ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: THE INFLUENCE OF MENTORING PROGRAMS TO STUDENTS IN PTPL SABAH

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the materials in this dissertation are original except for quotations, excerpts, summaries and references which have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

Academic excellence is a major goal of students, parents and educators. The need for skilled human resources and knowledge at the tertiary level, for example, is increasing. New areas related to the needs of development and the expanding of current economic and social matters of the country become a priority. So, it is not surprising that the issue of academic excellence has always been an issue of heated discussion and often steal the attention of the public or media. Academic achievement is often seen from the abilities available in the student. Students' effort, previous schooling, parent's educational background, family income, self-motivation of students, age of student, learning preferences and entry qualification of students are important factors that have effect on student's academic performance. Yet, it is undeniable that there are other factors that can influence their achievements, particularly when they enter university. Among them is the existence of the mentoring programs for students. Mentoring has been shown to help students achieved better grades, established obtainable goals, and enhanced their self-esteem when partnered with caring, supportive adults. This study attempted to determine the influence of mentoring programs to students' academic performance. The objective of the study is to determine whether mentoring communication, career support and psychosocial support has a significant relationship with academic performance. A survey research method was used to gather 115 usable questionnaires from student of certificate and diploma level from the School of Business Management and Professional Studies (SBMP) of Pusat Teknologi dan Pengurusan Lanjutan (PTPL) Sabah. The outcome of Pearson correlation confirms that there was no significant relationship between mentoring communication with academic performance but it was found that the relationship between both support; career and psychosocial support with academic performance was significant. In addition, the implications, limitations and future directions of this research was discussed.

ABSTRAK

PRESTASI AKADEMIK: PENGARUH PROGRAM MENTORING KEPADA PRESTASI AKADEMIK PELAJAR DI PTPL SABAH.

Kecemerlangan akademik adalah matlamat utama pelajar, ibu bapa dan pendidik. Keperluan untuk membentuk sumber manusia yang mahir dan berpengetahuan di peringkat pengajian tinggi, sebagai contoh, semakin meningkat. Bidang baru yang berkaitan dengan keperluan pembangunan dan mengembangkan perkara-perkara ekonomi dan sosial semasa di negara ini menjadi keutamaan. Oleh itu, tidak menghairankan bahawa isu kecemerlangan akademik sentiasa menjadi isu perbincangan hangat dan sering mencuri perhatian orang ramai atau media. Pencapaian akademik sering dilihat dari kebolehan yang ada dalam pelajar. Usaha pelajar, persekolahan sebelum ini, latar belakang pendidikan ibu bapa, pendapatan keluarga, motivasi pelajar, umur, pilihan pembelajaran dan kelayakan masuk pelajar adalah faktor-faktor penting yang mempunyai kesan ke atas prestasi akademik pelajar. Namun, tidak dapat dinafikan bahawa terdapat faktor-faktor lain yang boleh mempengaruhi pencapaian pelajar, terutamanya apabila mereka memasuki universiti. Antaranya ialah kewujudan program-program mentoring untuk pelajar. Program mentor-mentee telah terbukti mampu membantu pelajar mencapai gred yang lebih baik, pembentukan matlamat diri dan mempertingkatkan harga diri pelajar apabila mereka dipasangkan dengan orang dewasa sebagai sokongan. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan pengaruh program mentoring kepada prestasi akademik pelajar. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan sama ada komunikasi mentoring, sokongan kerjaya dan sokongan psikososial mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan pencapaian akademik. Kaedah penyelidikan kaji selidik telah digunakan untuk mengumpul 115 borang soal selidik daripada pelajar peringkat sijil dan diploma dari Sekolah Pengurusan Perniagaan dan Pengajian Profesional (SBMP) daripada Pusat Teknologi dan Pengurusan Lanjutan (PTPL) Sabah. Hasil korelasi Pearson mengesahkan bahawa tidak terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara komunikasi mentor dengan prestasi akademik tetapi didapati bahawa terdapat hubungan signifikan antara kedua-dua sokongan; kerjaya dan sokongan psikososial dengan pencapaian akademik. Di samping itu, implikasi, batasan dan hala tuju masa depan kajian ini telah dibincangkan.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of the Study

In facing the country's situation that is fast developing, the Malaysian government is giving serious attention to students' academic performance either in schools or in the higher learning institutions (IPT). This is due to the standard of education has a close relationship with employment standards, social status, income and a better living standard. There has been increasing pressure on higher education to contribute directly to national economic regeneration and growth (Harvey, 2000). Increasingly, national and international assessments of the role and purposes of education indicate a need for higher education to contribute significantly to meeting the needs of the economy, not least to ensure future competitiveness. He further explained that at an organisational level, employers have been, for some time, proclaiming the need for highly educated and skilled people if their businesses are to be successful in a rapidly evolving, global economy. Students are the ones who will helm the future. Therefore, academic excellence is a major goal of students, parents and educators. The need for skilled human resources and knowledge at the tertiary level, for example, is increasing. New areas related to the needs of development and the expanding of current economic and social matters of the country become a priority. So, it is not surprising that the issue of academic excellence has always been an issue of heated discussion and often steal the attention of the public or media.

Academic performance is often seen from the abilities available in the student. Few studies have been conducted in the area of students' achievement and these studies identify and analyse the number of factors that affect the academic performance of the student at school, college and even at university level. Their findings identify students' effort, previous schooling, parent's educational background, family income, self-motivation of students, age of student, learning preferences and entry qualification of students as important factors that have effect on student's academic performance in different setting (Shoukat, 2013).

Yet, it is undeniable that there are other factors that can influence their achievements, particularly when they enter university. Among them is the existence of the mentoring programs for students.

Mentoring has been shown to help students achieved better grades, established obtainable goals, and enhanced their self-esteem when partnered with caring, supportive adults. Mentors can provide at-risk students with a positive and influential person in their lives and may positively impact academic performance. According to Resnick and Burt (1996), at-risk students refers to youth that is engage in risky behaviour such as early sexual behaviour, truancy, tobacco/alcohol/drug abuse, running away from home and associating with delinquent peers. Exposure to certain surroundings may place a child at risk and these environments or situations include poverty, unsafe neighbourhood and family dysfunction. Effective mentoring programs steer teenagers away from trouble, give extra reassurance to students, and provide a role model for more positive types of behaviours (Johnson, 2006). Thus, each university should introduce a mentor-mentee system which is very important for all students. This is envisioned to improve the quality of character in students. With the system, students can ask for help and consult with their mentors at any time as long as it does not interfering with their lessons and lectures.

1.2   Problem Statement

Academic performance is the basis for measuring the success of a student in all level of schooling through higher learning institutions. Given most of the students who entered the university face many problems, so the mentor-mentee system through its programs conducted can help students reduce their problems whether related to academic or personal. Each student has a mentor, but some of them are less aware of the role and functions of their mentors. In fact, some assume mentors as their academic advisor to undersigned their subject registration form and verification of the subjects registered for each semester. The effectiveness of mentoring programs is not optimized by students whereby their participation in mentor-mentee activities is still considered low. In addition, their academic performance is not encouraging as well. This is associated with learning through the wrong techniques, not prepared for examinations, unable to manage time, having the wrong attitude such as they learn just to pass the

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examinations. Complacency and not striving enough in doing learning activities make them forget their responsibilities as a student. Furthermore, the culture of 'last minute' is also seen affecting their academic performance. Culture shock and a care-less attitude is believed to be the reasons of 112,132 students failing to obtain the results of the grade point average (GPA) 2.0 until the loan of their study gets ultimately frozen as revealed by Datuk Dr. Mohamad Shahrum Osman when he was still the Chairman of the National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PTPTN). The issue of declining academic performance among students of public and private institutions will have a major impact on the process of producing a world class human capital, and it seems to impair the government's noble intention of making Malaysia the best centre of learning at an international level. Malaysia will also face problems in dealing with the competition of developed countries at the global level. If this situation remains, the country will face a shortage of skilled workers, academics, professionals, economists and others. The level of education will face a serious problem in view of the university's products failing to work for the national and public interest. Serious monitoring is viewed as able to help improve the academic performance of tertiary education in Malaysia and the mentoring programs can do such. As a sequence to this, this study is done to explore the influence of mentoring programs to the academic performance of students in the private higher learning institution and how it can help students with the problems that they are facing.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions that need to be addressed are as follows:

a. Are the mentoring programs benefiting students in terms of their academic performance?

b. Is there a significant relationship between communication in mentoring and academic performance?

c. Is there a significant relationship between mentoring support (career support in mentoring and psychosocial support in mentoring) and academic performance?

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1.4 Objective of the Study

The overall objective of the study would be to affirm whether mentoring programs can influence the academic performance of students in the private higher learning institution. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

a. To identify students' perceptions of mentoring programs in influencing their academic performance.

b. To examine the relationship between communication in mentoring and academic performance.

c. To examine the relationship between mentoring career support in mentoring and academic performance.

d. To examine the relationship between mentoring psychosocial support in mentoring and academic performance.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Mentoring programs have flourished as one possible solution to the problems affecting students. Unfortunately, little research has been conducted evaluating mentoring programs in spite of the generally accepted belief that only positive effects can result from their implementation. By doing this study, it is hoped that the findings will be useful to assist the private higher learning institution to plan and organize effective mentoring activities to achieve higher participation rate that in turn will further enhance their learning environment and thus contribute to better academic performance. In addition, the study will somehow open the mentors' eyes to give more attention to organizing activities suitable for their mentees and view this as an important tool to guide mentees in their studies. It is also expected that students can appreciate their mentors whom not only assist them in their academic field but also in their personal problems. Furthermore, the results of this study may also provide information to other higher learning institutions which have implemented mentoring programs.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The organization chosen for the study is Pusat Teknologi dan Pengurusan Lanjutan (PTPL) Sabah which is located at the EPF Building in Sadong Jaya, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. The unit of analysis is students of PTPL Sabah. A total 150 self-administered

questionnaires were given to semester two and above students of diploma and certificate levels.

1.7   Definition of Terms

1.7.1   Academic Performance

Academic performance or academic achievement is the outcome of education. It is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. Academic performance is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important whether procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts (Ward *et al.*, 1996).

1.7.2   Mentoring

Mentoring is when a role model, or mentor, offers support to another person. It is an off-line help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge work or thinking (Clutterbuck, 1990). Parsloe (1992) stated that mentoring is to help and support people to manage their own learning in order to maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be. A mentor has knowledge and experience in an area and shares it with the person being mentored. Mentors are assigned for students to guide them in their studies and help them to become more familiar with the culture in their respective institutions.

1.7.3 Communication in Mentoring

It refers to mentors openly providing information about procedure, content, tasks and objectives of the mentoring programs, conducting career discussions about tasks that should be learned, giving thorough explanations about the benefits of joining mentoring programs and providing performance feedback (Ismail, Abdullah and Khian Jui, 2011).

1.7.4   Career Support in Mentoring

It is referring to the support a mentor has on mentee's success and future endeavours either in school or work (Olian *et al.*, 1988).

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1.7.5 Psychosocial Support in Mentoring

It refers to mentors providing advises and encouraging mentees to overcome job or personal problems (Rayle and Kram, 2006).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Mentor-mentee System

The term "mentor" is borrowed from the male guide, Mentor, in Greek mythology. It was first highlighted in the epic story of 'The Odyssey' written by Homer when Odysseus tells his loyal and experienced friend, namely, Mentor to teach his son, Telemachus about the tips for handling challenging lifestyles before he goes to the Trojan War (Ismail *et al.*, 2005). Based on this classical story, mentoring is often related to as an important field of education and/or counseling whereby mentors who are the elderly whom have wisdom, experiences and can be trusted to educate young men who have little experience and knowledge (Zuraidah *et al.*, 2004). Some researchers like Erkut & Mokros (1984) and Tomas *et al.* (1982) have suggested that social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) provides a theoretical foundation for mentoring. Bandura's social learning theory posits that people learn from one another, via observation, imitation and modelling. The theory has often been called a bridge between behaviourist and cognitive learning theories because it encompasses attention, memory and motivation. The theory explains that people learn through observing others' behaviour, attitudes and outcomes of those behaviour. Mentor has been adopted in English as a term meaning someone who imparts wisdom to and shares knowledge with a less experienced colleague, a mentee. A mentor is the person with expertise who can help develop the career of a mentee. In the education setting, mentor often serves in multiple roles, including teacher, advisor, role model, guide and resource. Mentors socialize with their mentees regarding the expectations placed on them and the demands of college life, and they build the mentees self-confidence (Dutton, 2003). The mentor-mentee relationship provides an added dimension to the learning experience with "real world" perspectives and is a starting point for students to identify their academic and career directions. The interaction between mentor and mentee allows students to benefit from the mentors' insights and experiences. As a result, the mentee can make more informed academic and social choices. A mentor often has

two primary functions for the mentee. The career-related function establishes the mentor as a coach who provides advice to enhance the mentee's professional performance and development. The psychosocial function establishes the mentor as a role model and support system for the mentee. Both functions provide explicit and implicit lessons related to professional development as well as general work–life balance.

Because of the prevalence of mentoring in various settings and the wide range of issues mentors address, scholars have struggled to develop a common definition of the term. In fact, there are over 50 different definitions of mentoring in the social science literature (Crisp and Cruz, 2009). Some describe mentoring as a concept or process (Roberts, 2000), while others use the term to describe a specific set of activities (Bowman and Bowman, 1990; Brown, Davis, and McClendon, 1999; Freeman 1999). Yet, across research studies, common characteristics of mentoring emerge (Eby, Rhodes and Allen, 2007). They include: A learning partnership between a more experienced and a less experienced individual (Garvey and Alred, 2003); a process involving emotional (friendship, acceptance, support) and instrumental (information, coaching, advocacy, sponsorship) functions (Jacobi, 1991) and a relationship that becomes more impactful over time (Grossman and Rhodes, 2002). Others discuss nurturing the mentee's social and psychological development, serving as a role model, and providing support for goal setting and future planning (Miller, 2002). As mentoring received increasing attention, definition of mentoring was categorized then into three field; education, management and psychology.

In education, Moore and Amey (1988) define mentor-mentee system as a form of professional socialization whereby a more experienced (usually older) individual acts as a guide, role model, teacher and patron of a less experienced (often younger) protégé. The aim of the relationship is the further development and refinement of the protégé's skills, abilities, and understanding. Noted that the term protégé is regarded as mentee. Moses (1989) expressed that mentoring is when a professor takes an undergraduate or graduate student under his or her wing, helps the student set goals and develop skills, and facilitates the student's successful entry into academic and professional circles. In addition, Shandley (1989) defined mentoring as first; it is an intentional process of interaction between

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at least two individuals, second; mentoring is a nurturing process that fosters the growth and development of the protégé, third; mentoring is an insightful process in which the wisdom of the mentor is acquired and applied by the protégé, fourth; mentoring is a supportive, often protective process whereby the mentor can serve as an important guide or reality checker in introducing the protégé to the environment he or she is preparing for and finally; mentoring is an essential component of serving as a mentor is role modelling. But there is a difference between a mentor and a teacher. A traditional teacher helps student to perform specific tasks correctly such as completing an assignment whereas a mentor helps mentees to achieve longer term, broader goals such as graduation and future endeavour (Olian *et al.*, 1988).

In the field of management and organizational behaviour, a mentor is regarded as someone in a position of power who looks out for you, or gives you advice, or brings your accomplishments to the attention of other people who have power in the company (Fagenson, 1989) while Olian *et al.* (1988) expressed that a mentor is a senior member of the profession or organization who shares values, provides emotional support, career counselling, information and advice, professional and organizational sponsorship, and facilitates access to key organizational and professional networks.

In psychology, the terms 'mentor' and 'sponsor' are often used interchangeably to indicate older people in an organization or profession who take younger colleagues under their wings and encourage and support their career progress until they reach mid-life (Speizer, 1981). The mentor relationship is one of the most complex, and developmentally important, a man can have in early adulthood. No word currently in use is adequate to convey the nature of the relationship we have in mind here. Words such as 'counsellor' or 'guru' suggest the more subtle meanings, but they have other connotations that would be misleading. The term 'mentor' is generally used in a much narrower sense, to mean teacher, adviser, or sponsor. As we use the term, it means all these things and more. Mentoring is defined not in terms of formal roles but in terms of the character of the relationship and the functions it serves (Levinson *et al.*, 1978). Mentoring is a term generally used to describe a relationship between a less experienced individual, called a mentee or protégé, and a more experienced individual known as

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a mentor. Traditionally, mentoring is viewed as a dyadic, face-to-face, long-term relationship between a supervisory adult and a novice student that fosters the mentee's professional, academic, or personal development (Donaldson *et al*, 2000). Mentoring creates a relationship between caring adults and youth. A mentor provides support and guidance for a child or youth in his or her personal, academic, and other areas of life. Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be (Eric Parsloe, 2000).

Over the last decade, mentoring programs have been implemented at many colleges and universities to assist in the recruitment, retention, graduation, and overall success of this target population. Haring (2000) observes that mentoring programs seek to minimize the demographic gap between the percentages of minorities in the general population and those with college degrees. Bringing the percentages of minorities with college degrees in line with the percentage in the general population is a goal of many of these programs. Healy (1997) stated that mentoring is a dynamic, reciprocal relationship in a work environment between an advanced career incumbent (mentor) and a beginner (protégé) aimed at promoting the career development of both. Mentoring has also been described as the process by which a student or protégé is positively socialized by a mentor into the institution and/or profession (Galbraith and James, 2004). Additionally, Galbraith and Maslin-Ostrowski (2000) describe mentoring as a process of intellectual, psychological, and affective development. Basically there are two categories of mentoring; informal and formal mentoring.

2.2 Mentoring Program
2.2.1 Informal Mentoring Program
Informal mentoring refers to naturally occurring, supportive relationships students have with older and more experienced individuals such as parents, ex-tended family members, neighbours, teachers, ministers, and others with whom students have regular contact. Informal mentoring involves the provision of general guidance and support and, in some instances, helping a student learn something new. It also promotes students' sense of well-being by challenging the negative

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opinions they may have of themselves and demonstrating that they can have positive relationships with adults (Rhodes, Grossman and Resch, 2000). The relationship may be short or long-term, but in both instances mentoring has a lasting positive impact on the student. Informal mentoring relationships are far more common than formal ones. A survey of mentors found that 83 percent of those responding indicated their relationships with students were established informally, while only 17 percent worked through formal mentor programs (McLearn, Colsanto and Schoen, 1998).

2.2.2 Formal Mentoring Program

Formal mentoring involves a structured and intentional approach to offering students those experiences and benefits similar to the ones provided by informal mentors. Such initiatives are often facilitated by an agency or program dedicated to this purpose and encompasses both one-on-one relationships between an adult and the student, or an older more experienced peer and a younger peer, as well as small groups of students working with an adult or older peer on a particular goal. In all instances, mentoring activities take place at regularly scheduled times over an extended period, and are most often only one component of a comprehensive program (Sipe and Roder, 1999). Formal mentoring programs place a strong emphasis on positive youth development, reducing the likelihood that students will engage in risky behaviours such as poor school attendance or drug use, and community concerns such as civic engagement and college and career exploration. They can be school-based, community-based, and occasionally workplace-based.

2.3   Communication in Mentoring

Many scholars, such as Ismail *et al.* (2011), and Santos and Reigadas (2005) view communication in mentoring as mentors openly delivering information about the procedures, content, tasks and objectives of the mentoring programs, conducting discussions about tasks that should be learned, giving detailed explanations about the benefits of attending mentoring programs and providing performance feedback. Effective mentoring requires the mentor to start by communicating with the mentees and helping them to articulate their goals and map out the steps toward achieving it. Effective communication strategies help mentor and mentee exchange

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information without misunderstanding and confusion. Effective communication features regular contact between the mentor and mentee. Effective communication occurs through verbal channels, such as meetings, phone calls and organizing fun based activities. Other types of communication include written methods, such as email, letters and social media technology, such group Facebook or WhatsApp. Choosing the right type of communication channel enhances the chances of successful interactions. For example, using written communication to provide a list of steps required to adhere to a complex procedure tends to be more effective than leaving a long voicemail message. Also, when providing feedback on mentees' performance, the mentor should wait for a face-to-face meeting or at least a live session because emotional exchanges can be misinterpreted in written format. Clearly, communication is a key element in mentoring and effective communication is considered a hallmark of effective mentoring relationship.

2.4 Career Support in Mentoring and Psychosocial Support in Mentoring

Mentors support the implementation of mentoring programs is often seen as mentors providing advises and encouraging mentees to overcome job and personal problems such as stress, motivation, work relationships, performance and ethnics (Rayle *et al.*, 2006; Stewart & Knowles, 2003). Mentoring relationships are helping relationships where it usually focused on achievement. The primary dynamic of mentoring relationship is the assistance and support provided to the mentee by the mentor. The support can take many forms but always intended to help mentee succeed in school or work. Career support in mentoring refers to the support a mentor has on mentee's success and future endeavours either in school or work (Olian *et al.* 1988).

The career-related function establishes the mentor as a coach who provides advice to enhance the mentee's professional performance and development. A variety of developmental theories emphasizes the importance of mentors, many of these focus on adult development and have, at best, limited applicability to the traditional undergraduate student experience. A number of authors, however, have linked mentoring to other developmental theories. For example, Thomas *et al.* (1982) link their discussion of mentoring to Perry's (1970) nine stages of cognitive development. They suggest that the ideal mentor will have

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reached Stage Nine thinking or will have achieved a self-created role and be involved in expanding it, know who she is and how she affects other people, places and things, and be ready to encounter risks to her self-esteem in achieving full potential. They also point out, however, that effective mentoring will provide students with stimulation at only one stage beyond their current cognitive levels, so that the mentor needs to be aware of, and responsive to, the developmental stage of the student. Chickering (1969) underscores the importance of student-faculty relations in promoting the development of students' intellectual competence, autonomy, purpose, and integrity. He concludes that student-faculty relations that succeed in promoting student development are characterized by accessibility, authenticity, knowledge and an ability to talk with a student. It is difficult to directly translate these concepts to specific mentoring functions, but one might infer that the role-modelling function is of greatest importance to student development followed by emotional support and direct assistance.

Empirical studies of mentoring derived from developmental theory would assess the impact of mentoring on students' personal, social, or cognitive development. A variety of standardized measures could be used to assess students' level of development before and after exposure to a mentor in comparison with students who did not have a mentor. Appropriate comparison groups would include not only mentored and unmentored students but also those students participating in programs designed to promote student development.

Psychosocial support in mentoring refers to mentors providing advises and encouraging mentees to overcome job or personal problems (Rayle *et al.*, 2006). The psychosocial function establishes the mentor as a role model and support system for the mentee. Social support theory focuses on the role of supportive relationships in preventing stress, reducing the harmful effects of stress, and/or increasing individuals' abilities to cope effectively with stress. Many definitions of social support have been proposed, one of the most common of which is "information leading the subject to believe he is cared for and loved, esteemed, and a member of a network of mutual obligations". House (1981) has proposed four broad categories of social support; (1) Emotional support (esteem, affect, trust, concern, listening); (2) Appraisal support (affirmation, feedback, social comparison); Informational support (advice, suggestion, directives, information);

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(4) Instrumental support (aid-in-kind, money, labour, time, modifying environment). The four functions of social support can be linked in a straightforward manner to the three major functions of mentoring. Emotional and appraisal social support correspond with the emotional support function of mentoring while instrumental and informational social support correspond with direct assistance for professional development. From the framework of social support, the social comparison component of appraisal social support perhaps best corresponds to the role-modelling function of mentoring. Within the educational environment, different kinds of support are best provided by different kinds of mentors. For example, informational support is probably best provided by staff or faculty while emotional and appraisal support are probably best provided by students, with counselling staff as back-up (Pearson, 1990). From this perspective, mentoring provides emotional, appraisal, informational, and instrumental support which either prevents stress or buffers students from the negative effects of stress. As a result, stress does not interfere with the students' academic activities, and they are better able to cope with the demands of the college environment.

Both career support in mentoring and psychosocial support in mentoring functions provide explicit and implicit lessons related to professional development as well as general work–life balance.

2.5   Mentoring Program and Academic Performance

Traditionally, mentoring programs were designed as interventions to address specific risk areas or problem behaviours such as school dropout rates, youth violence, adolescent pregnancy, and drug and alcohol use. Currently, mentoring is generally viewed as one component of a more comprehensive youth development strategy. Youth development strategies help youth to gain the competencies they need to meet the challenges of adolescence and become successful adults. In contrast to a narrow focus on risky behaviours, the youth development approach considers the developmental needs of all children and youth, and builds upon their existing assets. These needs include safe places and activities, health and mental health, marketable skills, and opportunities for service and civic participation. Relationships with caring adults are also essential. Mentoring provides a formal, structured caring relationship. A wide range of youth development approaches,

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