

From Proficiency to Higher Accomplishment: Inquiry into mentorship practices in the public school system in Nigeria - A Preliminary Report

Abstract

This paper presents preliminary findings from a mixed-method study examining the impact of mentoring on beginning teachers in Nigerian public schools. Conducted in four states with a sample of 200 teachers, data collection included surveys, focus groups, and interviews. Grounded in Etienne Wenger's Community of Practice Theory, the study highlights mentoring within the school as a learning community, emphasising intersectional and cross-cultural competencies. It underscores the importance of developmental networks, collaboration and shared leadership. Initial quantitative analysis was followed by thematic analysis, aligning with the literature on mentorship's impact on professional development and retention. Findings revealed a lack of a general mentorship framework, with schools providing orientation programs based on individual contexts, and ascertained that Nigeria lacks a mandatory formal teacher mentoring program, with lack of support and poor remuneration cited as key factors driving early career departures. The study offers an operational framework for implementing mentoring programs in Nigerian public schools.