

# Formal Mentoring and Teachers' Effectiveness in Stress Management in Private Secondary Schools in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

The study examined the effect of formal mentoring on teachers' effectiveness in stress management in private secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. Three research questions and three null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Quasi-experimental design using pretest, posttest, and nonequivalent control groups was used. The population of the study consists of all the two hundred and forty teachers who have served for not more than five years in private secondary schools. The sample of the study was one hundred and fifty teachers drawn from the total population using Taro Yamane formula, and purposive random sampling was used to select 10 private schools out of the 25 government approved private secondary schools. Two researchers developed instruments: Teachers Mentoring Guide (TMG) and Teachers' Stress Management Effectiveness Questionnaire (TSMEQ) were used to gather data. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while the hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. The results obtained revealed that the teachers who were formally mentored performed more effectively in stress management than those that were not formally mentored. Male teachers performed better in stress management than their female counterpart, and type of mentoring and gender did not have significant interaction effect on effectiveness of teachers in stress management. It is therefore, recommended that formal mentoring of teachers should be introduced in private and public secondary schools to enhance performance of teachers in stress management and overall effectiveness in teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** Formal mentoring, teachers' effectiveness, stress, stress management, private secondary schools.

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a remarkable rise of interest in mentoring and the benefits associated with it, especially in the area of improving teachers' effectiveness in schools. This is because many people believe that the act of mentoring involves transfer of knowledge, skills, expertise, vision among others from the more experienced persons (mentors) to the less experienced persons (mentee) for the growth and development of the individual or organization. Mentoring has been described as the manifestation of the highest level of personal maturity, security and self-confidence by individuals as one creates others who may become greater than themselves. Amoke (2020) explained that mentoring is all about an experienced person sharing knowledge, skills and experiences with the less experienced person in order to help them to progress in their career and other areas of interest. In a school set up, the head of the school or principal and other senior experienced colleagues are expected to give support, encouragement and training to the less experienced teachers in order that they may maximize their potentials, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the persons of their dream.

This mentoring relationship can be formal or informal. Momeke, Onyeagwu and Nwaham (2012) defined informal mentoring as a naturally occurring, supportive relationship between experienced members of an organization and less experienced members. This type of relationship develops on their own without any official arrangement. The two parties may not even know the particular time the relationship started, the goals or even when to end it. Formal mentoring on the other hand is a structured and organized mentoring relationship that exists between the mentor and the mentee willingly and usually supervised by the

organization. As stated by Maughan (2006), in a formal mentoring, the organization oversees and guides the mentoring programmes in order to promote employees' development.

Formal mentoring in school therefore refers to organized structured relationship where the principal and other more experienced members of the school offer help, support, advice and training to less experienced teachers for the purpose of improving their professional skills, especially as may be required in classroom and stress management. It is believed that formal mentoring when combined with mentoring training provides the most effective professional development programme needed by teachers in effectively coping with stress in the school environment. (<https://www.get.mentoringcomplete.com>).

Effective stress management by teachers is a process of facilitating learning by creating conducive and enabling environment which is expected to bring about change in behaviour of the learner. Ogwu and Ogwu (2013) stated that teachers with adequate knowledge of their subject matter can be more effective and efficient at organizing and delivering the subject matter, connecting the subject with the students previous knowledge, and managing stress that arise in the course of teaching and learning. The whole success of students in the acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills lies in the effectiveness of the teacher in classroom control and teaching method adopted for a particular lesson or topic. This includes the level of preparedness of the teachers and how well they can cope with pressure emanating from the classroom routine practices. Okolocha and Onyeke (2013), in this regard, stated that desirable transformation can only occur in the learner when a teacher has a good mastery of the subject matter, has a map to follow in terms of well-prepared lesson plan/note, grab the students attention through effective class control mechanism or strategy, recognize students attention span, plan activity for the students' by allowing them to participate actively in the teaching – learning encounter and also maintain approved lesson period, utilize visual aids, voice, eye contact and body movement as a way of stimulating the students and manage the stressors that arise in the course of teaching and learning.

Attainment of this level of efficiency may require structured and well planned mentoring programme for less experienced teachers in management of classroom routine practices as well as stressors. These classroom routine practices include all the activities that go on in the classroom from the moment the students line up in the assembly ground to enter the classroom, to the teachers' dismissal time. As summarized by Ugwoke (2013) this activity involves: observation of class rules, control of noise making, movement of students, classroom discipline, cleanliness of classroom environment, attendance/roll call, instructional activities – teaching and learning, class sitting arrangement, neatness of students and class, development of good health habit, inculcation of personal hygiene, participation in class assessment, involvement in continuous assessment, examination and promotions. As stated by Linda Shalaway, routines helps to make the teachers' work easier, saves valuable classroom time and makes it easier for students to learn and achieve better result. When routines and procedures are modeled and established in the classroom, students know what's expected of them and how to go about it on their own.

Ability to establish set routine and procedure for every aspect of classroom management is the key to establishing positive safe learning environment for the students. From the moment the student enter the classroom to the dismissal time, having structured clear expectations and appropriate consequences are the basics for creating a safe learning environment. Without that, it will be difficult for teachers to deliver and conduct class effectively. When teachers have effective management plan in place for every situation and the coping strategies for stress, then real teaching happens. Classroom routine practices of teachers cut across the level of educations or the type of school involved. Whether primary, secondary or tertiary education; private or public school, there is the need to set up a well planned routine for the classroom procedure on the first day of resumption because this will make the students to be more organized and enjoy smooth, safe guide learning environment in private or public school.

Private secondary school which is the focus of this study refers to secondary school that is run and supported by private individuals or organizations like churches, without the assistance of the government. While the public schools are run and funded by the government, private schools rely on tuition generated revenue to operate. As a result, many of these private secondary schools lack funds to engage qualified teachers, provide adequate infrastructure and other basic needs required to provide conducive environment for teaching and learning. The study by Ammukaenyi, Modekelu and Mama (2018) revealed that most private schools lack fund and facilities to properly manage the schools. It also observed that in Nigeria presently, the trend has been that of the private sector gradually taking over the primary and secondary sub-sector of education industry. Their enrolment figure has been on the increase, may be as a result of incessant strikes undertaken by government employed teachers in public schools. Hence, the need to pay attention to this education sector to ensure that the teachers engaged in the private schools receive adequate training and support to enable them perform effectively. This may improve the health status of teachers, quality of students and reduce the rate of examination malpractice in private schools.

Based on this background, the researchers intend to determine the influence formal mentoring may have on effectiveness of teachers in carrying out the day to day classroom routine practices and management of stress in private secondary schools.

## Statement of the Problem

In spite of the societal demand for teachers' effectiveness in education and the need for continuing professional development of teachers in schools, there is a growing concern about the realization of secondary education objectives as stated in the Nigerian Policy on Education (FRN, 2013). To worsen the matter, the private secondary schools which are now absorbing many of the teeming youths in schools, are poorly staffed with teachers who lack experience and requisite educational qualifications necessary for effective performance in classroom routine practices and ability to manage stress. In addition, because of poor remuneration and lack of incentive for private school teachers, the attrition rate seems to be high as many of them leave in search of greener pasture and many of them manifest severe chronic stress overload. These result in severe health challenges by teachers, poorly motivated and less productive staff and poor students' academic performance and involvement in examination malpractice. This situation coupled with the increasing rate of poor classroom routine practice of teachers appear to suggest that heads of schools and older teachers have failed in inculcating in less experienced teachers the desired skills and attitudes for effective functioning in the classroom and coping with stress. This may be that those managers of private schools lack mentoring skills needed for mentoring the teachers or the political will to establish formal mentoring programmes for their teachers.

However, the growing and endearing argument that mentoring has become an important tool for professional development in organizations such as schools appear to be strong and laudable. Evidences of the use of formal mentoring in improving the performance of teachers has been established in developed countries such as United States of America, Canada, UK among others. When it comes to reducing workplace stress, mentoring programmes have been proven an effective way for both mentors and mentees to manage and handle stressors in their lives. The Problem of this study put in question form therefore is, what are the effects of formal mentoring on teachers' effectiveness in management of stress in private secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone?

## Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to find out the effect of formal mentoring on teachers' effectiveness in management of stress in private secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu state. Specifically, the study sought to determine;

1. Effectiveness in stress management of formally mentored and informally mentored teachers in private secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu State.
2. Effectiveness in stress management of male and female teachers in private secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu State.
3. Interaction effect of type of mentoring and gender on teachers' effectiveness in stress management in private secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu State.

## Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What are the mean effectiveness scores in stress management of formally mentored and informally mentored teachers in private secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu State.
2. How do the mean effectiveness scores in stress management of teachers differ on the basis of gender?
3. What is the interaction effect of type of mentoring and gender on teachers' mean effectiveness scores in stress management?

## Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean effectiveness scores of formally mentored and informally mentored teachers in stress management in private secondary schools in Enugu State.

Ho2: Gender does not significantly influence the mean effectiveness scores in stress management of teachers in private secondary schools.

Ho3: There is no interaction effect of type of mentoring and gender on effectiveness scores of teachers on stress management.

## Methodology

The study adopted quasi-experimental design, using pre-test, post-test non-equivalent control group. The quasi-experimental design is considered appropriate for the study because pre-existing groups were used for the experimental treatment and control groups. The study was carried out in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu state and lasted for eight weeks. The population of the study consists of all the two hundred and forty teachers who have served for not more than five years in the private secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu State. The sample of the study was one hundred and fifty (150) teachers drawn from 10 private secondary schools using Taro Yamen's formula and purposive random sampling of schools. Two researchers developed instruments. Teachers' Mentoring Guide (TMG) and Teachers Stress Management Effectiveness Questionnaire (TSMEQ) were used to gather data. The teachers mentoring guide was used to train the principals/ senior teachers on how to formally mentor teachers while the teachers stress management effectiveness questionnaire were used to collect data on effectiveness of formally mentored and informally mentored teachers of the experimental and control groups. Five schools were assigned for experimental and five for control groups with 76 and 74 teachers in experimental and control groups.

The two instruments were faced validated by three experts, one from department of measurement and evaluation and two from administration and planning, all from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient was used to compute results of the trial testing after test and re-test instrument administration and the results indicated positive correlation co-efficient of 0.84 and 0.86 respectively. Data were collected through 10 trained assessors. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions and Analysis of Co-variance (ANCOVA) was used to test the three null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The ANCOVA was preferred because of its power to take care of the initial lack of equivalence (differences) in the experimental and control groups since intact classes of teachers were used for the study. The pre-test served as covariate to the post test and this justifies more the use of ANCOVA for testing the null hypotheses.

### Experimental Procedure

Ten mentors were trained by the researcher to assist in mentoring the teachers participating in formal mentoring. The mentors were required to have a contact session with the mentees at least twice a week for the period of six weeks. Each mentor is to mentor a maximum of eight teachers. The researchers gave each of the mentors a copy of the teacher mentoring guide which served as a reference material to them when mentoring the mentees. These mentors were made up of the principal and other senior experienced teachers in the school. The control group were not formally mentored, but did their normal classroom routine practices for that period of six weeks.

The teachers' stress management effectiveness questionnaire was completed by the assessors through observing and interviewing formally mentored and informally mentored teachers in the classroom and assigning scores using nominal value assigned to the scale point as follows; Very severe stress (4), moderate severe stress (3), severe stress (2), and no stress (1). The TSMEQ had two sections. Section A contained items regarding the teachers profile, while section B had two sub sections of twelve questions each, totally 24 items regarding various areas of teachers' stress and the coping strategies used by teachers to effectively manage stress based on the content of the teacher mentoring guide. Some aspects required the assessors to interview the teachers, check the lesson notes, scheme of work, diaries, record of work, class control, teacher- student interaction, teachers' health condition. One week was used to pre-test/assess the teachers before commencement of the experiment and another one week was used to post-test/assess the teachers at the end of the six weeks of formal and informal mentoring. A total of eight weeks was used for the experimental study excluding the period of training of the mentors and assessors.

## Results

The results of the study were presented according to the research questions and the hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question One: What are the mean effectiveness scores in stress management of formally mentored and informally mentored teachers in private secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean Effectiveness Scores of Formally Mentored and Informally Mentored Teachers in Classroom Routine Practices

| Type of mentoring   | N  | Pre-test |      | Post-test |      | Mean  |
|---------------------|----|----------|------|-----------|------|-------|
|                     |    | Mean     | SD   | Mean      | SD   | Gain  |
| Formally mentored   | 76 | 11.79    | 3.31 | 27.1      | 5.31 | 15.31 |
| Informally mentored | 74 | 12.06    | 3.36 | 21.34     | 5.50 | 9.28  |

Table 1 shows the pre-test and post-test effectiveness scores of formally and informally mentored teachers in classroom routine practices. It reveals that the pre-test mean effectiveness scores and standard deviation of formally mentored teachers is 11.79 and 3.31, while the pre-test effectiveness scores and standard deviation of informally mentored teachers were 12.06 and 3.36 respectively. This suggests that at pre-test level, teachers that belong to the control and experimental groups almost had the same level of effectiveness.

The post-test mean and standard deviation effectiveness scores of formally mentored and informally mentored teachers were 27.10 (5.31) and 21.34 (5.50) respectively. This implies that teachers who received formal mentoring were more effective than their counterparts who were informally mentored.

Research Question 2: What is the difference in the mean effectiveness scores in classroom routine practices of male and female teachers in private secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Effectiveness Scores in Classroom Routine Practices of Male and Female Teachers in Private Secondary Schools

| Gender | N  | Pre-test |      | Post-test |      | Mean  |
|--------|----|----------|------|-----------|------|-------|
|        |    | Mean     | SD   | Mean      | SD   | Gain  |
| Male   | 66 | 11.81    | 3.58 | 24.29     | 6.45 | 12.48 |
| Female | 84 | 11.99    | 3.14 | 23.83     | 5.56 | 11.84 |

Table 2 reveals that male teachers had post-test mean effectiveness score of 24.29 with standard deviation of 6.45 against their pre-test mean effectiveness score of 11.81 and standard deviation of 3.58. Their female counterpart had post-test mean effectiveness score of 23.83 with a standard deviation of 5.56 against their pre-test mean effectiveness score of 11.99 and standard deviation of 3.14. The mean effectiveness gain scores of 12.48 and 11.84 for the male and female teachers respectively indicated that male teachers had higher effectiveness score than their female counterpart.

Research Question 3: What is the Interaction Effect of Type of Mentoring and Gender on Teachers mean Effectiveness Scores in classroom Routine Practices in Private Secondary Schools?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on Interaction Effect of Type of Mentoring and Gender on Teachers mean Effectiveness in Classroom Routine Practical

| Pre-test      | Formal Mentoring |              |      | Informal Mentoring |             |      |
|---------------|------------------|--------------|------|--------------------|-------------|------|
|               | N                | Mean         | SD   | N                  | Mean        | SD   |
| Male          | 34               | 11.71        | 3.87 | 32                 | 11.93       | 3.34 |
| Female        | 42               | 11.83        | 2.96 | 42                 | 12.15       | 3.33 |
| Post-test     |                  |              |      |                    |             |      |
| Male          | 34               | 27.08(15.39) | 6.35 | 32                 | 21.31(9.38) | 5.20 |
| Female        | 42               | 26.24(14.41) | 4.82 | 42                 | 21.37(9.16) | 5.23 |
| Observed mean |                  | 26.62        | 5.50 |                    | 21.34       |      |
| Gain score    |                  | 15.31        |      |                    | 9.3         |      |

The results in Table 3 indicated that teachers who were formally mentored had gain score of 15.31 and those who were informally mentored had gain score of 9.3. The result revealed a higher gain score of 15.37 for male teachers mentored formally, while their female counterparts had a gain score of 14.41. Male teachers who were not formally mentored had a gain score of 9.38, while their female counterpart had gain score of 9.16. The result showed that at all levels of gender, male teachers had higher gain score than their female counterparts in classroom routine practices.

### Hypotheses

Table 4: Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) for Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3.

| Source of Variation | Sum of S squares       | Df  | Mean Square | F       | Sig.  |
|---------------------|------------------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------|
| Corrected model     | 14.77.796 <sup>a</sup> | 5   | 369.449     | 14.033  | .000  |
| Intercept           | 3439.080               | 1   | 3439.080    | 130.631 | .000  |
| Pretest             | 427.705                | 1   | 427.708     | 16.246  | .000  |
| Types of mentoring  | 1094.835               | 1   | 1094.835    | 41.587  | .000  |
| Group gender        | 8.613                  | 1   | 8.613       | -.329   | .568  |
| Gender              | 6.824                  | 1   | 6.824       | .259    | 0.038 |
| Error               | 3791.036               | 144 | 26.327      |         |       |
| Total               | 91333.000              | 150 |             |         |       |
| Corrected total     | 5268.832               | 149 |             |         |       |

Hypotheses one: There is no significant difference in the mean effectiveness scores of formally and informally mentored teachers in classroom routine practices in private secondary schools in Enugu State.

Table 4 showed the F-value as 41.587 and the probability value as .000. The probability value of .000 of this finding is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and thus, there is significant difference in the mean effectiveness scores of teachers who were formally mentored and those who were not formally mentored in favour of those who were formally mentored.

This implies that teachers who received formal mentoring were more effective compared with their counterparts who did not receive formal mentoring.

Ho2: Gender does not significantly influence the mean effectiveness scores in classroom routine practices of teachers in private secondary schools

Table 4 showed the f-value as .259 and the probability value as .038. Since the probability value of .038 of this finding is less than the alpha value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference in the mean effectiveness scores of male and female teachers in classroom routine practices, in favour of the male teachers. This suggest that male teachers were more effective in classroom routine practices than their female counterpart in private secondary schools.

Ho3: There is no interaction effect of type of mentoring and gender on effectiveness scores of teachers in classroom routine practices in private secondary schools.

Table 4 showed no interaction effect of type of mentoring and gender on teachers effectiveness score as f-value .327 and the probability value as .568. Since the probability value of 0.568 is greater than the alpha value 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant interaction effect of type of mentoring and gender on mean effectiveness scores of teacher in classroom routine practices in private secondary schools. Formally mentored male and female teachers performed better than their counterparts who were not formally mentored.

## Discussion of Results

The result from the research question one indicated that the mean effectiveness scores of teachers who were formally mentored in classroom routine practices were significantly higher than those who were not formally mentored. This showed that formal mentoring yielded positive effect on teachers' effectiveness in various aspects of classroom routine practices.

Also the result of hypothesis one showed that there were significant difference in the effectiveness scores of teachers who received formal mentoring and those who did not in favour of those who received formal mentoring. This implies that teachers who received formal mentoring were more effective than those who did not receive formal mentoring. The results agreed with the findings by Muraya and Wair, (2020), Ingersoll and Strong (2011) and Stanulis and Floden (2009) which indicated that beginning teachers who were mentored performed better than their counterpart who received only normal induction training and informal mentoring. Muraya and Wairimu concluded in the same vein, that teacher mentoring is effective in improving teacher classroom practices and should be integrated into the formal school programme in Kenya. Donalson (2008) equally agreed that good quality mentoring in schools makes important contribution to developing the professional skills of new teachers and assuring best quality learning experiences for students. Hence, formal mentoring of teacher may bring about positive improvement in effectiveness of teacher in classroom routine practices.

Findings from research question two and hypothesis two also revealed that the mean effectiveness gain score of male teachers was higher than that of female teachers. Further analysis equally showed that gender significantly influenced the mean effectiveness scores of teachers in classroom routine practices in secondary schools. Male teachers exhibited higher personality characteristics and commitment in classroom routine practices. The findings agreed with the opinion of Salvage and Salvage (2009) that facets of classroom management may vary as a result of the teachers' gender and further stated that male teachers have better control of their classroom than their female counterparts. Martins, Yin and Mayal (2006) equally noted that male teachers are more likely to take control of their classrooms, use better classroom voice and speak for longer duration while female teachers on the other hand are more likely to use helplessness as a way of influencing others. The male teachers as observed by assessors, performed slightly higher than female teachers in areas such as control of unwanted behaviour during teaching, effective class control, orderly presentation of blackboard summaries, establishment of clear rules and regulations guiding the class, addressing behaviour issues quickly and wisely. However, female teachers showed slightly higher performance in some areas such as proper dressing, neatness of the classroom, comportment, willingness to attend to students needs and personal problems. This result however, disagreed with Amoke (2018), which showed that gender did not significantly influence the mean performance scores of teachers in classroom management in public secondary school, even though there was difference in the mean gain scores of teachers in favour of males.

The result from table 3 indicated that male and female teachers who were formally mentored in classroom routine practices had higher mean gain effectiveness scores than the male and female teachers who were not formally mentored. It was further revealed that there was no significant interaction effect of type of mentoring and gender on mean effectiveness scores of teachers in classroom routine practices in private secondary schools. The findings pertaining to male and female teachers who were exposed to formal mentoring and those not exposed to formal mentoring showed that formal mentoring has positive effect on performance of teachers in classroom routine practices irrespective of gender. This agreed with Achor and Duguruil (2014) that male and female pre-service chemistry teachers who were exposed to formal mentoring performed better than their counterparts who were to exposed to formal mentoring. Therefore, the result showed that through formal mentoring of both male and female teachers, the educational industry in Enugu State stood a very big chance of rising to an enviable level of excellence if properly implemented. The finding agreed with Garvey (2008) which indicated that formal mentoring remains a viable policy option for teachers irrespective of gender

## Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, the following conclusions were made;

Teachers in private secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone, Enugu State when formally mentored, would be more effective in classroom routine practices than their counterparts not formally mentored. Teachers when appropriately mentored would be more effective in classroom routine practices regardless of gender and the type of school.

## Recommendation

School administrators should introduce formal mentoring programmes in their schools to improve the effectiveness of teachers in classroom routine practices, as this would result in the overall improvement of secondary education sector in Nigeria.

The ministry of education, managers of private secondary schools, post primary school management board and all stakeholders in secondary education should play active role in planning and execution of mentoring programmes in schools.

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