SPIRITUAL MENTORING: A REVIEW

Alvyn Cesarianto Hendriks

Abstract

Mentoring, a relationship between a mentor and mentee, is considered significant because of its efficiency and effectiveness for schools and churches. A well-designed mentoring program benefits mentor and mentee. It may help enhance leadership and skills, and develop character and competence. It brings lasting results. This paper discusses on how effective mentoring (Jethro-Moses; the Apostle Paul-Timothy) is, especially in bringing the mentee closer to God.

Key words: Mentoring, Old Testament, transforms,

INTRODUCTION

Mentoring, a concept that has already received significant scholarly considerations in the professional literature, has developed effective programs for schools (Bradley, 2015; Richards, 2010) and even churches (Boldeau, 2014). Mentoring is considered as a significant means through which any organization can connect leadership gap and develop other leaders (Chiroma, 2008). Thus, it is taken into account as an important factor towards raising leadership and as a way of bridging generational gaps and investing in the future of any organization (Chiroma, 2012).

Mentoring practice in local churches is an effective and efficient way of developing new Christians as disciples (Rock, 2006). Also, a study (see Chiroma, 2018) revealed that mentoring is an effective way for the church to retain its young members and develop not only their character, but also competence and calling. Thus, mentoring programs are designed to fulfill the mission of the church.

The Fundamentals of Mentoring

Mentoring is a relationship. It is a "relationship between two parties, who are not connected within a line management structure, in which one party (the mentor) guides the other (the mentee) through a period of change and towards an agreed objective" (Kay & Hinds, 2009, p. 17). Mentoring can be seen as a relationship between two individuals—the mentor teaches the mentee regarding the latter's job, et cetera (Allen, Finkeltstein, & Poteet, 2009).

Theory on Mentoring

Social/Situational Learning Theory. Based on Social/Situational Learning Theory, the learning process happens when there is interaction between two people through social context (Bandura, 1971). Vygotsky, in his Social Constructivist

Theory, supports mentoring (Miller, 2002). Young learners, with the support of more experienced peers or adults, can perform better (Vygotsky, as cited by Miller, 2002).

The Bible and Mentoring

The Bible does not specifically mention the word *mentoring* but its concept of mentoring can be found in its pages. Throughout the Old and the New Testaments, many examples of mentoring relationships are written. The apostle Paul and Timothy stand as models of mentoring relationships in the whole Scripture. The Apostle Paul and Timothy displayed a model of mentoring relationship that later was called as a reproductive mentoring (see Figure 1).
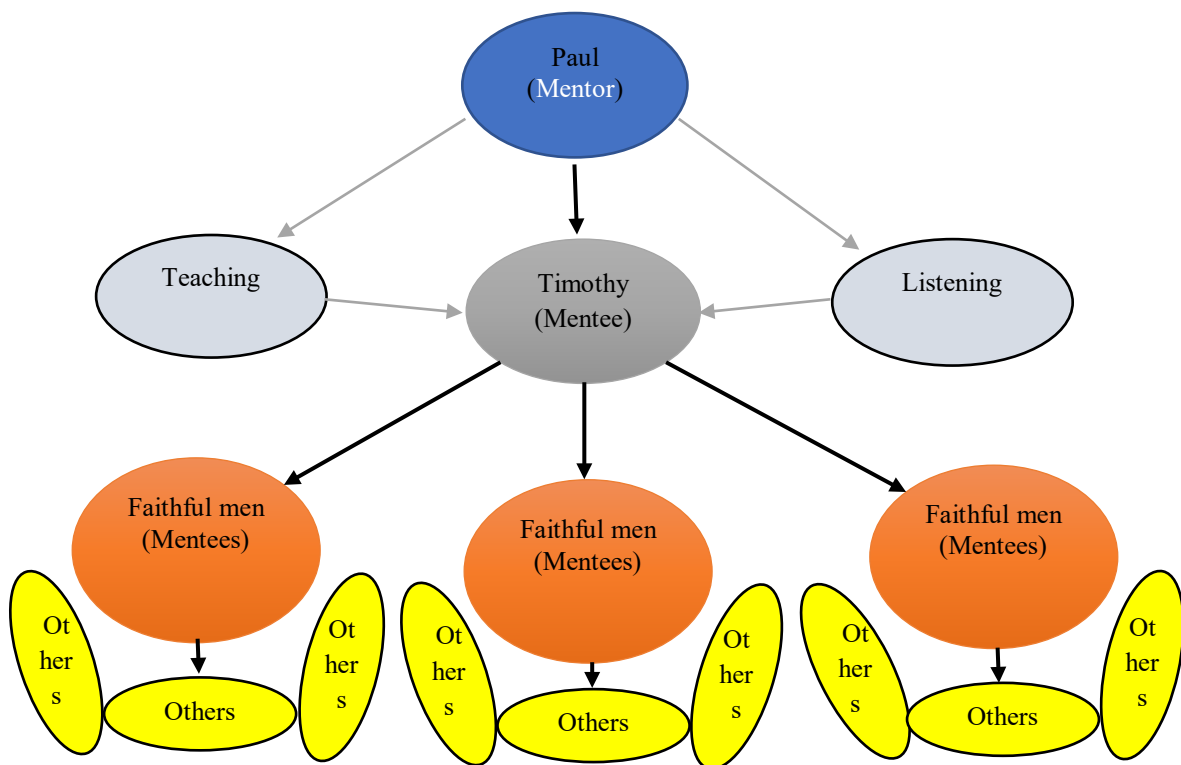

Figure 1. Reproductive mentoring.

Although the reproductive mentoring between the Apostle Paul and Timothy happened ages back, mentoring is still effective in the contemporary society. It is because, such a kind of spiritual mentoring transforms lives wherein the mentor models the mentee through examples, training, and teachings (Chiroma, 2012)—a needed way to transform lives even in the present days.

Mentoring in the Old Testament

Several models of mentoring relationships are depicted in the Old Testament. Specifically, mentoring can be seen between Jethro and Moses. This biblical model of spiritual mentoring is discussed in the following subsections.

Jethro and Moses. The mentoring relationship between Jethro and Moses (see Exodus 18) is one of the earliest records in the Old Testament. When Moses faced many challenges in his leadership during the exodus of the Israelites to Canaan, he was mentored by Jethro, his father-in-law. Jethro gave Moses spiritual pieces of advice. His counsel, done in a proactive relationship, was found to be effective. It was because Jethro used different methods to help enhanced the leader of Moses, his son-in-law which includes having a close relationship, listening, and giving encouragement (Snode, 2013).

Having a close relationship. Jethro was concerned of Moses thus he went to see him upon learning of the latter's needs (Exod 18:1-8). The father-son relationship must have developed into a special bond. Such a quality bond led to the development of a close relationship.

For mentoring to succeed, both mentor and mentee should spend quality time together. They need to develop a kind of relationship which looks at the needs of the mentee. It must be developed with trust, love, and mutual commitment (Snode, 2013).

Listening. Moses shared his experiences to his father-in-law, Jethro. Moses told him both the struggles and victories of the Israelites (Exod 18:8). On the other hand, Jethro listened to what Moses shared to him (Exo 18:9).

Giving encouragement. Jethro gave Moses words of encouragement. Jethro's encouraged Moses regarding the challenges he faced and advised him not to perform everything solely (Exod 18:17-18). Mentoring relationship is considered as development because encouragement is given not only for learning, growth, and opportunities, but also for growth.

Jethro showed how God was working in the life of Moses. It made an impact. Roehl (2012) evaluated Jethro's mentoring relationship with Moses in Exod 18:1-24. The following are his evaluations:
1. Meeting with him (v. 7).
2. Taking time to find out how he was doing personally (v. 7).
3. Listening to him about the ups and down of his journey (v. 8).
4. Celebrating with him (v. 9).
5. Worshiping with him (v. 12).
6. Eating with him (v. 12).
7. Watching him work (v. 14).
8. Asking him probing questions (v. 15).
9. Challenging unproductive behavior (v. 17).
10. Giving wise counsel (vs. 18-23).

Benefits of Mentoring

A well-planned mentoring benefits not only mentors and mentees, but the whole organization because it can "shorten learning tracks, hasten advancement and develop the next generation of leaders" (Stone, 2004, p. 47). It indicates the experiences, skills and wisdom of others for mutual benefits (Ritchie & Genonie, 2007). It boosts the mentee's moral through growth and satisfaction at work (Allen, et al., 2009).

Mentoring benefits both mentor and mentee. While mentees claim that their morale boost and their capabilities increase through mentoring, mentors claim that they "grow in their counselling skills, expand their access to information, build contacts, and gain sense of well-being from sharing their knowledge" (Stone, 2004, pp. ix-x). Thus, mentoring should be properly administered to maximize its benefits.

Elements of Mentoring

Mentoring has two elements in its meaning (its impact and outcome). Through mentoring, the mentee can work independently (Maxwell & Dornan, 1997). The impact and outcome in mentoring are timeless.

Since mentoring is "not an exclusive profession" (Kay & Hinds, 2002, p. 22), anyone can be involved. It can be done by anyone as long as he/she has the experience, and the motivation to help. Mentoring can either be natural or intentional.

Natural mentoring is a kind of mentoring which is characterized by not only of mutual benefits but also of equality of power between a mentor and a mentee— having trust as the key theme (Miller, 2002). On the other hand, intentional mentoring, also called as the planned mentoring, is a type of mentoring with an intentional program (Landefeld, 2009) that happens in a group, organization, or company when they formally begin to prepare young employees. According to Hart (2009), a well-designed program assists in the advancement by having experienced person (mentor) to support professional and personal aspects of the less experienced person (mentee).

Mentoring and Christian Institutions

Christian institutions can play significant roles for effective mentoring. Given this, teachers and students can both take part. Teachers, for instance, may prepare students for ministry. Mentoring "includes more than educating them in theology, implanting certain skills such as preaching and counselling, and training them in methods of church growth" (Reisz, as cited in Chiroma, 2012, p. 21).

Christian mentors not only in preparing but also in training students for effective ministry. Christian mentors can encourage and empower mentees to attain their ministry and life goals with confidence (Kay & Hinds, 2009). There is a great need to have mentors like the apostle Paul who was blessed to have good mentors and grew to become one himself (Cole, 2011).

This role-model mentor-mentee relationship (Chiroma, 2012), where mentors act like the Apostle Paul will develop mentees like him (Cole, 2011). What a blessing!

Summary and Conclusion

Mentoring, a relationship between two parties—mentor and mentee—is an important consideration in schools and churches. Mentoring, when properly administered, brings good results. It helps keep young members of the church and develop their character, competence, and will. Mentoring develops leaders.

In Social and Situational Learning Theory, mentors should serve as role models to their mentees. The support of a more experienced peer or adult (mentor) may help to mentees to perform better. Mentoring benefits both mentor and mentee.

The Scriptures has examples of mentoring. While Jethro-Moses mentoring is a good example in the Old Testament, the Apostle Paul-Timothy mentoring is a good example in the New Testament. Their kinds of mentoring are models and worthy of emulation. The Jethro-Moses and the Apostle Paul-Timothy mentoring are varieties of relationship that brought the mentees closer to God.

Christian institutions may help assist in providing an effective mentoring. Christian educators may encourage students and prepare them for ministry. It is because mentoring is beyond educating, preaching, counselling, and training students for church growth. Through well-designed programs, effective mentoring will have impact and outcome—a kind of results that may last perpetually!

REFERENCES

Allen, T. D., Finkeltstein, L. M., & Poteet, M. L. (2009). *Designing workplace mentoring programs: An evidence-based approach.* West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Bandura, A. (1971). *Social learning theory.* New York, NY: General Learning.

Boldeau, D. G. (2014). *Developing a mentoring model, based on Christ's approach to discipleship, for intern pastors in the British Union.* Retrieved from http:// digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=d min

Bradley, A. (2015). Mentoring: Following the example of Christ. *A Journal of the International Christian Community for Teacher Education, 10*(2), 1-16. Retrieved from http://icctejournal.org/issues/v4i2/v4i2-bradley/

Chiroma, N. H. (2008). *Mentoring: A sustainable means of developing young leaders for the church in Africa* (Master's thesis)*.* Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10019 .1/3395

Chiroma, N. H. (2012). *Critical evaluation of mentoring programmes in theological seminaries of the evangelical church of West Africa (ECWA)* [Doctoral dissertation]*.* Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10019.1/71895

Cole, N. (2011). *Journeys to significance: Charting a leadership course from the life of Paul.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hart, E. W. (2009). *Seven keys to successful mentoring.* Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative Leadership.

Kay, D., & Hinds, R. (2009). *A practical guide to mentoring: Play an active and worthwhile part in the development of others, and improve your own skills in the process*. Oxford, UK: How to Books.

Landefeld, T. (2009). *Mentoring and diversity: Tips for students and professionals for developing and maintaining a diverse scientific community.* New York, NY: Springer.

Maxwell, J., & Dornan, J. (1997). *Becoming a person of influence: How to positively impact the lives of others*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

Miller, A. (2002). *Mentoring students & young people: A handbook of effective practice.* London, UK: Kogan.

Richards, J. C. (2010). Mentoring preservice teachers in a community of practice summer literacy camp: Master's students' challenges, achievements, and professional development. *The Qualitative Report, 15*(2), 318-339. Retrieved from http://nova .edu/ssss/QR/QR15-2/richards.pdf

Ritchie, A., & Genonie, P. (2007). *My mentoring diary.* Friendswood, TX: TotalRecall.

Rock, A. D. (2006). Developing a spiritually-formative leadership mentoring ministry at Southwood Community Church. *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects* (Paper No. 384). Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/384

Roehl, T. (2012). Biblical foundations of coaching. *Enrichment Journal*. Retrieved from http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/201202/201202_028_biblical_foundations.cfm

Snode, T. (2013). *Mentoring in the Old Testament*. Retrieved from http://www .travissnode.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Mentoring-in-the-Old-Testament .pdf

Stone, F. (2004). *The mentoring advantage: Creating the next generation of leaders*. Chicago, IL: Dearborn.