

## **ROLE OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MENTORING AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION: PLS APPROACH**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The aim of the present paper is to examine the mediating role of effective communication between mentoring and employee satisfaction. Data is collected from bank employees, who have been formally assigned a mentor. As the sample size is small (less than 100) the Smart-PLS version 3 has been used for hypothesis testing. For testing mediating effect Baron and Kenny (1986) approach has been used. The result revealed that effective communication acts as a mediating agent between mentoring and employee satisfaction. In formal mentoring programmes mentor informs mentees about latest career advancement opportunities and encourages him/her to feel free to ask anything related to work related problems, which enhance communication effectively. Effective communication in turn increases the level of employee satisfaction. The data is too small for future research same study can be conducted in other service sector.*

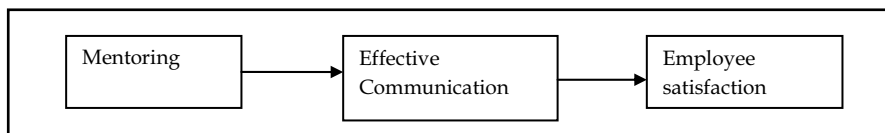
**KEYWORD: Mentoring, Employee Satisfaction, Effective Communication, Partial Least Squares**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Human are valuable intangible assets in organization. In order to gain productivity, profitability and performance organizations are struggling to retain these valuable human resources. This is possible when organisation develops its

human resources through implementing appropriate strategies and techniques. One of the best ways to develop and retain its human assets is, by establishing mentoring programs (Catalyst, 1993). Mentoring enhances learning capabilities (Tanweer et al., 2016) and helps them to cope with major organizational changes (Kram & Hall, 1996). Mentoring provides number of benefit to the mentor, mentee as well as organization like professional development of the mentor and mentee (Fowler & Gorman, 2005), improvement in communication within the organisation (Rowland, 2011), motivation (Lo et al., 2014), work satisfaction and loyalty (Zhang et al., 2016) etc.

Earlier research papers revealed that competency, personal skill, personal learning (Lue et al., 2009; Hezlett 2005; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Pan et al., 2011), role stressors, role conflict (Lankau et al., 2006), self-efficacy (Ismail & Ridzwan, 2012), teacher and parent relationship quality (Chan et al., 2013), perceived organisational support (Park et al., 2016) mediates the relationship between mentoring and its related outcomes like job performance (Lue et al., 2009; Hezlett, 2005; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Pan et al., 2011) role ambiguity, job satisfaction (Lankau & Scandura, 2002), job attitudes (job satisfaction and organisational commitment) (Lankau, et al., 2006), academic performance (Ismail & Ridzwan, 2012), self-esteem and academic attitudes (Chan et al., 2013), turnover intention (Park et al., 2016). Few researchers have pointed that the impact of mentoring on its outcomes is not direct but it is mediated through various other mechanisms and hinted at the need to explore other mediating variables (Godshalk & Sosik, 2000; DuBois et al., 2002; Modlock & Lightsey, 2010; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Liu et al., 2011). Therefore the present study examines the mediating role of effective communication between mentoring and employee satisfaction in the Indian banking sector.



**Figure 1: Theoretical Framework**

## **HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

Mentoring enhances proteges' communication satisfaction (Purcell, 2004; Madlock, 2008; Rowland, 2012). Communication satisfaction is the extent to which employees perceive satisfaction with respect to informative and communicative environment (Chan & Lai, 2017). Madlock & Lightsey (2010) viewed that the impact of mentoring on its outcomes flow through communication satisfaction. They viewed that mentees' communication satisfaction is important as it highlights the key issues for employees, who assist in determining organisational effectiveness. Further low employee communication satisfaction results in reduced

employee commitment, greater absenteeism, increased industrial unrest, higher employee turnover, and reduced productivity (Hargie et al., 2002). Smooth flow of communication at the workplace increases job satisfaction and employee performance (Ainspan & Dell, 2000). Further strong positive relationships have been found between job satisfaction and communication satisfaction (effective communication) by Pevitt (1999) and Hilgerman (1998). Based on above discussion, the following hypothesis has been framed:

*H1. Effective Communication mediates the relationship between mentoring and Employee satisfaction*

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Measures***

The scale items have been finalised with the help of following literature:

*Mentoring*: 15 items scale has been used to measure mentoring (Scandura & Ragins, 1993). *Effective Communication*: effective communication has been measured with communication satisfaction scale. Therefore self generated scale (9 items) has been used for assessing communication satisfaction after reviewing the research papers by Hecht (1978) and Madlock & Lightsey (2010).

*Employee satisfaction*: Employee satisfaction scale (8 items) has been adopted from Weiss et al. (1967)

### ***Pilot Survey***

Hundred employees from banking sector (20 from each selected bank) have been contacted on convenience basis. EFA has been conducted at this stage for identifying the underlying factors of each scale (as communication satisfaction is self generated). The data collected at this stage have also been used for final sample size determination. Mentoring consisted of fifteen items.

After applying factor analysis four items got deleted and all the other items fulfilled the threshold criteria of anti image value, communality extracted and factor loading (above 0.5) and these eleven items converged under three factors namely psychosocial functions (five items), career functions (four items), and role modeling (two items). These factors accounted for approximately 70 percent of total variations (i.e. psychosocial function account for 27.84% of variance, career function account for 25.32 % of variance and role modeling account for 17.09% of variance).

The KMO value (0.751) and BTS ( $\chi^2 = 564.544$ ,  $df=55$ ,  $sig=0.000$ ) gave the required adequacy for applicability of EFA. EFA on nine items of effective communication

resulted in two factor solution namely, 'communication satisfaction with organisation' and 'communication satisfaction with mentor'. The BTS ( $\chi^2 = 551.408$ ,  $df = 36$ ,  $sig = 0.000$ ) and KMO (0.890) indicated suitability of data for factor analysis. The communality values of items are above 0.5. The total variance explained is 71.10% out of which first factor is accounting for 42.06% and second factor accounting for 29.043 % of variation. Eigen value is within the limit (6.3).

Employee satisfaction scale consisted of eight items. The BTS and KMO value come out to be insignificant with eight items. So, after deleting three items (on the bases of communalities less than 0.5) in four round BTS ( $\chi^2 = 174.980$ ,  $df = 10$ ,  $sig = .000$ ) and KMO (0.681) come out to be favourable which indicates significance and fitness of data for factor analysis. Remaining five items converged into two factors namely, satisfaction with work (41.698% of variance) and recognition and identification (35.542% of variance). These factors are explaining 77% of variance.

### ***Data Collection***

The present paper is focusing on formal mentoring. All the five banks i.e. J&K, PNB, SBI, HDFC and ICICI bank heads have been approached about formal mentoring in these banks. The interaction revealed that buddy approach (mentoring) (the new entrant is attached with one of the existing employee as a mentor) is being practiced in only two banks i.e. HDFC and ICICI bank. So, only those employees, who have been formally assigned a mentor has been contacted. Therefore out of 186 employees only 52 employees through convenience sample gives the responses.

As the sample size is small (less than 100) the Smart-PLS version 3 has been used for hypothesis testing. Smart PLS is a software application that permit the user to perform path modeling with partial least squares method (Sanchez, 2013), which does not assume for normalcy of data and large sample size.

## **RESULTS**

### ***Demographic Profile***

Majority of the employees are male (54%) and 46 percent are female. Maximum of the respondents (63 %) are in the age group of 25-30 years. About 42% employees have graduation degree.

39% employees are having post graduate degree and nineteen percent of the employees have higher qualification (JAIIB and CAIIB). Majority of the employees are from the ICICI bank (56%) whereas 44 percent are working in HDFC. Detail is shown in table 1.

Variables	Groups	Percentage%
Gender	Male	54
	Female	46
Age group	20-25	27
	25-30	63
	30-35	8
	35-40	2
Qualification	Graduation	42
	Post Graduation	39
	other	19
Bank	HDFC	44
	ICICI	56

## RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The reliability of the data has been checked through construct reliability & Cronbach's alpha and the values are greater than 0.70, which proved the reliability of data. Construct validity has been checked through convergent validity and discriminant validity. The values of Average Variance Extracted and factor loadings (standardised regression weight) for all the scales are above 0.70 & 0.50 respectively, which proved the convergent validity of the scales. Further the detailed results of reliability and validity analysis are shown in table 2. Discriminant validity got established as the square root of average variance extracted for all the scales are higher than the correlation between different scales, which is shown in table 3

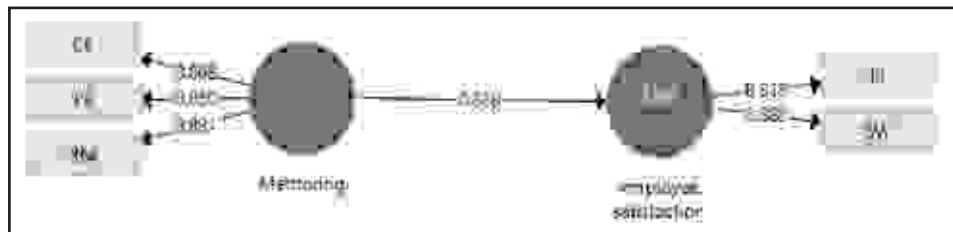
Constructs	Mean	Standard deviation	Standardised Regression Weight	Average Variance Extracted	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's alpha
<b>Mentoring</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>0.980</b>		<b>0.834</b>	<b>0.938</b>	<b>0.900</b>
Career function	3.65	0.845	0.908			
Psychosocial function	3.64	1.024	0.920			
Role modeling	3.74	1.073	0.912			
<b>Employee satisfaction</b>	<b>3.74</b>	<b>1.043</b>		<b>0.860</b>	<b>0.925</b>	<b>0.838</b>
Satisfaction with work	3.71	1.072	0.935			
Recognition and identification	3.77	1.014	0.920			
<b>Effective Communication</b>	<b>3.70</b>	<b>1.036</b>		<b>0.850</b>	<b>0.919</b>	<b>0.824</b>
Communication satisfaction with mentor	3.63	1.12	0.930			
Communication satisfaction with organisation	3.77	.952	0.914			

Constructs	Mentoring	Effective Communication	Employee Satisfaction
Mentoring	<b>.913</b>		
Effective Communication	.736	<b>.922</b>	
Employee Satisfaction	.709	.702	<b>.927</b>

Note. Values on the diagonal axis represent the square root of average variance extracted. Values below the diagonal axis are correlation \*\*p<0.01

### Mediation Hypotheses

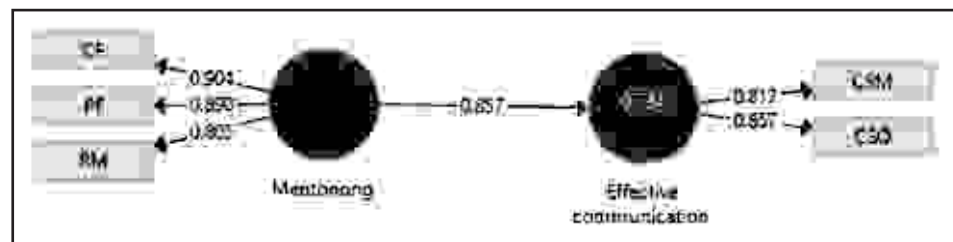
In order to test the mediating effect all the conditions described by Baron and Kenny (1986) were firstly satisfied. These are: a) the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable should be significant b) the relationship between independent and third variable i.e. mediator should be significant c) the relationship between the mediator or third variable and outcome should also be significant d) and when the mediator is entered into the equation i.e. relationship between independent and dependent variables becomes insignificant. We used four step procedures through SmartPLS Version 3 to check mediation. We first assessed the impact of mentoring on employee satisfaction (Figure 2), which is significant (SRW= 0.818, p<0.001).



**Figure 2: Impact of Mentoring on Employee Satisfaction**

Key: CF = career function, PF=psychosocial function, RM=role modeling, SW=satisfaction with work, RI= recognition and identification.

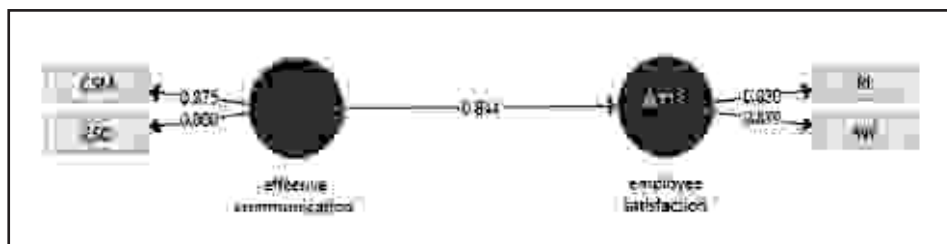
In the second step the impact of mentoring on effective communication has been evaluated (Figure 3), which was also found significant (SRW= 0.857, p<0.001).



**Figure 3: Impact of Mentoring on Effective Communication**

Key: CF = career function, PF=psychosocial function, RM=role modeling, CSM= communication satisfaction with mentor, CSO= communication satisfaction with organization

In the next step we examine the impact of effective communication on employee satisfaction (Figure 4), which was also significant (SRW= 0.844 p<0.001). So, the first three conditions of mediation given by Baron and Kenny (1986) were satisfied.



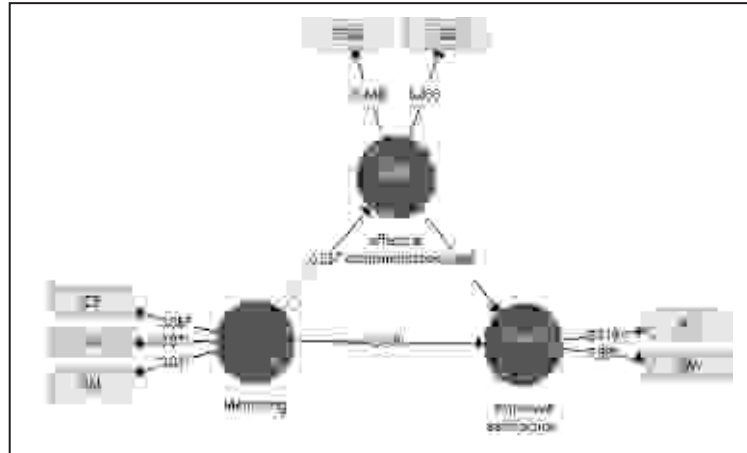
**Figure 4: Impact of Effective Communication Satisfaction on Employee Satisfaction**

Key: CSM= communication satisfaction with mentor, CSO= communication satisfaction with organisation, SW= satisfaction with work, RI= recognition and identification.

In order to test the mediating effect, in the last step we added the mediating variable i.e. effective communication between mentoring and employee satisfaction. The result revealed that when the mediator i.e. effective communication, is entered into the equation of mentoring and employee satisfaction, the relationship between mentoring and employee satisfaction is significant (p>0.05) but the significant value is lower than the first condition relationship (i.e. impact of mentoring on employee satisfaction without mediator).

Further relationship between effective communication and employee satisfaction and mentoring and effective communication remained significant (p<.05). This indicates that effective communication act as a mediator between mentoring and employee satisfaction (Figure 5).

Thus fulfillment of above condition providing support for acceptance of hypothesis 1 i.e. effective communication mediates the relationship between mentoring and employee satisfaction.



**Figure5: Impact of Mentoring on Employee Satisfaction: Role of Effective Communication**

Key: CF = career function, PF=psychosocial function, RM=role modeling, CSM= communication satisfaction with mentor, CSO= communication satisfaction with organisation, SW= satisfaction with work, RI= recognition and identification.

Hypotheses	Main effect of independent variable to mediator (a)	Main effect of mediator to dependent variable (b)	Direct $\beta$ without mediator (C)	Direct $\beta$ with mediator (C')	Indirect effect (a*b)	Accepted/ Rejected
M→EC→ES	0.857***	0.844**	0.818***	0.349**	0.468*	H1-Accepted

Note: \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \* $p < .05$ , ns= not significant, N = 5000 Bootstrapping resample; M= mentoring, ES= employee satisfaction

## DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

This study investigated the influence of communication satisfaction between mentoring and job satisfaction. The finding indicates that the mentor offers a safe environment to the mentee within which they can discuss work related issues and techniques to complete demanding tasks. When the mentee has complete information about his job and he is able to communicate openly with his mentor, his communication satisfaction level increases.

Furthermore, findings suggest that in formal mentoring programmes mentor informs mentees about latest career advancement opportunities and encourages him/her to feel free to ask anything related to work related problems, which makes communication effective. Smooth communication flow makes mentee to feel them as important for their mentor, which in turn makes them satisfied which is



consistent with this finding Pevitt (1999) and Hilgerman (1998) found that there is a strong positive relationship between job satisfaction and communication satisfaction. In mentoring relationship mentor knows and understands the problems faced by their employee/ mentee and accordingly motivates the mentee to meet his/her goals. Study revealed existence of performance feedback system and negative feedback is never communicated openly, which helps to maintain job satisfaction level of the mentee (Madlock & Lightsey, 2010). The study findings are consistent with Madlock & Lightsey (2010); Ainspan & Dell (2000) and Rowland (2012). To conclude that mentor always communicate with their mentee regarding organisation vision and mission, which helps to increase the job satisfaction.

### **Limitations and future avenues for research**

This study also has several limitations. First, data were gathered at a single time point. Hence, deriving assumptions of causality between focal variables has to be undertaken with care. Second, the data is too small for future research same study can be conducted in other service sector. Third there are other mediating variables which can influence employee satisfaction. Therefore, future research might examine the influence of the other mediating variables like personal learning, relationship quality etc.

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