

**THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF MENTORING FOR
EDUCATORS IN A TECHNICAL COLLEGE IN AFRICA:
A SELF-STUDY ENQUIRY**

By

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DECLARATION

This declaration serves to state that the work contained in the thesis entitled:

**The principles and practices of mentoring for educators in a
technical college in Africa:
A self-study enquiry**

is my own original work, and that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference. The dissertation has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at another university. I further declare that I have not allowed and will not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of presenting it as his or her own work.

Signature: Julia Akumu Nyanjom
April 2009

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS STUDY

Abbreviation	Full term
BTEP	Botswana Technical Education Programme
GROW	Mnemonic for a model used for guiding mentoring conversations that stands for Goal phase, Reality phase, Option phase, Wrap-up phase
GTC	Gaborone Technical College
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PDP	Personal Development Plan
SAID	Mnemonic for a model used for guiding reflection that stands for Situation, Affective domain, Interpretation of events, Decision
VET	Vocational Education and Training

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The principles and practices of mentoring for educators in a technical college in Africa: A self-study enquiry

ABSTRACT

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Educators in higher education are expected by their institutions to enhance their learning and development in order to acquire the requisite knowledge and skills to keep up with the changes being presented by the external environment. Within this environment of change, educators are faced with challenges of professional development. Under certain circumstances, there are educators who will take the initiative to intervene in the learning and development of other educators in the absence of sufficient organisational support. A developmental mentoring approach is presented as a powerful intervention to enhance the learning and development of educators.

Action research, utilising a self study approach to enquiry, is used to explore how mentoring practice can, from a developmental perspective, assist in enhancing the individual learning and development of educators in one Vocational Education and Training (VET) educational institution in Botswana. In this study, one mentor and two mentees undertake an innovative mentoring journey to build personal and professional capacity. Action research cycles are used in the collection of data from face-to-face conversations, personal reflective journals and focus group interviews.

The findings indicate that the mentoring process contributed effectively to learning and development and enhanced the participants' capacity to cope with the challenges facing the organisation. The intervention assisted the mentor to improve her mentoring capacities. Overall, the behavioural change that the participants gained through the mentoring process resulted in improved practices that contributed to the learning of the organisation.

The value of this study lies in the fact that it provides insight into the learning and development of educators in VET educational institutions through an innovative mentoring experience and highlights how both the mentees and the mentor grew and were empowered by this experience. The individual learning of educators can influence the organisational behaviour of the VET educational institutions using mentoring.

The implication of these findings points to the fact that educators need to be proactive and pursue their own professional development by making use of mentoring as an avenue to individual learning and personal and professional development. Educators who engage with more experienced colleagues in mentoring relationships contribute to organisational learning. A recommendation to VET educational institutions in Africa is to embrace mentoring as an organisational development intervention for the continuous learning and development of educators in their institutions.