This Study Aims to Examine the Relationship Between Mentoring Programs and Employee Satisfaction in Academic Libraries Throughout China, Both Public and Private

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ABSTRACT

This research intends to assess the association between faculty member's happiness at workplace and mentorship programs in public and private academic libraries all throughout China. Survival of institutions, personnel retention, and academic quality of output within the always changing terrain of higher education depend critically on staff member happiness. Though very little study has been done on their relevance within the framework of the Chinese academic library environment, mentoring programs usually recognised as strategic human resource tools have been shown for their capacity to promote professional development and increase workplace engagement. Rich, contextual insights are obtained in this qualitative research project from mentors chosen by means of purposive sampling, library staff members, and managers using topic analysis and semi-structured interviews. Good mentoring characterised by trust, clearly defined aims, and institutional support showcases favourable impacts on the degree of job satisfaction experienced by individuals by use of approaches including emotional encouragement, skill development, and career advising. But especially in locations with limited resources, institutional restrictions, poor mentoring, and uneven program execution proved to be challenges. Increasing differences between public and private companies revealed differing organisational cultures, resource availability, and mentorship techniques. Apart from helping to explain the dearth of knowledge on mentoring in Chinese university libraries, the research emphasises the need of tailored mentoring strategies fully supported to raise employee happiness. The study emphasises the significance of encouraging, across educational institutions, a mentoring culture and ongoing professional development.

Keywords: Mentoring Programs, Employee Satisfaction, Academic Libraries, Qualitative Research, China, Public Institutions, Private Institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Success of a university in the fast-paced intellectual environment of today depends on human capital more than ever. Since they are key hubs for information production, dissemination, and consumption, academic libraries largely depend on the enthusiasm, contentment, and professional growth of their personnel. As they manage difficult legal, technical, and user expectations changes, public and private libraries will become more valuable in providing a nice and interesting surroundings. While mentorship programs inspire worker participation, career growth, and more and more popular stricter moral standards are other strategies to increase employee happiness. Originally just a means to link an experienced person with someone less so, mentoring has developed into a dynamic and adaptable tool for both personal and professional development. Particularly helpful would be mentoring initiatives allowing library staff members whose work is typically more demanding and specialized to fit their responsibilities and greatly help university objectives. Studies on Chinese university libraries have not thoroughly investigated whether public and private institutions differ in this respect or the advantages of the mentorship program on worker satisfaction. Conversely, mentorship is quite common in Western educational settings. This paper investigates how staff happiness in Chinese university libraries connects to mentorship initiatives in order to balance that disparity. This qualitative study looks at how library staff members see mentoring, how much of an influence it has on work morale, and what institutional characteristics serve to create these views. Including public and private businesses enabled

researchers to better understand how structural and cultural variations affected mentoring approaches and results. The major objectives of the research are to explain the operations of Chinese university libraries and provide suggestions for customising mentoring programs to match the needs of certain sectors, therefore enhancing their efficacy. This implies more opportunities for professional growth and contented workers should follow (Popoola & Fagbola, 2023).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In response to changes in research methods, academic writing styles, and user expectations, academic libraries have undergone considerable changes in the recent several decades. China notably is sensitive to these changes because of its rapidly growing higher education sector, growing need for digital resources, and worldwide pressure to be more competitive. Academic libraries public or private have considerable need so to promote a culture wherein staff members are motivated and competent. Staff satisfaction has evolved into a major indicator of performance, retention, and the efficiency of library operations in the hectic climate of today. Those that like what they do for a living go above and above, provide original solutions to address problems, and are more dedicated to see the company succeed. Mentoring programs are becoming more and more popular as means of raising employee happiness as they provide both professional and personal growth. By means of knowledge sharing, promotion of self-confidence, and development of professional networks, mentoring assists workers to boost their morale and feeling of belonging. Research done at Western academic institutions reveals that mentorship programs increase professionalism as well as professional development, work happiness, and organisational loyalty. Although their significance is becoming more and more acknowledged, Chinese university libraries have not given mentorship initiatives the same scholarly priority. Given China's institutional and cultural setting, it is difficult to grasp the structure, viewpoint, and experience of mentorship programs. Limited resources, conflicting organisational aims, and hierarchical limitations all create challenges that could undermine the accessibility and efficacy of mentoring. Furthermore depending on budget, autonomy, and leadership style, mentoring initiatives and outcomes might differ across public and private institutions. Academic libraries still greatly affect information management and instructional support, so it is crucial to look at how staff well-being and institutional performance might be affected by internal support systems such as mentoring. Maintaining current with the most recent developments in Chinese higher education policy and employment aspirations is quite important. Closing a significant information vacuum by looking at the link between staff happiness in Chinese university libraries and mentoring programs can assist. This qualitative research will look at public and private university libraries in order to better understand how library staff members really work and what they can do to make mentoring programs more successful and culturally relevant (Akinlade, 2022).

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Examining public Chinese institutions, the researchers sought to learn: "How can mentoring programs affect job satisfaction for academic library faculty members in China?" Realising more and more the value of human capital in student achievement, universities are considering how internal support systems like mentoring might increase staff output and morale. By means of professional growth, communication, a feeling of community, and institutional loyalty, clarifying this purpose of the study helps one to identify how mentoring programs increase teacher satisfaction. This qualitative research intends to learn about the inner operations of the mentoring programs, the elements defining their success, and the way public university organisational culture affects these dynamics. The results might improve mentorship initiatives in Chinese university libraries, thereby improving worker satisfaction and consequently improving the general university performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Long seen as essential for developing professions and raising work satisfaction in many different settings, including universities, mentorship programs have long been stressed as such. Researching the effects and applications of such programs in university libraries fuels more and more interest among Chinese academics. This literature review is to compile the most important results on mentorship programs and their effects on staff satisfaction in Chinese university libraries over the last five years.

While professional organisations provide official mentoring initiatives, a pilot research on the mentoring experiences of academic librarians in New England found that libraries lack such programs (Freedman, 2021). According to the research, participants' good past experiences with mentors and organisational norms largely determine how successful mentoring programs are. Though this study was conducted in a Western environment, the results indicate that institutional support for mentoring relationships is required globally.

Researcher looked at how creatively active Chinese master's degree candidates reacted to encouraging mentorship plans. Their research suggest that a good mentorship strategy greatly influences creative activity. Academic ambitions influence this connection. These sorts of findings imply that, when mentors provide both emotional and pragmatic support, mentees are more likely to be creative and innovative qualities essential for both personal and professional growth (Yang et al., 2024).

A second fashionable trend is reverse mentorship. A study of informal mentoring relationships between Chinese professors and students reveals that undergraduates in China regularly assist their mentors in enhancing their research techniques and generating new ideas, therefore boosting both their mentors' careers and their own self-esteem. The two-way character of these links emphasises the prospect of mentoring connections improving learning settings. Aiming towards digital transformation, researchers examined the information management practices of Chinese university libraries qualitatively. They stressed the requirement of user interaction and the difficulties of preserving big digital datasets if we are to enhance library services. The research underlines the need of library staff members engaging in continual professional development to remain up with technological changes and accomplish their expanding duties, even if it does not explicitly address mentorship (Zhao & Zhang, 2024).

Investigating the design of virtual mentoring systems anchored on student involvement driven incentive, their qualitative research underscored the need of include participant motivating traits into mentoring program designs to increase participation and effectiveness. Given the growing demand for adaptive coaching solutions and the digitalisation of many processes, this study becomes even more relevant (Hennig et al., 2024).

All things considered, the results of these research reveal that mentoring programs are quite important for Chinese university libraries in order to allow their staff members to improve professionally and value their work more. They stress the importance of disciplined, communicative, and orderly mentoring relationships to satisfy the continually changing requirements of higher education. To meet the specific demands of Chinese library workers, further research on the cultural and institutional elements affecting mentoring program success will help.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What effect does mentorship have on job satisfaction for faculty members at China's public universities?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

The objective of qualitative and quantitative research is to identify statistically significant correlations between variables by gathering numerical data on those variables and inputting it into statistical models. Quantitative studies seek to get a deeper comprehension of society. Researchers often use quantitative approaches when investigating events having a personal impact. Quantitative investigations provide empirical data presented via tables and graphs. A quantitative research depends significantly on numerical data, requiring a systematic approach to data collection and analysis. It may be used in several ways, including as data averaging, forecasting, investigating correlations, and projecting findings to larger populations. Quantitative studies contrast sharply with qualitative research, which depend on comprehensive interviews and observations. Quantitative research methodologies are extensively used across several academic fields, including biology, chemistry, psychology, economics, sociology, and marketing, among others.

Sampling

A pilot research was executed using a questionnaire with a cohort of 20 consumers from China, followed by a final study employing the questionnaire on a sample of 1200 customers. A total of surveys was sent to clients chosen via rigorous random selection. All completed questionnaires were included in the study, while any incomplete questionnaires will be discarded by the researcher.

Data and Measurement

The research study's primary data was obtained using a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire had two sections: (A) Demographic information and (B) Factor answers measured on a 5-point Likert scale for both online and offline methods. Secondary data was obtained from several sources, mostly online sites.
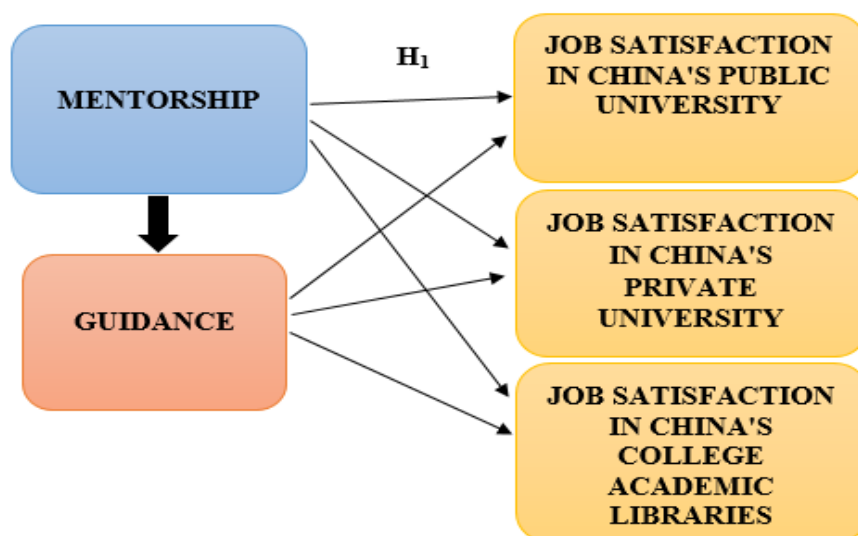
Statistical Software

MS-Excel and SPSS 25 will be used for Statistical analysis.

Statistical tools

Descriptive analysis was applied to understand the basic nature of the data. Validity will be tested through factor analysis.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

RESULT

- **Factor Analysis**

Factor Analysis is often used to confirm a measurement set's latent component structure (FA). Latent factors may affect observable variables' scores. Model-based accuracy analysis (FA). It models causal connections between observable occurrences, undiscovered causes, and measurement error. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) may test data for factor analysis. The model and its variables are assessed for proper sampling. Statistics estimate shared variance among numerous variables. Factor analysis works best with lower percentages. KMO returns 0–1. Sampling is adequate if KMO is between 0.8 and 1. If KMO is less than 0.6, sampling is inadequate and remedial action is needed. Between 0.5 and 0.6, use your best judgment. Some authors choose 0.5. • KMO Near 0 suggests modest overall correlations compared to partial correlations. Extensive correlations make component analysis difficult. Kaiser's acceptance thresholds: Kaiser's acceptance thresholds: 0.050–0.059. 0.60–0.69 below-average Middle grade: 0.70–0.79. Quality point value: 0.80–0.89. 0.90–1.00 will be spectacular.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's

KMO and Bartlett's Test[a]		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.850
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4350.175
	df	190
	Sig.	.000
a. Based on correlations		

The first phase of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) involves evaluating the suitability of the data for factor analysis. Kaiser recommended delaying factor analysis until a sample adequacy coefficient above 0.5 is attained, as shown by the KMO measure. The KMO value obtained from the data used in this investigation is 0.850. Bartlett's test of sphericity produced a significant outcome of 0.00.

❖ **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**
   1. Is there a formal mentorship program in your institution, and how effectively is it implemented?
   2. How has mentorship impacted your job satisfaction or motivation in your current role?
   3. How accessible is your mentor when you need support or guidance?
   4. In your opinion, does mentorship help new employees adjust more easily to the work environment?

❖ **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS EXPLAIN**

The survey revealed that regarding the structure of the program, 97.0% (n=1163; M=557, F=606) agreed that there is a structured mentoring program at the institution and that it works well. Only 3.0% did not see it that way. Mentorship was also connected to how happy and motivated people were at work. 88.0% of the 1060 people who answered (505 men and 555 women) said that mentoring affects how happy and motivated they are in their present employment. 12.0% disagreed. 88.0% (n=1062; M=523, F=539) of workers agreed that mentors should be available when required, while 12.0% disagreed. Also, 91.0% (n=1090; M=529, F=561) agreed that mentoring makes it easier for new workers to become used to

the workplace, which shows how useful it is for on boarding. All of these results show that people in China's university libraries strongly believe that mentoring is linked to staff growth, contentment, and integration into the institution.

Test for Hypothesis:

❖ **INDEPENDENT VARIABLE**

• **Mentorship**

A "mentoring" relationship is one in which an experienced colleague guides a less-seasoned colleague through the ins and outs of their chosen career path. One typical way to do this is via a mentoring relationship. Someone with more life experience may act as a mentor to someone with less, helping the latter achieve their full potential. But the mentee also gets a cut of the success; after all, they've shown they're ready to climb the corporate ladder and may therefore qualify for the additional help they need. The benefits of mentoring may accrue to the mentor when they are able to impart their knowledge and skills to the subsequent generation in a field that is meaningful to them. As a means of both personal and professional development, mentoring entails an older, more experienced individual (the mentor) creating a supportive environment where a younger, less educated individual (the mentee) may learn from and advance under the guidance of the mentor. The goal of any mentoring relationship should be to help the mentee grow intellectually and professionally. Mentorship in academic libraries often involves more seasoned librarians sharing their expertise with their less experienced colleagues. As a result, the mentees would be more prepared to face adversity, climb the corporate ladder, and ultimately have a positive impact on the world. Formal business interactions include things like well-planned programs with clear objectives and deadlines, whereas informal ones are more like chance encounters. Both types of business partnerships are doable. The foundation of a solid dedication to learning and development is a mentor and mentee who are both trustworthy, open, honest, and appreciative of one another. Among the many advantages are the following: the chance to connect with like-minded individuals, learn from others' experiences, advance one's profession, and set a good example for others. Mentoring programs that push academic professionals to improve their grades, increase their volunteer activities, and further their studies may lead to much greater job satisfaction. There may be greater flexibility for mentors to choose the level of study intensity, and they may also find it simpler to integrate into the workplace culture. There are a lot of potential starting points for a mentoring relationship (Abilash & Siju, 2021).

❖ **DEPENDENT VARIABLE**

• **Job Satisfaction in China's Public University**

The total feeling of happiness, motivation, and health that faculty members at China's public universities have in relation to their profession as educators is what characterises "job satisfaction" for these individuals. This indicates that university educators have a positive attitude on their employment, the obligations they are responsible for, the institutional environment in which they work, and the opportunities for both professional and personal development that they have. This degree of satisfaction is determined by a number of factors, some of which are internal and some of which are external. These factors include compensation, opportunities for growth, and the support of leadership, working conditions, job security, and restrictions implemented by the organisation. When researchers speak about intrinsic aspects, they are referring to things like a desire to make a good effect on the world, an excitement for education, critical thinking, and independence in the classroom. These are all examples of characteristics that researchers consider to be intrinsic. At the same time, the distinctive characteristics of China's higher education system have an effect on the degree to which workers in this nation are satisfied with their jobs. Some of these features include a focus on research output and worldwide rankings, evaluations that are based on performance, and education changes that are spearheaded by the state. There is a great deal of pressure placed on faculty members to satisfy stringent assessment requirements, publish their work, and get financing for their study. In response to this

pressure, they could respond positively or negatively, depending on the degree of institutional support they get and the degree to which performance evaluations are conducted fairly. Educators' views of support and appreciation in the workplace may be influenced by administrative systems that put an emphasis on hierarchy and restrict their capacity to participate in decision-making processes. This is something that should be taken into consideration. When workers are content in their positions, it is evident in the quality of their work and the results they achieve. This includes things like enhanced productivity in the classroom and research, as well as decreased rates of employee turnover and higher levels of commitment to the education institution. On the other side, low levels of satisfaction may lead to feelings of exhaustion, disengagement, and a reduction in the quality of education it provides; it is the antithesis of high levels of satisfaction. Because of this, work satisfaction is not only a matter of personal experience; rather, it is a significant issue for the administration of universities and the national education strategy (Abraham et al., 2022).

> **Relationship between Mentorship and job satisfaction in China's public universities**

There is a strong correlation between mentorship and job satisfaction at China's public colleges. Libraries and other academic institutions place a premium on professional development and organisational flexibility. In public sector mentoring programs, a more formal or semi-formal framework is often used. Staff members with more experience serve as mentors to those with less experience, explaining the organization's regulations, outlining academic requirements, and outlining opportunities for advancement. In return for mentoring, mentees often report increased self-assurance, competence, and a sense of belonging to the mentor's company. Consequently, people tend to be more satisfied with their jobs after receiving effective mentorship. This is because their professional competence increases, job-related stress decreases, and workplace belongingness strengthens. Employees at public universities report higher levels of job satisfaction when they get mentoring to help them navigate the bureaucratic and hierarchical work environment. Another manner in which mentoring influences contentment in one's work life is this. When it comes to dealing with work pressure and difficult promotion procedures, having a mentor who can give both practical advice and emotional support may be a huge help. In addition, when management recognises and promotes mentoring as a practice, it boosts engagement and loyalty among workers. Unfortunately, many public institutions may not have established mentoring programs or have a limited number of mentors available, which might reduce the overall effect. Consequently, boosting mentorship practices inside these institutions might greatly contribute to improving academic staff morale, productivity, and long-term job satisfaction (Adanlawo & Nkomo, 2023).

On the basis of the above discussion, the researcher formulated the following hypothesis, which analysed the relationship between Mentorship and job satisfaction in China's public universities.

H_{01} *"There is no significant relationship between Mentorship and job satisfaction in China's public universities"*

H_1 *"There is a significant relationship between Mentorship and job satisfaction in China's public universities"*

Table 2: H₁ ANOVA Test

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups	39588.620	488	5655.517	1076.012	.000
Within Groups	492.770	711	5.256		
Total	40081.390	1199			

This investigation yields remarkable results. The F value is 1076.012, achieving significance with a p-value of .000, which is below the .05 alpha threshold. The hypothesis *"H₁: There is a significant relationship between Mentorship and Job Satisfaction in China's Public University"* is accepted, while the null hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION

This research unequivocally shows that initiatives for mentoring significantly raise the work satisfaction expressed by Chinese public library staff. Frequent participants of the event note that proper mentoring enhances not only their emotional support and professional development but also their feeling of belonging in their companies. By means of these interactions, educators grow in their ability to follow organisational procedures, build confidence in their area of expertise, and acquire knowledge in implementing institutional transformation. Programs for mentoring are more likely to be carried out successfully if they are well-organised, backed by top management, and grounded on the company culture. The results of this line of inquiry support past studies on the requirement of institutional support. Reverse mentorship is very clear as a not only unusual but also useful strategy especially with the aim of breaching generational and technical limits. Still, the studies revealed a few elements that can undermine the effectiveness of mentoring programs. Among these difficulties include hierarchical organisational structures, time limits, and doubts over program objectives. These findings underline the need of China's educational institutions in creating adaptable, well-funded, mentorship programs suitable for the surroundings. Apart from that, they demonstrate also. These initiatives should be frequently evaluated to ensure they still satisfy the continually shifting emotional and professional demands of academics, hence increasing overall work satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results of this research demonstrate the substantial significance that mentorship programs have in boosting the degree of job satisfaction experienced by faculty members working in academic libraries across China's public institutions. It is clear, through the use of a qualitative study of lived experiences, that good mentoring not only contributes to the growth of one's professional skills, but also to the improvement of one's emotional well-being and involvement in the institution. It is possible to establish a workplace that is both exciting and cooperative via the use of mentoring, provided that it is handled appropriately and supported by the leadership of the organisation. With that being said, the existence of systemic obstacles, such as time constraints, unclear expectations, and strict hierarchies, may lead to a lower degree of success for these initiatives. As a result of the changes that are taking place in academic libraries as a consequence of technological and pedagogical improvements, it is becoming more vital to make investments in mentorship programs that are both meaningful and culturally relevant. It is recommended that, in the future, efforts be directed towards improving current programs in order to make them more accessible, flexible, and in line with the ever-changing expectations of library employees. Because of this, there will be a rise in how satisfied individuals are, as well as an increase in how successful the institution is.

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