and long-term entrepreneurial intentions suggests that apprentices who acquire a deeper understanding of entrepreneurship are more likely to have long-term aspirations (Terpstra & King., 2021; Ojiaku, Nkamnebe & Nwaizugbo, 2018). Similarly, the correlation between mentorship qualities and entrepreneurial knowledge indicates that mentors with superior qualities contribute to the acquisition of entrepreneurial knowledge (Baluku, Matagi & Otto, 2020). All of the result was tested to ascertain the absence of autocorrelation which was also supported as a test to enhance the validity of the data in carrying out further test of relationship (Adewuyi & Makinde, 2018).

The significant positive relationship between mentorship and entrepreneurial knowledge observed by this study within the apprentice was also consistent with the study which emphasizes the impact of mentoring on knowledge transfer and skill development (Ergun & Teraman, 2016). The result indicated that the coefficient of mentorship quality is higher which suggested that the characteristics of the mentor have the greatest influence on entrepreneurial knowledge, supporting the importance of mentor qualities highlighted in by other literatures (Adewuyi & Makinde, 2018; Ergun & Teraman, 2016).

The study results also showed that mentorship accounts for a significant variation in long-term entrepreneurial intentions and business startup success, but other factors also contribute to this influence. This is consistent with the literature, which acknowledges the multifaceted nature of entrepreneurial outcomes and the influence of various factors beyond mentorship (Ojiaku, Nkamnebe & Nwaizugbo, 2018; Roberts, Storm & Flynn., 2019). The coefficients for mentorship qualities, support, and intensity being statistically significant highlight the substantial impact of these mentorship factors on long-term entrepreneurial intentions and business startup success (Chukwuemeka, 2021).

Conclusion

This study examined the role of mentorship qualities, support and intensity in the development of entrepreneurial knowledge and long-term intentions within traditional apprenticeship practices in Nigeria. The findings indicate that mentorship factors, including mentorship qualities, support, and intensity, have a positive correlation with entrepreneurial outcomes. The study highlights the importance of effective mentorship programs within apprenticeships and emphasizes the significant impact of this mentorship characteristics on entrepreneurial knowledge, as well as its contribution to long-term entrepreneurial intentions and business startup success. The results align with existing literature on the importance of mentorship in facilitating learning, enhancing self-efficacy, and providing support in entrepreneurship. Therefore, it is apparent that there is a very significant impact of

mentorship qualities, support and intensity on the development of the entrepreneurship outcome.

Based on the findings, traditional Nigerian apprenticeship practices should develop tailored mentorship programs with quality, support, and intensity to foster entrepreneurial knowledge, long-term intentions, and business startup success, considering vocational disciplines' specific needs.

Recommendations

1. Given the substantial impact of mentorship qualities on entrepreneurial knowledge, it is crucial to emphasize the development of mentors with superior qualities. Mentors should receive training to improve their mentoring skills, communication abilities, and method of knowledge transmission in order to support apprenticeship practises.
2. Given the statistically significant positive effect of mentorship support and intensity, mentorship programs should ensure that mentors provide adequate support and guidance to apprentices within traditional apprenticeship practice. This can be achieved through regular interactions, feedback sessions, and opportunities for apprentices to seek advice and assistance from their mentors.

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