

Mentoring of the hotel workforce: a sustainable tool to improve employee morale (retention)-a case study in Delhi, NCR

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To understand the impact of mentoring process on employee morale (retention) improvement and to establish mentoring as one of the important sustainable tool for handling the hotel workforce.

Methodology: In the hotel industry, retaining talented staff is the serious retarding reasons for HR, and to step up towards employee succession planning, hotel Human Resource Department has to provide proper mentoring to develop determination, values, and beliefs within the employee. To collect the required data for this research, existing literature of mentoring in different organizations as well as in the hotel industry was concerned. The qualitative research method has been used to collect and analyze the data. The data were collected from the hotel workforce, who experienced mentoring program in 60 different hotels from Delhi, NCR. The data was analyzed using descriptive analysis, reliability test, Correlation test and regression.

Findings: Findings concluded that mentoring process overall has a statistically significant impact on improved morale (retention) of protégé in an organization. Results also concluded that identified mentoring process dimensions-motivating protégé and relationship building have significant positive impact towards the morale (retention) improvement of the workforce in an organization.

Implications: The findings emphasize that the concept of mentoring can be used as a tool to develop a positive workforce, which can help an organization to retain its valuable workforce.

Limitations: The findings are limited to Delhi, NCR and therefore the results cannot be generalized on the broader term and are specific to the particular region.

Key words: *Mentoring, mentoring process, morale.*

1. Introduction

In last ten years, hotel industry faced talent management and staff retention as the major problems. It can be said that retaining employees in the organization has become an immense challenge. Chand (2007) determined that performance of a hotel is significantly related with the HR policies of recruitment, training and development and employee retention. Human Resource department has to determine the strength of an organization by retaining his talented workforce; as “Happy Employee make happy profit” for the organization (Srirupa, 2015).

In this regard, mentoring/coaching has emerged as the finest tool which will help to implement the retention management in the organization. It also measures as a learning curve, which helps in advancing professionally for a less experienced employee (Wanberg, Welsh & Hezlett, 2003).

Kram (1985) define mentoring as a workplace relationship developed between experienced senior (mentor) and less/ or inexperienced employee (protégé). Mentoring is the act of helping the less experienced employees at frequent interval. It can be a decision determined by organizational-core competencies as well as position-specific competencies. A systematic mentoring process will steadily fill the space between the current human resources and the leadership talent, which will eventually help to counter the forth-coming business challenges.

The aim and main idea of this research is to investigate the impact of mentoring on protégé morale and retention in an organizational of the hotels in Delhi and NCR.

As, Kram in 1985 presented her work on mentoring in the organization, the most commonly explored research topic was the outcome of mentoring program. Findings of this research acts as a guideline for mentoring in hotel industry. This is accomplished by introducing a general mentoring collaboration seen in the hotels in Delhi and NCR. It is hoped that this study can persuade hoteliers to take important measures for mentoring connections and think up more proficient mentoring administration frameworks.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Mentoring and improved morale (retention)

Fagenson (1992) and Newby and Heide (1992) identified that mentoring can be the morale booster to affect the bottom line of any organization, which can be the key factor for the employee job satisfaction. Fagenson (1992) also identified mentoring as a method of morale boosting and enhanced job satisfaction. Dessler & Varkey (2011) recommended mentoring as the process of endowing manpower with skills and efficiency. It help in enhancing performance level and productivity level too, which help in highlighting the service quality and job satisfaction level within the employees and financial stability within the organization, as it directly impact retention rate of the organization. In 2012, Schilling, Laumer & Weitzel, with the help of their research work evaluate mentoring as an important strategy for retention in the organization. Christine White (2008), explained that mentoring improve succession planning in an organization by impacting staff retention. Barkham (2007) explained mentoring as a helping hand in creating professional as well as personal impact on protégé, mentor and the organization and also elaborate mentoring as a tactical tool helps in retaining talent of an organization.

Retention accordingly encourages the association to spare cash on progressing enlistment and choice, and preparing of recently substitute workers. Nkomo, Thwala and Aigbavboa (July, 2018), explained the influence of mentoring on organizational commitment and ongoing efficiency of retention and knowledge enhancement too. White, Buhr & Pinheiro (2009), explained that mentoring improve succession planning in an organization by impacting staff retention and turnover ratio.

2.2 Mentoring in hotel industry

Zopiatis et. al. (2014) identified that as hotel industry is based on specific seasons, so most of the organizations operate on small permanent workforce with additional casual staff during peak seasons. This results in less job security among the employees and high turnover within in the hotel industry (Chalkiti & Sigala, 2010). Whereas, Panwar, Dalal & Kaushik (2012) examined that long working hours and less wages are the major reason of employee dissatisfaction.

Also, Brown in 2015 identified that long working hours and fewer wages in comparison to other sectors is one of the important reasons for hotel workforce to leave. Laghane (2012) in one of his study on retention management in Indian hotel industry identified that less wages and long working hours are the major factor of staff turnover.

Sharples & Marcon-Clarke (2017) identified in their study that either from large hotel or from small hotels, dedicated and motivated workforce is always the key to success for the hotel industry. Motivated employees serve their customers with more enthusiasm and meet the customer expectations well. And as the findings of their research, Sharples & Clarke identified that it is important to support dedicated workforce and mentoring is highlighted as the noble approach to provide support to the workforce. Mentoring has been recognized as a tool to improve morale of an employee and increase his job satisfaction level (Fagenson, 1992: Newby and Heide, 1992).

Malekpour & Salamatbaksh (2014) in his research identified that most of the hotel management graduates leave the industry because of the expectation by the industry. Significantly he also identified that there is gap between industry expectations and the skills actually acquired by the graduates. So he suggested that there is need of more support and mentorship required from the industry to retain their manpower.

In one of their presentation about Mentorship Program followed in their organizations, Hyatt hotels claimed that, the mentoring program helped in drop down the millennial turnover rate by 7% i.e. from 20% down to 13% (Average turnover rate in Hyatt Hotels Corporation-a hospitality company), which will significantly impact on saving time and money of the organization. Also they acclaimed that mentoring program help in enhancing the positive considerations towards the organizational objectives and goals. It helps in constructing improved association, loyalty and motivation among the employees (Busscher, B., et. al., 2016).

2.3 Dimensions for the study

In 1968, with the help of his research work titled 'Towards a theory of task motivation and incentives' Edward A. Locke concluded that defined goals helps in enhancing motivation among the employee. Later Dr. Gary Latham explored the Locke research work, resulting which they collectively published a book in 1990, titled 'A theory of Goal setting and task Performance'. In their book Locke and Latham explained **Goal setting theory** in which they explained that employee performance is directly related to the goal setting criteria with regular feedback. On the basis of Goal-setting theory and other available literature, identified variables for mentoring process for the study are:

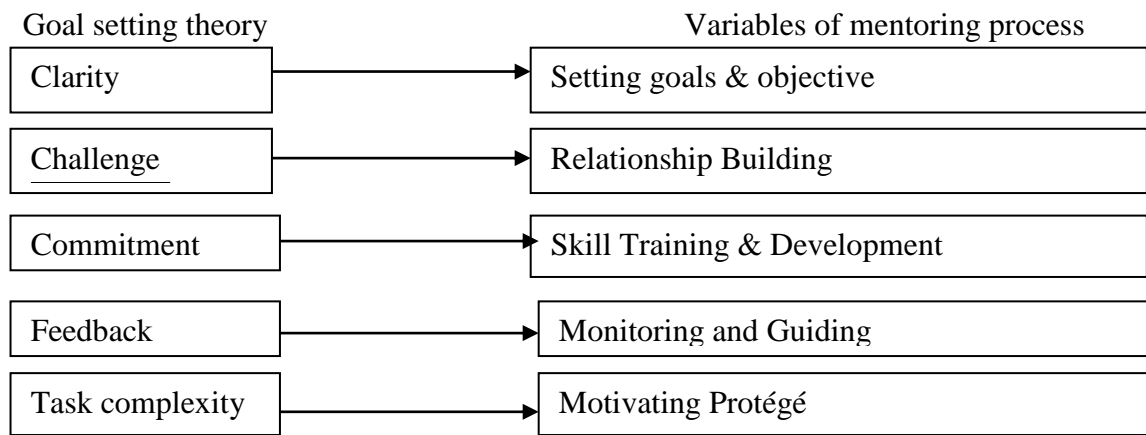


Figure 1: Mentoring strategies for the study

S. No.	Variables	Dimensions of Variables	Sources
5	Mentoring process	Setting goals & Objective	Locke & Latham (1990); Whitmore (1996); Turner (1999); Neupane (2015);
6		Relationship Building	Locke & Latham (1990); Whitmore (1996); Eliades, Weesw, Huth & Jakubik (2014).
7		Motivating Protégé	Locke & Latham (1990); Bozeman & Feeney (2007); Bhatia (2006).
8		Skill Training & Development	Locke & Latham (1990); Gibson (2004); Megginson & Clutterbuck (2005); Pfund et. al. (2006); Bally (2007); Anderson, (2009)
9		Monitoring and Guiding	Locke & Latham (1990); Whitmore (1996); Meyer & Fourie, (2004); Blunt & Conolly (2006); Loquercio et. al. (2006)
10	Morale Improvement (Retention)		Barkham (2007); White, Buhr, & Pinheiro (2009); Dessler & Varkkey (2011); Schilling, Laumer & Weitzel (2012); Nkomo, Thwala & Aigbavboa (2018)

3. Research Methodology

To collect primary data, quantified population *i.e.* workforce of hotel industry, is targeted. Survey method is used, which is considered as an important tool of descriptive research. It helps in collecting large amount of data from the targeted population. Secondary data is the analysis of already existing data (Sekaran, 2003) that is correlated to the research topic in question. Also it generated necessary information for better creativity. Sources for secondary data collection are internet/ Web Site, books, journals, magazines, newspapers and reports, HR manuals/ training policies, old records and feedback forms.

3.1. Research Objectives

1. To determine the mentoring process practiced in hotel industry.
2. To investigate the impact of mentoring process on improved morale (retention)

3.2. Population of the study: Population for this study is employee from 60 different five star, four star, three star and budget hotels of Delhi, NCR. Study elements of the sample are different hotel employees from different departments dealing with the mentoring process.

3.3 Data Analysis

Factor analysis is defined as ‘data reduction technique’ which helps to reduce number of variable set of essential factors that summarize important information in the variables’ (Coakes & Steed, 2003). This technique helps in extracting maximum common variance from all the variables and puts them into a common score.

Descriptive statistical analysis was carried out in accordance with the study of objectives by use of SPSS 20 software that assists in measuring the central tendency and variability. This in turn helps in determining the normality of distribution.

Cronbach’s Alpha is considered to measure internal consistency, which depicts that for a group, how closely all the items are related.

Pearson Bivariate correlation coefficient was used to test the strength of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The Pearson correlation coefficient is a measure of how closely related two variables are.

The study used Regression analysis to test the statistical significance of independent variable-mentoring process, on the dependent variable-employee morale improvement (retention). Linear regression analysis is the most commonly used statistical technique, which helps in studying linear additive relationships between variables. One variable is considered as an exploratory variable/ variables and other is considered as dependent variable. Let ‘y’ denote the ‘dependent’ variable whose value is to be predicted and x_1, \dots, x_k denote the ‘independent’ variables from which the result is to be predict it. Then the equation for computing the predicted value of y is:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \dots + \beta_k x_k$$

4. Result and its interpretation

4.1 Sample Description

To understand the accuracy of the responses, it is important to be familiarizing with the respondents. This is described in two parts, one on the basis of demographic variables-PART A, and second on the basis of the response given by the respondents against Part B of the questionnaire. These sets of information are presented below:

S. No.	Demographics	Dimension	Frequency	Percent
1	Gender	Male	277	74.7
		Female	94	25.3
		Total	371	100.0
2	Department	Front office	113	30.5
		Food and Beverage service	138	37.2
		Food and Beverage Production	44	11.9
		Housekeeping	50	13.5
		Human Resources	26	7.0
		Total	371	100.0

Results in Table no. 2 revealed that 277 (74.7%) male and 94 (25.3%) female have submitted the complete responses for the study. Results also identified that 37.2% respondents are from Food and Beverage department, 30.5% respondents are from Front office department, whereas 11.9% and 13.5% respondents are from Food and Beverage department and Housekeeping department respectively. Only 7% respondents are from Human resource department of the hotel.

S. No.	Part B	Dimension	Frequency	Percent
1	Existence of mentoring in Hotels	Yes	326	87.9
		No	39	10.5
		Partially	6	1.6
		Total	371	100.0
2	Presence within the departments of a Hotel	HR Department	262	70.6
		Skill development and training and Placement	77	20.8
		Individual Department	32	8.6
		Total	371	100.0

Table no. 3 present that 87.9% respondents agreed with the statement that mentoring is the important part of their organization. And it is also explained mentoring as important part of Human Resource department (70.6%) in their organization. Although 87% respondents also admitted that they are/were active part of the program.

4.2. Factor analysis

It is an exploratory technique applicable on the set of observed variables that pursue to identify underlying factors (subsets of variables) from which the observed variables were generated. The observed underlying influential variables are the factors for further study.

To check the adequacy of the data for extraction of principal components, the **Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)** measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity were used. Consequently, a value of 0.632 and above for the KMO statistic and a significant measure of sphericity were acceptable as suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). Any element that fails to get the criteria of having a factor loading value greater than 0.5, loads on one and only one factor is dropped from the study (Wei et al., 2009).

Table no. 4. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.773
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1427.201
	Df	28
	Sig.	.000

The rotated component matrix helps in determining the correlation between each of the variable and estimated component:

Table no. 5. Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component	
	1	2
Improve morale-Retention		.881
Motivate protégé	.883	
Skill training and development	.790	
Monitoring and guiding	.682	
Setting goals and objective	.760	
Relationship building	.807	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

The results in Table no. 5 indicates that all factors of mentoring have value more than 0.6, so the results identified all the factors reflecting accepted value of factor loading.

4.3. Objective 1: Mentoring process practiced in hotel industry

To examine the reliability of variables framed for mentoring process, reliability analysis was done and the result (Table no. 6) indicates that the data collection instrument is reliable.

Table no. 6. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.835	5

To identify the strength of the linear relationship between all five variables of mentoring process, Pearson's correlation coefficient (Table no. 7) is calculated. And the result implies that all the variables have significant positive relationship with each other.

	Motivating protégé	Skill development and training	Monitoring and Guiding	Setting goals and objectives	Relationship building
Motivating protégé	1	.602**	.499**	.683**	.643**
Skill development and training		1	.451**	.417**	.614**
Monitoring and Guiding			1	.331**	.370**
Setting goals and objectives				1	.457**
Relationship building					1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). N=371 and Pearson correlation=r

4.4 Objective 2: Impact of Mentoring Process on Protégé morale (retention)

This section defines the relationship between dimensions of mentoring process and protégé morale and retention. In this section regression analysis is used to measure the average relationship between variables of mentoring process (IV) and morale (DV) of protégé morale in terms of the original units of data.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES (Mentoring process)	DEPENDENT VARIABLE
1. Motivating Protégé 2. Skill development and training 3. Monitoring and guiding 4. Setting goals and objective 5. Relationship building	Protégé morale (Retention)

H1a: Mentoring process of motivating protégé (Mo- x_1), skill development and training (SDT- x_2), monitoring and guiding (MG- x_3), setting goals and objectives (SGO- x_4) and relationship building (RB- x_5) have a significant and positive linear relationship with morale(MP- y) of protégé in the hotel.

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \beta_3x_3 + \beta_4x_4 + \beta_5x_5$$

Table no. 9 Model Summary of Mentoring Process and morale (retention)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.583 ^a	.340	.331	.875

a. Predictors: (Constant), Relationship building, Skill development and training, Monitoring and Guiding, Motivating protégé, Setting goals and objectives

Table no. 9 reviews the multiple regression model summary for mentoring process and morale of protégé in the hotel. The value of R^2 is .340, thus 34% of variation in morale of protégé in the hotel.

Table no. 10 ANOVA^a Mentoring Process and morale (retention)

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	143.709	5	28.742	37.545	.000 ^b
	Residual	279.417	365	.766		
	Total	423.127	370			

a. Dependent Variable: Morale (retention)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Relationship building, Skill development and training, Monitoring and Guiding, Motivating protégé, Setting goals and objectives

Results of table no. 10 indicate that the p-value associated with F value is very small (0.00). Thus the independent variables (setting motivating protégé, skill development and training, monitoring and guiding, setting goals and objectives and relationship building) reliably predict the dependent variable (morale of protégé).

Table no. 11 Standard Coefficients^a Mentoring Process and Morale (retention)

Model		Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Co-linearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.782	.222		3.524	.000		
	Motivating protégé	.176	.092	.087	1.913	.051	.885	1.130
	Skill development and training	.022	.085	.012	.261	.794	.873	1.145
	Monitoring and Guiding	.138	.101	.072	1.369	.172	.652	1.533
	Setting goals and objectives	-.182	.109	-.088	-1.659	.098	.648	1.542
	Relationship building	.569	.043	.570	13.340	.000	.990	1.010

a. Dependent Variable: Morale (retention)

The estimated multiple regression equation for the above given data is:

$$MP = .782 + .176^{**}Mo + .022SDT + .138MG - .182SGO + .569^{**}RB \quad \dots \text{Equation 1}$$

[Note: ** Significant at $p < .05$]

Thus it is concluded that there is strong evidence of significant and positive linear association between motivating protégé (*Mo*) and relationship building (*RB*) with morale improvement of protégé in the hotel. The standardized coefficient beta value indicates the change in each dimension of mentoring process has a unit change in improved morale (retention) of protégé. It can be interpreted as unit change in motivating protégé has .087 unit changes in improved morale (retention) of protégé; and unit change in relationship building has .570 unit changes in improved morale (retention) of protégé. This indicates that dimensions of mentoring process have impact on improved morale (retention) of protégé. It also confirms that selection of relationship building during mentoring program imply high impact on Improved morale (retention) of protégé. And also, as the value of all variables for coefficient output-co-linearity statistics, imply between the ranges of 1 to 10, which indicates that there is no multi-co-linearity symptom for the observed dimension.

5. Findings and Discussions

5.1 Demographic profile

The study sought to establish the demographic data of the respondents'. Majority of respondents i.e. 74.7% (277) of the respondents are male with 25.3% (94) of the respondents are female. In one of the studies, conducted by Cleveland et al. (2007) on 33 hotel managers from different organizations, identifies that long volatile working shifts impact the presence of women in the hotel industry.

Frequency distribution of respondents by department implies that majority of the respondents i.e. 37.2% of respondents are from Food and Beverage Service department, which is considered as the department responsible for maintaining the high quality of food and service, food costing and managing different food service outlets in the hotel. 30.5% of respondents are from the department which is considered as the front face of any hotel. Front office department refers to the reception and reservation area for the hotel. The housekeeping department is considered as the backbone of the hotel and there are 13.5% respondents from this department.

Also, we have 11.9% of respondents from Food and Beverage Production, which is the most crucial department for any hotel operation. Human resource department serves no customer in a hotel, but it serves a very important role in the hotel efficient operation. There are only 7.0% of respondents from HR department too.

Respondents were also asked to identify the presence of the mentoring system in their organization and 87% of respondents agreed that mentoring is an important part of their organization. And with that result also explained that mentoring is an important part of the Human Resource department (70.6%) in their organization. Although 87% of respondents also admitted that they are/were an active part of the program.

5.2 Mentoring practices in the hotel industry

To analyze the reliability of mentoring process, reliability analysis was done and the result with Cronbach value more than .7 (Table no. 6) indicates that the data collection instrument for mentoring process are reliable.

Table no. 7 presents Pearson coefficient of correlation between all the five variables of mentoring process. And the results identified that all the variables are correlated with minimum range of $r=.331(**)$ to maximum range of $r=.683(**)$. Hence OBJECTIVE 1 'Mentoring process practices in hotel industry' can be attained with the all the positively related variables.

5.3 Impact of mentoring on protégé morale improvement

Further results of the study helped in establishing OBJECTIVE 2, 'there is a significant relationship between mentoring process (setting goals and objective, relationship building, motivating protégé, skill training and development, and; monitoring and guiding) and protégés' improved morale (retention).

Nowadays, many organizations are keeping their eyes on implementing successful coaching and mentoring programs in order to increase employees' morale and productivity (Hahn, 2008). Mentoring helps in developing a relationship which can be characterized by improved morale (Awaya et. al., 2003) and intended retention (Ensher and Murphy, 1997).

Explaining the same with the help of results identified for the study **equation 1** established that dimensions of mentoring process, like relationship building; and motivating protégé have significant positive impact on improved morale.

5.4 Research Limitations

Researcher faces the limitation of time and willingness by the respondents, which if does not occur, the sample size could be larger than the present one. The sample of the study emphasized managerial level workforce, thus, results may not be generalized to all the hierarchical levels. Population of the study is from specific region, so it may not be the representative of other regions. The study is limited to the hotel industry only, so it may not be generalized to hospitality industry overall. Only open-ended questions were used and there were no follow-ups for further interpretation. Random sampling technique was used to collect data, hence the results may not be considered as the representative of the population. **5.5**

Managerial Implications of the study

Results classified that currently mentoring is a part of HRM and Training-placement. With the help of this study, Managers and head of different departments from the hotel are recommended to follow the mentoring program as an essential part of their individual department. It will help to retain the talent within the department and the organization.

Findings also established motivation as the most significant variable of mentoring process. So it is recommended that managers have to motivate his/ her employee at regular intervals as it not only encourage protégé towards his knowledge and skill development, but it also increase retention by morale improvement

It is also recommended that managers to structure mentoring program in such way that it will help protégé in developing its relationship, which at later levels help protégé to increase his morale from the organization.

5.6 Scope for future Research

- The study is conducted in the hotels of Delhi-NCR; future research can be carried out at the national vs international level.
- Sample size of the study employee from 60 different hotels in Delhi, NCR, which may increase in future research work.
- Also the research work does not portray the impact of diversity in mentoring, depending upon the qualification and work experience of the protégé.
- The objectives of this research work should also be examined in one of the other sector of hospitality i.e. travel and tourism.
- This research only emphasized on the workforce of the hotel industry, so in future research can be conducted addressing the need of mentoring during internship in the industry.

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