

NEGATIVE MENTORING EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES: THE MEDIATING EFFECTS OF DISSATISFACTION WITH FORMAL MENTORING SUPPORT

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Abstract

The study explored the role of dyad mismatch, mentor distancing and manipulative behaviour (negative mentoring experiences) and the mediating effects of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support on job stress and affective commitment (outcomes). Data were obtained from 167 employees drawn from banking organisations in Nigeria using a questionnaire. Results showed that dyad mismatch ($\beta = .16, p < .05$) and mentor's distancing behaviour ($\beta = .15, p < .05$) were significantly and positively related to dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support but mentor's manipulative behaviour was insignificant. Dyad mismatch ($\beta = .13, p < .05$) and mentor's distancing behaviour ($\beta = .25, p < .01$) had a significant positive relationship with job stress that was mediated by dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support. The significant negative relationship between mentor's distancing behaviour and affective commitment ($\beta = -.17, P < .05$) was mediated by dissatisfaction with mentoring support while mentor's manipulative behaviour had a significant direct influence on affective commitment ($\beta = -.32, p < .001$). Practical implications of findings and future research directions are discussed.

Key words: Dyad mismatch, distancing and manipulative behaviour, negative mentoring, job stress, affective commitment.

Mentoring is a close, developmental relationship between two people in which a partner willingly avails him/herself of the full range of superior experience, knowledge, skills or status of the other partner in all spheres of human endeavour (Okurame, 2011). Consistently, findings have linked positive mentoring experience with favourable protégé development outcomes (Cureton, 2009; Cureton, Green & Meakin, 2010; Kram, 1985; RFB, 2010) including acquisition and productive use of skills (Chao, 2009; Eby, Alien, Evans, Ng & DuBois, 2008; Kammeyer-mueller & Judge, 2008; Ramaswani & Dreher, 2007), enhanced salary and promotion, career commitment and success, good health, and job satisfaction (Aryee & Chay, 1994; Burke, Mckeen & McKenna, 1994; Fagenson 1989; Johnson & Anderson, 2010; Kram, 1985; Kwan, Liu, Liu & Hong-Kit Yim, 2011; Okurame, 2012a; Okurame & Balogun 2005; Payne 2006; Turban & Dougherty 1994). For mentors, positive mentoring experience results in generativity satisfaction (Kram, 1985) while the organisation in which the relationship thrive benefit from reduced turnover and a potent succession pipeline (Alien, Eby, Poteet, Lenz & Lima, 2004; Cull, 2006; Hall & Smith, 2009; Payne, 2006; St-jean & Audet, 2009).

In the past decade, concerns about the potential for problems in mentoring relationships culminated in the identification of five distinct taxonomies of negative mentoring experiences from the protégé's perspective. These are dyadic mismatch, defined as a poor fit in a mentor-protégé dyad arising from differences in admiration, interest, values, personality, and work styles; distancing behaviour, described as mentor actions reflecting a lack of interest in a protégé's career, including neglecting and excluding a protégé from important events and sources of information; manipulative behaviour, defined as a mentor's wielding of his or her power in a tyrannical and exploitative manner towards a protégé, inappropriately delegating work to a protégé, and engaging in deceit and sabotage; lack of mentor expertise, defined as a mentor's lack of interpersonal and technical expertise; and general dysfunctionality, which describes a mentor's display of negative

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attitudes towards their work or organisation or personal problems that interfere with his or her ability to mentor (Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby, Butts, Durley & Ragins, 2010; Eby, Butts, Lockwood & Simon, 2004; Eby, Durley, Evans & Ragins, 2008; Eby, McManus, Simon & Russell, 2000). Although, five categories of negative mentoring experiences from the protégé's perspective are identified in the literature, the study examined three negative mentoring experiences (dyadic mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour) that are relevant to the population of interest with a view to establishing their impact on two attitude variables related to individual and organisational effectiveness: job stress and affective commitment.

The first outcome variable of this study, job stress, is the job-related domain of stress which captures the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur within an individual when the requirements of the job do not match capabilities, resources, or even needs (Srivastava, 2009). This phenomenon, recognised world-wide as a major challenge to employee performance and the healthiness of their organisations (ILO, 1986; 1992; Srivastava, 2009), can be triggered by interpersonal relationships at work, including mentoring experiences (Alien, Smith, Mael, O'Shea, & Eby, 2009; Leka, Griffiths & Cox, 2004). The second outcome variable, affective commitment is one of the three components of organisational commitment which reflects a desire to remain a member of an organisation because of emotional attachment (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). Emotional attachment, which encourages identification with and involvement in the organisation's goals and values, is distinct from continuance commitment that depicts an individual's awareness of the perceived costs of leaving the organisation (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). A meta-analysis demonstrated that affective commitment is a strong predictor of turnover intentions, actual turnover behaviour, effort and performance (Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Meyer et al., 2002). The present study proposes that the three categories of negative mentoring experiences would affect job stress and affective commitment through their influence on dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support.

Mentoring is increasingly a popular phenomenon in Nigerian business organisations because it is appreciated as a tool for achieving competitive advantage by management (Okurame, 2011). Consequently, they have created an interpersonally flexible work environment to encourage superior-subordinate interaction and have instituted training programmes to generate a pool of competent mentors that new employees can be assigned in a formal mentoring intervention. Clearly, organisations are investing so much time, capital and effort to avoid negative mentoring experiences and to reap the benefits high-quality relationships. For this reason, an empirical investigation of factors that may dash this expectation should be a source of research concern.

Although, empirical data on both positive and negative aspects of mentoring is needed to fully understand the relational experience (Eby et al., 2000), studies have mainly concentrated on positive mentoring thereby creating a virtual absence of literature on negative mentoring experiences. The need to address this gap is clearly accentuated by two reasons. First, perceptions of positive experiences in mentoring are empirically distinct and conceptually different from perceptions of negative mentoring experience (Eby, Durley, et al., 2008; Eby et al., 2004; Fletcher & Ragins, 2007; Ragins & Scandura, 1999). For instance, a mentor could create a negative mentoring experience if the protégé finds it difficult to deal with his or her interpersonal style (Eby et al., 2010). Nonetheless, the same mentor may create a positive relational experience by advancing the protégé's career through making him/her 'visible' to influential people within the organization. Second, findings reveal that compared to positive experiences, negative mentoring experience is a stronger predictor of mentoring outcome and relates to a broad range of work, career, relational, and personal outcomes for a protégé' (Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby et al., 2004; Eby et al, 2010; LaBianca & Brass, 2006).

Again, a large body of research (e.g. Chao, 2009; Eby & Allen; 2002; Eby et al., 2000; Eby, Allen, et al., 2008; Karkoulian, Halawi & McCarthy, 2008; Kim, Choi & Gim, 2011; Kim & Choi, 2011a; 2011b; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Simon & Eby, 2003; Tourigny & Pulich, 2005) have suggested that relationship problems, which are more likely in formal than informal mentoring relationships, could explain negative mentoring experiences. This position stems from

the argument that since positive mentoring experience is marked by positive functions provided by mentors, negative mentoring can be defined by the presence of problems in the relationship. Three of such problems are noticeable in the Nigerian context of formal mentoring. These are: mismatch in mentor-protégé pairings; nonchalant attitude and flagrant lack of interest in protégés by formal mentors who feel inconvenienced when their protégés call out for their attention; and mentors who have become tormentors, exploiting and saddling protégés with their own assigned duties (Okurame, 2011). Obviously, these problems reflect the taxonomy of negative mentoring experiences which existing research from the protégé's perspective (e.g. Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby et al, 2000; Eby et al, 2004; Ragins, 1997a; 1997b) have identified as mismatch within dyad, mentor's distancing actions and manipulative behaviour.

Although, problems of mentoring are widely thought to be the cause of unfavourable outcomes of formal mentoring interventions in Nigeria, no study has empirically examined this assumption. Therefore, unlike previous enquiries (e.g. Eby et al., 2000; Eby et al, 2004; Eby, Durley, et al., 2008; Eby et al, 2010; Kim et al., 2011; Kim & Choi, 2011a; 2011b) which have focused on taxonomy and scale development or antecedents and predictive power of good vs. bad mentoring experiences, the present study examined their effects on job stress and affective commitment through the mediating role of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support. This focus answers calls in the literature (e.g. Eby et al, 2000; Eby et al, 2004) for mentoring scholars to examine the relationship between negative mentoring experiences and a range of psychological reactions including job stress, and the type of outcomes examined in relation to positive mentoring such as affective commitment. Besides, given the cost to organisations of job stress and reduced affective commitment, the examination of these variables is justified in the present study.

To date, no research attention has been devoted to the mediating role of dissatisfaction with mentoring support, a mechanism that may be responsible for the association between negative mentoring experiences and outcome, in the evolving negative mentoring literature. The study, therefore, examines how negative mentoring experiences that are germane to the population of interest relate to job stress and affective commitment through discontent with formal mentoring support. Findings will have implications for theoretical development and how formal programmes can be better organised to achieve desired results.

Three major negative mentoring experiences considered in the study are dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour. Although there is a dearth of studies relating these negative mentoring experiences to job stress and affective commitment, findings in the interpersonal relationship literature suggest significant associations between the variables.

Findings show that dyadic match enhances the quality of interaction between a mentor-protégé pair through shared identity and liking (Burke, McKeen, & McKenna, 1993; Dreher & Dougherty, 1997; Eby et al, 2004; Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Ragins, 1997a; 1997b). Shared identity validates beliefs and attitudes, creating a sense of similarity between partners and reciprocal liking (Berscheid & Reis, 1998; Condon & Crano, 1988). This makes communication easy, enhances interpersonal disclosure and makes partners in the relationship to spend more time together (Eby et al, 2004). On the contrary, a lack of fit between a mentor-protégé pair tends to result in a clash of identity, poor interpersonal attraction between partners and dislike. According to the socio-psychological perspective by Smith and Mackie (2000), when interactions fail to meet a protégé's needs, it leads to more dislike and a vicious circle of negative reactions, including job stress and reduced emotional commitment. Indeed, negative mentoring experience is widely associated with intention to leave the relationship and vulnerability to stress (Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby et al, 2004; Russell, Altmaier & Van Velzen, 1987). Empirical findings reveal that dislike and unfavourable perception of mentor-protégé similarity decreases an employee's perception of person-organisation fit and organisational commitment (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003; Kim & Choi, 2011a; Moynihan & Pandey, 2007; Weng, Huang, Tsai, Chang, Lin & Lee, 2010). Consequently, employee's who perceive that they are dissimilar with their mentors would be expected to express

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less affective commitment to their organisation and report high levels of job stress.

Distancing and manipulating behaviour are intentional negative behaviour of a mentor (Kim & Choi, 2011a) that are potentially a source of job stress because they reflect a mentor's unsatisfactory performance in his or her relational role. Mentors play an important role in a protégés coping behaviour in times of stress (Kram & Hall, 1989) and provide them sufficient reasons to invest energy in their career and organisation (Okurame, 2012a). However, employees can only avail themselves of these benefits if mentors perform their roles as expected. Arguably, therefore, being excluded, neglected and/or exploited by a mentor, as is the case in distancing and manipulation behaviour, can be a harrowing experience for a protégé. Distancing behaviour prevent protégés from taking advantage of opportunities for receiving feedback about ideas and work performance while manipulative behaviour means that a protégé would bear the additional burden of a mentor's exploitation (Kim & Choi, 2011a). This makes the relationship less supportive, the protégé less willing to identify with his or her organisation and more vulnerable to workplace stress (Kim & Choi, 2011a; Lyons & Schneider, 2009; Russell et al., 1987).

The interpersonal dimension of the social exchange theory posits that individuals develop emotional reactions based on their perception of the benefits/cost derived from their relationship (Eby et al., 2004). Distancing and manipulative behaviour represent forms of relational cost which can lead a protégé to believe that the relationship is no longer meeting his or her needs, create interpersonal crisis, decrease emotional attachment and increase job-related stress (Kim & Choi, 2011a; Kim et al, 2011). Similarly, since a mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour potentially inhibits personal growth in a career and within an organisation (Kim & Choi, 2011a; LePine, Podsakoff & LePine, 2005), it increases turnover intentions and stalls a protégé's development of affective commitment to their organisation (Kim & Choi, 2011a).

Based on the literature review of the potential direct link between negative mentoring experience and the outcome variables of job stress and affective commitment, the study formulated and tested the following hypotheses. *Hypothesis 1*: Dyadic mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour would have significant positive relationships with job stress. *Hypothesis 2*: Dyadic mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour would have significant negative relationships with affective commitment.

The social exchange theory provides the conceptual basis for understanding the process through which dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support mediates the relationship of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour with job stress and affective commitment. Central to the social exchange exposition of this process is the norm of reciprocity - a tendency for employees to react positively to favourable treatment received from their organisations (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli & Lynch, 1997). Employees form a general perception concerning what they expect from their organisation in return for their perceived contributions and the extent to which their organisations value them (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986; Robinson, 1996; Rousseau, 1989; 1990; 1995). Such perceptions can be derived from the actions of agents of an organisation, such as mentors, who are regarded as representatives of the organisation itself (Kabar & Barrett, 2010; Okurame, 2012b). Thus, social exchange theorists argue that the receipt of satisfying support from a mentor incurs an obligation to reciprocate, not necessarily to the mentor, but towards the organisation (Eisenberger et al., 1997). Findings show that when employees utilise a valuable organisational intervention such as mentoring for career growth, they find their job more interesting and commit to the organisation's goals in ways that reduce workplace stress (Avey, Nimnicht & Pigeon, 2010; Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002; Meyer & Allen, 1984; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Organ, 1988; Weng et al., 2010). On the contrary, if employees feel that their expectations in the relationship are not being met, the organisation is seen as renegeing on its obligation and employees react with negative work behaviour (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Okurame, 2012b; Osland, Turner, Colb & Rubin,

2007; Robinson & Morrison, 1995; Turnley & Feldman, 2000). Consequently, dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support is strengthened by dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour to the extent that it inhibits the potential for fulfilling an employee's expectation of quality formal mentoring support. Consistent with this conclusion, the few studies on this issue (e.g. Allen et al., 2004; Eby, Durley, et al., 2008; Eby, et al., 2010) report that negative mentoring experience is associated with poor mentoring support and relationship satisfaction. On the strength of this argument, employees who report high levels of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing, and manipulative behaviour will be expected to report greater levels of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support since these problems constrain a mentor's capacity to sufficiently support a protégé. Accordingly, the study formulated and tested hypothesis 3: Dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour would be significantly and positively related to dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support.

Again, on the basis of the social exchange theory, increased levels of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support would, in turn, be expected to increase vulnerability to job stress and decrease affective commitment. Given the postulations of the norm of reciprocity, dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support decreases feelings of obligation to care about the organisation (Eisenberger, Arneli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhodes, 2001) and to attend to job activities. It inhibits socialisation to organisational culture, modelling of work/life balance, coping techniques and networks of social support, and results in a pervading lack of interest in a job, elevated levels of job stress and inhibited commitment (Lewallen, Crane, Letvak, Jones & Hu, 2003; McDonald, 2010; Thomas & Lankau, 2009). On the contrary, studies (e.g. cited in Chahal, 2010; Erdwins, Buffardi, Casper, & O'Brien, 2001; Fagenson, 1989; Nadim, Akbar & Haq, 2004; Nielson, Carison, & Lankau, 2001; Okurame, 2008; 2009; 2012a) have found that supportive and satisfying mentoring relationships reduce perception of and negative reactions to stress, and enhances commitment to the organisation. Consequently, it is expected that dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support would be strengthened by dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour, which will in turn, affect job stress and affective commitment. Therefore, the study stated and tested the following hypotheses. *Hypothesis 4*: Dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support would mediate the positive relationship of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour with job stress. *Hypothesis 5*: Dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support would mediate the negative relationship of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour with affective commitment.

Method

Participants

A total of 167 employees of banking organisations in South-Western, Nigeria, were selected for the study using the purposive sampling technique whose inclusion criteria is a formal mentoring experience as a protégé. Of the total sample, 93 (55.7) were males and 74 (44.3) were females. Their mean age was 32.48 years ($SD = 5.37$), ranging from 22 to 41. They had worked in their current organisation for an average of 2.95 years ($SD = 0.92$). Respondents represented a range of job status that were collapsed into junior ($n = 103$, 61.7) and intermediate cadres ($n = 64$, 38.3). Majority of the participants were married ($n = 92$, 55.1%); seventy-five were single (44.9). Their highest educational attainment varied thus: 77 (46.1%) had higher national diplomas, 40 (24.0) had completed first degrees and 50 (29.9) had postgraduate qualifications, regarding formal mentoring relationships, 50 (29.9) were currently ongoing whereas 117 (70.1%) were reported on a completed formal relationship. Mentors were either male ($n = 109$, 65.3) or female ($n = 58$, 34.7).

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Measures

Control variables: All demographic data were considered potential covariates in the study. However, sex, age and job status were utilised as control variables in analyses because they were the only variables that showed significant relationships with the mediator (dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support) and dependent variables (job stress and affective commitment) of the study. Controlling for the effects of demographic data with significant relationships with the main variables of study reduces error and maintains power (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

Dyadic mismatch: This variable was measured by a 9-item scale developed by Eby et al (2004). The authors reported significant convergent and divergent validity coefficients, and a Cronbach alpha of .89 for the scale. Sample items include "The personal values of my mentor are different from my own", "My mentor and I have different life priorities" and "My mentor and I are different from one another". Factor analysis resulted in a single factor with a least item loading of .49. Significant item-total correlations ranging from .45 to .66 were obtained for the scale. A Cronbach alpha of .77 was obtained for the scale in the present study. Participants responded to scale items on a seven point scale, ranging from 7 "strongly agree", to 1 "strongly disagree". High scores represent greater dissimilarity background with mentor, while low scores signify lower dissimilarity.

Distancing behaviour: A 7-item scale developed by Eby et al (2004) assessed this variable. The scale has significant convergent and divergent validity with a Cronbach alpha of .89. Sample items include "My mentor seems to have "more important things to do " than to meet with me", "My mentor is reluctant to talk about things that are important to me" and "My mentor is more concerned about his/her own career than helping me develop in mine". Results of item analysis revealed a significant least item-total correlation of .61 while factor analysis resulted in a one factor structure with a significant least item loading of .51. A Cronbach alpha of .81 was obtained for the scale in the present study. Respondents reacted to scale items on a seven point scale, ranging from 7 "strongly agree", to 1 "strongly disagree". High scores represent greater distancing behaviour by a protégé's mentor, while low scores signify lower distancing behaviour.

Manipulative behaviour: An 11-item measure developed by Eby et al (2004) to assess a mentor's manipulative behaviour from the protégé's perspective assessed this variable. The scale has significant convergent and divergent validity with a Cronbach alpha of .94. Sample items include "When I am successful, my mentor takes more credit than he/she deserves", "My mentor asks me to do his/her "busy work", "My mentor has deliberately misled me", and "I am intimidated by my mentor". Results of item analysis revealed a significant least item-total correlation of .46 while factor analysis resulted in a one-factor structure with a significant least item loading of .51. A Cronbach alpha of .79 was obtained for the scale in the present study. Respondents reacted to scale items on a seven point scale, ranging from 7 "strongly agree", to 1 "strongly disagree". High scores represent greater manipulative behaviour from a protégé's mentor, while low scores signify lower manipulative behaviour.

Dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support: The study utilised a 4-item scale originally developed by Ragins and Cotton (1999) to assess the extent to which a protégé is satisfied with support in a mentoring relationship. Scale items were modified to reflect the focus of the present study. Sample items include: "My formal mentor has been ineffective in his or her role", and "My formal mentor fails to meet my needs". Results of item analysis revealed a significant least item total correlation of .48. Factor analysis revealed that all scale items loaded strongly onto a single factor and were above the primary loading of .40. A Cronbach alpha of .86 was obtained for the scale in the present study. Respondents reacted to scale items on a seven point scale, ranging from 7 "strongly agree", to 1 "strongly disagree". High scores represent greater dissatisfaction with mentoring support, while low scores signify lower dissatisfaction with mentoring support.

Job stress: A 2-item measure of general job-related stress assessed this variable. The scale, which was developed by Eby et al (2004), taps the level of stress an employee experiences as he or she engages in the day-to-day activities of a job. Scale items are, "Overall, I find my job to be

stressful" and "I experience a lot of stress at work". A coefficient alpha reliability of .91 was reported by the authors using the scale. In the current study, the coefficient alpha for the scale was .89. Respondents were required to indicate the extent of agreement with scale items on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). High scores indicate high levels of job stress, while low scores indicate low levels.

Affective organisational commitment: Six items adapted by Rhodes, Eisenberger & Armeli (2001) were used to assess affective commitment. Previous studies (e.g. Allen & Meyer, 1990; Hackett, Bycio & Hausdorf, 1994; Rhodes et al, 2001) have reported that the scale is a single factor with high reliability. The affective commitment scale is also highly correlated with the organisational commitment questionnaire (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Scale items include "I feel personally attached to my work organisation", "I really feel that problems faced by my organisation are also my problems" and "Working at my organisation has a great deal of personal meaning to me". A coefficient alpha reliability of .82 was obtained for the scale in this study. Respondents were required to indicate the extent of agreement with scale items on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). High scores indicate high levels of affective commitment, while low scores indicate low levels.

Procedure

Data were collected from respondents through the questionnaire method. Participants were approached and requested to take part in the study. They were informed that study data were purely for academic research purposes and were assured of confidentiality. A total of 210 questionnaires were handed to employees who agreed to take part in the study. In order to ensure that the purposive sample met the inclusion criteria, the first section of the questionnaire sought to identify respondents with formal mentoring experiences as a protégé. Thus, respondents were asked if they currently have a formal mentor in their organisation or had one recently. If yes, they were directed to respond to questionnaire items with the relationship and their mentor in mind. Respondents were asked to fill the questionnaires at their free time and to submit the completed questionnaire with the signed consent form. A total of 170 questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 80.95 percent. Because some respondents did not supply required information and/or had no formal mentoring experience, only 167 questionnaires with full data for analysis were utilised in the study; resulting in a final response rate of 79.52.

Results

Preliminary analyses, which involved the Hest and correlation statistical tools, were conducted before the hypothesized relationships in the study were examined. Results of the Hest analyses (not presented in Table) revealed that respondents in ongoing and completed formal mentoring relationships were comparable on all main variables of the study. This provides justification for collapsing data obtained from the sample into one group. Inter-correlations among demographic data and the major variables of the study, which are presented in Table 1, revealed that sex was significantly related to dyad mismatch ($r = .20, P < .01$), distancing behaviour of mentor ($r = .36, p < .001$), dissatisfaction with formal mentor support ($r = .41, P < .001$) and job stress ($r = .58, p < .001$). Age was significantly related to dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support ($r = -.16, P < .05$) and affective commitment ($r = .30, P < .001$) while job status was significantly related to distancing behaviour ($r = -.17, P < .05$), dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support ($r = -.31, P < .001$) and affective commitment ($r = .20, P < .01$) - all other demographic data were not significantly related to the main variables of the study. Consequently, sex, age and job status were selected as covariates in analysis.

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Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Sex	-													
2. Age	-.02	-												
3. J. status	.01	.12	-											
4. M. status	-.12	-.03	-.04	-										
5. Education	.08	.08	-.18*	-.08	-									
6. WE	.13	-.16*	.18*	.03	-.06	-								
7. RS	-.03	.13	.02	-.03	-.15	-.08	-							
8. MO	.03	-.10	-.05	.07	.12	.01	-.06	-						
9. DM	.20**	-.03	-.09	-.03	-.05	-.07	.14	-.08	-					
10. DB	.36***	-.03	-.17**	-.05	-.03	.05	.01	-.04	.51***	-				
11. MB	.03	-.09	-.01	-.07	-.04	.01	-.05	.04	.45***	.34***	-			
12. DFMS	.41***	-.16*	-.31***	-.01	.00	.08	.05	-.04	.33***	.40***	.14	-		
13. Job stress	.58***	-.01	-.08	.03	.07	.08	.08	.01	.33***	.48***	.11	.51***	-	
14. AC	-.05	.30***	.20**	-.09	.07	-.01	.07	-.01	-.31***	-.33***	-.43***	.44***	-.06	-
M	-	32.5	-	-	-	2.9	-	-	25.5	20.2	27.1	14.6	4.7	18.5
SD	-	5.4	-	-	-	1.9	-	-	4.8	6.2	8.3	3.4	1.6	8.4

Notes: J. Status = Job status. M. status = Marital status. WE = Work experience. RS = Relationship status. MG = Mentor gender. DM = dyadic mismatch. DB = Distancing behaviour. MB = Manipulative behaviour. AC = Affective commitment. DFMS = Dissatisfaction with formal mentoring

support. * = $p < .05$. ** = $P < .01$. *** = $p < .001$.

The study hypotheses were tested using a series of multiple regression analyses. In the analyses, respondent's sex, age and job status which served as covariates were entered into the regression equations before the main variables of study. Results in Table 2, 3 and 4 revealed that sex was not related to affective commitment but was significantly and strongly related to dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support ($\beta = .33, P < .001$) and job stress $\beta = .46, P < .001$). Age significantly influenced affective commitment ($\beta = .25, P < .001$) but its relationship with dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support and job stress were not significant. The relationship of job status with dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support ($\beta = -.26, p < .001$) and affective commitment ($\beta = .13, p < .05$) were significant while that with job stress was insignificant.

Table 2: Regression of job stress on independent variables

Variables	β	t	R ²	F
Covariates				
Sex	.46**'	7.234***		
Age	.01	0.281		
Job status	-.03	-0.587		
Independent variables				
Dyad Mismatch	.13*	1.928*		
Distancing Beh.	.25**	3.449**		
Manipulative Beh.	.04	-0.025	.44***	20.96***

= p < .05. ** P < .01. *** = p < .001

Hypothesis 1, which stated that dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour would have significant positive relationships with job stress, was partly supported. As shown in Table 2, dyad mismatch ($\beta = .13, p < .05$) and mentor's distancing behaviour ($\beta = .25, P < .01$) were significantly and positively related to job stress. There was no significant relationship between mentor's manipulative behaviour and job stress ($\beta = .04, n.s.$). Hence, hypothesis 1 was supported in part.

Table 3: regression of affective commitment on independent variables

Variables	β	t	R ²	F
Covariates				
Sex	.03	0.486		
Age	.25***	3.786***		
Job status	.13*	1.995*		
Independent variables				
Dyad Mismatch	-.06	-0.824		
Distancing Beh.	-.17*	-2.068*		
Manipulative Beh.	-.32***	-4.366***	.32***	12.677***

= p < .05. * = p < .01. ** = p < .001.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour would have significant negative relationships with affective commitment. Table 3 showed that mentor's distancing ($\beta = -.17, P < .05$) and manipulative behaviour ($\beta = -.32, P < .001$) were significantly, and negatively related to affective commitment while the relationship between dyad mismatch and affective commitment was not significant ($\beta = -.06, n.s.$). Therefore, hypothesis 2 was also partly supported. Hypothesis 3 predicted that dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour would have significant positive relationships with dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support. Results in Table 4 showed that no such relationship was found between mentor's manipulative behaviour and protégé dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support. However, dyad

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mismatch ($\beta = .16$, $P < .05$) and mentor's distancing behaviour ($\beta = .15$, $P = .10 < .05$) were significantly and positively related to dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support. Hence, hypothesis 3 received partial support.

Table 4: Regression of DFMS on independent variables

Variables	β	T	R2	F
Covariates				
Sex	.33 ^{'''}	4.775 ^{**}		
Age	-.11	-1.793		
Job status	-.26 ^{'''}	-4.026 ^{'*}		
Independent variables				
Dyad Mismatch	.16 [*]	2.068 [*]		
Distancing Beh.	.15 [*]	1.911 [*]		
Manipulative Beh.	.00	-0.051	.35 ^{***}	14.734 ^{***}

Notes: DFMS = Dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support

*= $p < .05$. **= $P < .01$. ***= $P < .001$.

Hypothesis 4 and 5 were tested by estimating three regression equations suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). According to Baron and Kenny (1986), a variable functions as a mediator if the predictor variables explain a significant variance in the dependent variable; if the predictor significantly account for variation in the mediator variable; and when both the predictor and mediator variables appear together, a previously significant relationship between the predictor and dependent variables will no longer be significant or will be less while the mediator significantly account for variation in the dependent variable. Hypothesis 4, which predicted that dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support would significantly mediate the respective influence of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour on job stress, received partial support. The first equation in the analysis, regressing the dependent variable of job stress on the independent variables of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour while controlling for covariates, was completed in hypothesis 1 (Table 2). A significant relationship was found between dyad mismatch and job stress as well as between distancing behaviour and job stress. The mentor manipulative behaviour - job stress relationship was not significant. The second equation involved the regression of the mediator variable of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support on the independent variables of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour. This was the focus of hypothesis 3 which found that dyad mismatch and distancing behaviour were the only significant variables (see Table 4). The third equation is a regression of the dependent variable of job stress on the predictor variables of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour, the mediator variable of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support, and the control variables. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Regression of job stress on both mediator and independent variables

Variables	β	T	R2	F
Covariates				
Sex	.38**	5.746***		
Age	.04	0.793		
Job status	.03**	0.503***		
Independent variables				
Dyad Mismatch	.09	1.290		
Distancing Beh.	.21"	2.998**		
Manipulative Beh.	.04	-0.737		
Mediator variable				
DFMS	.26"	3.596***	.48**'	21.15***

Notes: DFMS = Dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support

* = $p < .05$. ** = $P < .01$. *** = $P < .001$.

As shown in Table 5, when dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support was entered into the equation with the independent variables, the hitherto significant relationship between dyad mismatch and job stress became non significant $\beta=.09$, n.s.), that between distancing behaviour and job stress became less (from .25 to .21, $p < .01$) while the non significant manipulative behaviour - job stress relationship remained unchanged. Thus, the results of hypothesis 1, 3 and 4 combine to satisfy the conditions required for a mediation role to be established for dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support in the dyad mismatch - job stress relationship. For the reason that the effects of mentor's distancing behaviour is less in the third equation than in the second, dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support partially mediates the relationship between distancing behaviour and job stress since full mediation occurs only when the independent variable has no effect on the dependent variable in the third equation (Baron & Kenny, 1986). However, the results did not satisfy the mediation conditions for the mentor's manipulative behaviour - job stress relationship. Therefore, hypothesis 4 was partly supported.

Hypothesis 5, which predicted that dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support would significantly mediate the respective influence of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour on affective commitment, also received partial support. The first equation in the analysis, which is the regression of the dependent variable of affective commitment on the independent variables of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour while controlling for covariates, was completed in hypothesis 2. A significant negative relationship was found for mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour (see Table 3). In the second equation (tested in hypothesis 3), distancing behaviour was significantly related to dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support but manipulative behaviour was not (Table 4). The third equation is the regression of the dependent variable of affective commitment on the independent variables of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour, the mediator variable of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support, and the control variables.

Table 6: Regression of affective commitment on both mediator and independent variables

Variables	β	T	R ²	F
Covariates				
Sex	.15'	2.149*		
Age	.20*'	3.327*'		
Job status	.03	0.593		
Independent variables				
Dyad Mismatch	-.01	-0.104		
Distancing Beh.	-.11	-1.472		
Manipulative Beh.	-.32**'	-4.666***		
Mediator variable				
DFMS	-.35***	-4.716***	.40***	15.485***

Notes: DFMS = Dissatisfaction With formal mentoring support
 * = $p < .05$. ** = $p < .01$. *** = $p < .001$.

Results in Table 6 showed that when dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support was entered into the equation with the independent variables, only the hitherto significant relationship between distancing behaviour and affective commitment became non significant ($\beta = .11$, n.s.). This indicates that dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support is a full mediator of the distancing behaviour - affective commitment relationship. Whereas the results of hypothesis 2, 3 and 5 combine to satisfy the conditions required for a mediation role to be establish for dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support in the distancing behaviour - affective commitment relationship, it did not for the relationships of dyad mismatch and manipulative behaviour with affective commitment. Thus, hypothesis 5 was partly supported.

Discussion

Negative mentoring experiences and consequent negative reactions/outcomes are generating empirical interest in the mentoring literature. Since negative mentoring can be defined by the presence of problems in the relationship, the present study examined the outcomes of three problems noticeable in the Nigerian context of formal mentoring, i.e. dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour. Although, these problems are widely thought to be the root of unfavourable outcomes in formal mentoring interventions, no study has investigated the assumed linkage. Therefore, while controlling for the influence of covariates such as sex, age and job status, the present study examined the influence of a protégé's perception of dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour on job stress and affective commitment. Further, the study investigated the mediating role of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support in the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Study findings serve as constructive data for the development of theory on effects of negative mentoring with implications for intervention.

The significant positive relationship of dyad mismatch and distancing behaviour with job stress portray these variables as critical problems to be addressed in mentoring. The findings imply that mentor-protégé mismatch and high levels of mentor distancing behaviour makes a protégé more vulnerable to the experience of high levels of job stress. A probable explanation for these findings can be found in the social exchange theory, which posits that a relationship where partners perceive mismatch is often marked by negative actions and counter-actions that foster dislike and vulnerability to stress. Similarly, the theory argues that unsatisfactory mentor performance that may arise from a mentor's distancing behaviour represents a relational cost that is potentially distressing with negative effects on job activities. These arguments can be put forward as possible explanations for the significant relationship found between the variables.

That a mentor's manipulative behaviour is not significantly related to job stress is an unexpected finding. Logical and theoretical assumptions, including research in the interpersonal

domain, have associated features of manipulative mentor behaviour with protégé vulnerability to job stress. The present finding implies that protégés who experience high levels of mentor manipulative behaviour and those who experience low levels reported comparable levels of job stress. A probable explanation for this finding may be that mentor manipulative behaviour is not a critical factor for exploring the variance in job stress in the present population. Alternatively, the non significant relationship may be suggestive of the fact that mentor manipulative behaviour in isolation is not enough for explaining job stress.

The study findings supported the hypothesis that mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour are negatively related to affective commitment but failed to establish the dyad mismatch - affective commitment relationship. This suggests that high levels of distancing and manipulative behaviour lead to lower levels of affective commitment to the organisation, and vice versa. The findings corroborates the social exchange perspective that distancing and manipulative behaviour of a mentor, which are potentially viewed by a protégé as a sign of an organisation's lack of care, diminishes the need to recompense the organisation with affective commitment to the organisation, its goals and activities. The non significant path between dyad mismatch and affective commitment, however, is an indication that the variables are not associated. This implies that having a matched or a mismatched dyad does not significantly inhibit or enhance a protégé's affective commitment to organisation.

The findings that dyad mismatch and distancing behaviour were significantly and positively related to dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support lend credence to their importance in formal mentoring. The significant influence of dyad mismatch supports previous findings (e.g. Alien & Eby, 2003; Turban, Dougherty & Lee, 2002) that mentor-protégé dissimilarity is detrimental to the receipt of mentoring support. The current finding implies that the more unfavourable the perception of dissimilarity by a protégé, the greater the dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support. Similarly, the significant influence of distancing behaviour on dissatisfying mentoring support is consistent with arguments in the literature (e.g. Eby et al, 2004) that distancing behaviour such as neglect and lack of concern for a protégé's career advancement limits mentoring functions and increases the possibility that a protégé will be dissatisfied with the relationship. The implication of the pattern of relationships obtained for dissatisfaction with mentoring support suggests that a satisfying formal relationship can be fostered by averting distancing behaviour and creating a match between protégé and mentor.

The significant mediating effects of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support in the positive relationship between dyad mismatch and job stress implies that it influences the strength of the relationship between the variables. This result is consistent with the expectation that stalled interpersonal communication occasioned by dyad mismatch increases exposure to job stress through its immediate impact on dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support. Thus, dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support explains the process through which dyad mismatch affects job stress.

The results of this study also established that the positive relationship between distancing behaviour and job stress is significantly mediated by dissatisfaction with mentoring support. The introduction of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support reduced the strength of the significant relationship between distancing behaviour and job stress. This signifies that when a protégé experiences distancing behaviour from a mentor, its adverse effect on job stress is through an immediate influence on dissatisfaction with mentoring support. The implication of this interpretation is that high levels of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support strengthen the possibility that distancing behaviour will lead to job stress. One potential explanation for this mediating effect is that high levels of dissatisfaction with mentoring support have a distressing effect on a protégé's career, making him or her vulnerable to stress reactions.

That dissatisfaction with mentoring support also mediated the negative relationship between mentors' distancing behaviour and affective commitment underscores its importance in

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mentoring outcomes. The implication of the current finding is that the impact of high levels of distancing behaviour on dissatisfaction with mentoring strengthens its link with affective commitment. This result is in line with arguments that distancing behaviour decreases a relationship's capacity to meet protégé needs, leading onto decreased emotional attachment (Kim & Choi, 2011a; LePine et al., 2005). Although, mentor's manipulative behaviour was significantly and negatively related to affective commitment, it was not mediated by dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support. This indicates that manipulative behaviour has a direct negative influence on affective commitment that is not dependent on whether a protégé is dissatisfied with formal mentoring support or not. Consequently, it is expected that as mentor's manipulative behaviour increases, protégé affective commitment decreases.

The practical implications of the findings of this study abound. First, the findings represent crucial empirical data that contributes to the theoretical development of negative mentoring experiences in terms of reactions and outcomes. Second, findings afford an understanding of how mentoring problems such as dyad mismatch, mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour impact dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support, affective commitment and job stress. This is particularly important to organisations that seek to promote healthy formal mentoring experiences among its workforce. Third, the study addressed the dearth of empirical data from the African setting on negative mentoring experiences, thus, providing context-specific information for intervention in the African, albeit Nigerian, environment. Fourth, the study affords empirical data on negative mentoring that would be useful for comparative analysis.

For intervention purposes, results show that the greater the level of dyad mismatch and mentor's distancing behaviour, the higher the levels of dissatisfaction with formal mentoring support and job stress. Results also show that the greater the level of mentor's distancing and manipulative behaviour, the lesser the level of affective commitment exhibited by protégés. The practical implication of these findings is that a satisfying formal relationship and a workforce free from job stress and problems of affective commitment can be ensured by creating less dissimilar mentoring partners and averting negative mentor behaviour in formal relationships. Organisations can achieve this by creating a profile of all potential mentors and having protégés choose their own kind of mentor from the pool. Organisations could also train mentors to ensure that they balance work and mentoring activities, and to assure the delivery of quality mentoring support to protégés.

Although, findings of the present study have practical relevance for formal mentoring activities of organisations, caution should be exercised in the interpretation of results because of study limitations. First, this study is exploratory, indicative of the fact that further studies are needed to confirm or deny whether the current findings can be supported. Consequently, data from employees in the banking sector may not be said to typify organisations in general until present findings are replicated. This calls for caution in generalising the study findings to include employees in other contexts. Second, data for the study are subject to the usual limitations of a survey research because they were obtained from self-report instruments. Third, although valid and reliable measures were employed to reduce the possibility of bias arising from common method variance, caution is nevertheless required because this cannot be entirely ruled out as study data were collected from a single source. Fourth, although, the causal ordering of the independent, mediator and outcomes variables in this study is consistent with past research on mentoring, conclusive statements regarding causality cannot be made because reverse interpretations are possible with correlation data. Finally, findings do not imply that variance in the outcome variables of this study are totally accounted for by the independent and mediator variables. Future research should explore the potential of other factors to independently or jointly predict the outcome variables.

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