



Comparative Effectiveness of Coaching and Mentorship on Career Advancement Outcomes

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Abstract. This research examines the comparative effectiveness of coaching and mentorship on career advancement among employees. The research adopted a cross-sectional survey design. Using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) via AMOS, the study tested the validity of constructs and the strength of the relationships among variables. Results revealed that both coaching and mentorship significantly and positively influence career advancement, with coaching exerting a slightly stronger effect compared to mentorship. The findings suggest that while both strategies are beneficial, structured coaching programs may yield quicker, performance oriented career outcomes, whereas mentorship supports long-term professional development. The study recommends a strategic integration of both approaches to maximize employee growth and retention. The model demonstrated strong reliability and validity, with acceptable fit indices after modification. This research contributes to human resource development literature by providing empirical evidence on the relative impact of coaching and mentorship in organizational settings.

Keywords: Career advancement, Coaching, Employee development, Human resource development, Mentorship.

1. INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of career advancement has become a strategic imperative for both individuals and organizations as stakeholders navigate complex organizational structures, evolving role expectations and rapid technological change. Traditional models of career development rooted in hierarchical progression and long tenured loyalty are being redefined. In this evolving context, coaching and mentorship have emerged as critical mechanisms for facilitating individual growth, organizational alignment, and career mobility.

Coaching and mentorship are structured developmental relationships that support individuals in enhancing their skills, building professional networks and navigating career challenges (Al Hilali et al., 2020). While often used interchangeably, they serve distinct functions while coaching is typically goal oriented, short term, and performance driven often led by a trained external or internal professional who guides employees toward specific career outcomes or skill development (Knowles & Knowles, 2021) while mentorship on the other hand is usually long-term, relational and career-oriented involving more experienced individuals offering guidance, wisdom and psychosocial support to less experienced colleagues (Mullen & Klimaitis, 2021). Both strategies have been widely adopted across sectors as tools to enhance individual effectiveness and promote organizational development. There is growing scholarly and practitioner interest in how these interventions affect measurable career advancement outcomes, such as promotions, role expansions, salary growth, professional recognition, job satisfaction, and leadership readiness. Prior studies such as Otu (2024), Yates (2021), Grant (2020), Cox, Clutterbuck, & Bachkirova (2023), among others suggests that effective coaching helps individuals clarify their career goals, strengthen critical competencies and improve performance through feedback and reflection. Similarly, mentorship has been linked to increased job satisfaction, higher retention rates, greater access to career enhancing assignments and accelerated upward mobility (Abraham et al., 2022). These benefits extend beyond individual advancement as organizations that embed coaching and mentorship within their talent management frameworks often experience stronger leadership pipelines, enhanced employee engagement, and improved knowledge transfer across generations (Richards & Kieffer, 2023). The relationship between coaching, mentorship, and career advancement is both complementary and synergistic as all three elements are closely interwoven in the broader framework of professional development. While each concept serves a unique function, they collectively contribute to enabling individuals to navigate complex career paths, enhance their competencies, and achieve both short and long-term career goals (Balthazar, Murphy & Tan, 2021).

Coaching focuses primarily on enhancing performance and specific skill sets through a structured, often short term, engagement between a coach and a coachee (Huuskonen et al., 2023). It is goal oriented and typically addresses current job challenges, leadership development, decision-making, and productivity. Through feedback, reflective inquiry and accountability, coaching empowers individuals to overcome career-related obstacles, build confidence, and take ownership of their professional growth (Atkinson, Watling & Brand, 2022). This direct and personalized support often results in improved job performance, readiness for promotion, and increased visibility within the organization key drivers of career advancement. Mentorship, on the other hand is a more long term relational process in which a more experienced individual (the mentor) guides a less experienced colleague (the mentee). Mentorship encompasses both career development and psychosocial support (Eby & Robertson 2020). It offers access to networks, insider knowledge and informal learning opportunities that might otherwise be unavailable to the mentee (Junn et al., 2023). Effective mentors serve as role models, advocates and advisors who

help mentees understand workplace politics, set career goals and gain exposure to opportunities aligned with their aspirations and these benefits cumulatively facilitate upward mobility, job satisfaction and career longevity (Busse, 2021). The interaction between coaching and mentorship provides a robust framework for career advancement. While coaching hones immediate capabilities, mentorship nurtures long-term career vision. Coaching tends to be more tactical and driven by performance metrics whereas mentorship is strategic focusing on guidance, trust, and development over time. When individuals receive both coaching and mentorship they are not only equipped to perform in their current roles but are also prepared to envision and achieve future possibilities (Weinberg & Scandura, 2024).

Studies such as Seehusen et al (2021), Toni et al (2025), Balthazar et al (2021), among others have shown that individuals who engage in either or both of these developmental relationships are more likely to experience positive career outcomes such as promotions, salary increases, leadership opportunities, and greater career satisfaction. Organizations that institutionalize coaching and mentorship programs tend to foster a culture of learning, knowledge-sharing, and talent retention all of which are critical to sustainable success. The relationship between coaching, mentorship and career advancement is mutually reinforcing (Hryshchenko et al., 2025). Coaching accelerates performance and immediate career gains, while mentorship cultivates broader career vision and progression. Together, they offer a comprehensive approach to professional development that enhances individual capacity and career trajectory (Baker et al., 2021).

Despite these promising indications factors such as organizational culture, the quality of the coach or mentor and mentee relationship, gender and power dynamics and access to developmental networks can significantly influence outcomes. Furthermore, in many developing economies and emerging sectors the act of formalized coaching and mentorship programs are still underutilized or poorly structured, limiting their potential impact (Tawanda & Tsara, 2022). This raises important questions about how these interventions can be tailored, institutionalized and evaluated for greater effectiveness.

Additionally, the rise of digital coaching platforms such as virtual mentorship communities and data driven performance tools introduces new opportunities and challenges for assessing the relevance and scalability of coaching and mentorship in modern workplaces (Bajpai & Clutterbuck, 2024). As career paths become more nonlinear and employees seek more personalized and agile development strategies (Defoe et al., 2022), it becomes increasingly important to understand not only whether coaching and mentorship work, but how, for whom, and under what conditions they deliver meaningful advancement outcomes.

Notwithstanding the growing popularity and institutionalization of coaching and mentorship as strategic tools for employee development but there remains a significant gap in understanding their actual effectiveness in driving tangible career advancement outcomes (Akiri & Dori, 2022). In contemporary workplaces organizations invest substantial resources in coaching programs and formal mentoring schemes with the expectation that these interventions will foster leadership readiness, increase employee retention, enhance job satisfaction and ultimately promote upward mobility (Abdulrahman & Kara, 2022). However, empirical evidence on the impact of coaching and mentorship on measurable career progression such as promotions, salary increases, skill acquisition, and access to leadership opportunities remains inconsistent and context-dependent (Nabi et al., 2025).

Many professionals particularly in developing economies or less structured corporate environments either lack access to high quality coaching and mentorship opportunities or engage in programs that are poorly executed, unstructured, or disconnected from organizational goals and as a result, these interventions often fail to yield the intended career outcomes (Okolie et al., 2020). In some cases, mentorship relationships are overly informal or based on hierarchy rather than mutual learning, while coaching may be limited to performance correction rather than developmental growth (Chaudhuri, Ghosh & Park, 2022). Furthermore, there is limited research on how demographic factors such as age, gender, organizational level, and industry influence the success of these interventions.

Moreover, the line between coaching and mentorship is often blurred in practice, leading to unclear expectations and outcomes (Bachkirova, Jackson & Clutterbuck, 2021). Without a clear understanding of what works, for whom, and under what circumstances, organizations risk treating coaching and mentorship as checkbox initiatives rather than transformative development tools. This presents a critical challenge for both human resource professionals and scholars to determine whether these interventions genuinely contribute to career advancement or whether their perceived value is based more on anecdotal success than empirical validation (Stokes, Fatien Diochon & Otter, 2021).

Given this context, the present study aims to critically examine the effectiveness of coaching and mentorship programs in promoting career advancement. By investigating their influence on both objective and subjective career success metrics the study seeks to offer evidence based insights for organizations, human resource professionals, and policy makers striving to build inclusive and impactful career development ecosystems. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the effectiveness of coaching and mentorship on career advancement outcomes by exploring the nature of these interventions in the context in which they are implemented and the extent to which they influence objective and subjective measures of career success. The findings aim to offer actionable insights that can inform evidence based practices ensuring that coaching and mentorship programs are not only well intentioned but also measurably impactful.

2. OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the extent to which coaching influences employees' career advancement outcomes, including promotions, skill acquisition, and leadership readiness.
2. To evaluate the role of mentorship in fostering long-term professional development, job satisfaction, and sustained career progression.
3. To conduct a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of coaching and mentorship in shaping employee career trajectories.
4. To examine the organizational and contextual factors that moderate the impact of coaching and mentorship programs on career advancement.

The research seeks to generate empirical evidence into the relative influence of coaching and mentorship in employees' career advancement, while also generating actionable insights to inform policy and practice in the design of effective employee development strategies.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Jones and Smith (2022) examine two coaching and mentoring programmes aimed at improving undergraduate students' prospects of securing professional level employment at two UK universities. The study also provides recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of coaching and mentoring within higher education (HE). The methodology involves a comparative analysis of two similar programmes: the first is a two phase coaching initiative implemented in a business school, engaging over 1,500 students; the second is a mentoring programme conducted over ten years, involving more than 250 students in the business school of another institution. Both programmes were evaluated using established success criteria from the literature, supported by coaching and mentoring experts. Findings underscore several critical success factors, including integration with other initiatives, commitment from senior management, adequate funding, structured application and matching processes, trained mentors and coaches, proper induction, supportive resources, ongoing supervision, and comprehensive evaluation and record-keeping. A key limitation is that both programmes were implemented in similar institutional contexts with comparable student populations, limiting the generalizability of findings. The study would have benefited from deeper exploration into how coach/mentor and mentee characteristics influence relationship effectiveness and from broader testing of the recommendations across diverse HE contexts. Nevertheless, the research identifies valuable best practice guidelines for institutions seeking to implement coaching and mentoring to support students' career development.

Seehusen et al. (2021) assert that coaching, mentoring, and sponsorship are distinct yet valuable strategies academic leaders can employ to support the development of junior faculty. Each approach differs in purpose, duration, and methodology, with sponsorship particularly highlighted as a potentially effective tool for advancing the careers of women in medicine. The primary objective of the study was to assess how family medicine department chairs in the U.S. have personally benefited from these tools in their own career progression and how frequently they apply them in supporting others. A secondary objective was to explore any gender differences, particularly in experiences with sponsorship. The researchers conducted an electronic survey between August and October 2019, targeting all family medicine department chairs across the United States. Out of 193 chairs, 105 responded, yielding a 54.4% response rate. The findings indicate that while mentoring was most commonly cited as influential in career development, coaching and sponsorship were less frequently experienced. Similarly, mentoring was more often used to support junior faculty than coaching or sponsoring. Notably, training in mentoring and sponsorship correlated with greater application of these tools, whereas coaching did not show the same effect. Contrary to expectations, the study found no significant gender differences in sponsorship experiences between male and female chairs. Overall, the research concludes that mentoring remains the most familiar and widely used development tool among chairs, and that both personal experience and formal training contribute to the likelihood of using mentoring and sponsorship practices.

McIlongo and Strydom (2021) observed that patriarchal structures have historically shaped workplace dynamics, particularly in the public sector, limiting career advancement opportunities for women. The slow pace of organizational transformation underscores the need for a structured and strategic developmental framework to support women's career progression. Their study emphasizes mentorship as a crucial tool for professional development and a form of affirmative action that can help uplift women and other historically marginalized groups. The primary objective was to assess the role of mentorship in facilitating women's career advancement within the South African public sector. Key aspects of mentorship examined included the presence of female mentors, career support, formal mentoring policies, and leadership development opportunities. Using a quantitative research design, data were gathered from 200 women working in various provinces across South Africa's public sector. Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were employed in analyzing the responses. The findings revealed that women in the public sector regard mentorship as a vital component of their professional growth. Interestingly, the gender of the mentor was not found to significantly influence career progression. The study also exposed a lack of formal mentoring structures and policies, pointing to a critical need for public sector managers to institutionalize mentorship frameworks that can systematically support women's career development.

Susanto and Sawitri (2022) emphasize that employee engagement is a central theme in human resource management research, particularly due to its significance in minimizing employee turnover. Their study set out to systematically review and synthesize existing literature on the interrelationship between coaching, mentoring, transformational leadership, and employee engagement. By analyzing 20 international scholarly articles, the researchers aimed to determine whether and how these variables influence one another. Through a structured literature review, the study mapped out the interactions among these factors and presented the findings in a matrix format. The analysis revealed that coaching, mentoring, and transformational leadership all play a supportive role in enhancing employee engagement. The study ultimately highlights these three elements as critical drivers that can be leveraged to foster higher levels of employee commitment and retention within organizations.

Nabi et al. (2025), conducted a systematic review of 73 scholarly articles published between 1986 and 2023 to develop a conceptual framework that explores the connection between various mentoring approaches and career development outcomes. The study differentiates among diverse student populations, including female students and those from underrepresented groups. While the review generally supports the positive impact of mentoring on career development especially in areas like career decision-making and transition behaviors it also reveals inconsistencies and notable variations within the data. Given the growing concerns over student transitions into the workforce, the findings offer practical insights that could enhance mentoring effectiveness, such as the importance of peer mentoring for female students and the relevance of cultural alignment between mentors and minority students pursuing STEM careers. The study recommends future research to focus on three key areas: (1) the development of new impact indicators that capture emotional aspects such as career passion and inspiration; (2) the exploration of under-investigated outcomes related to non-traditional career paths, including entrepreneurial aspirations and broader socioeconomic effects; and (3) an examination of how contextual factors and the structure and delivery of mentoring influence the varying results reported across studies.

Randel et al. (2021), argue that while the sponsorship aspect of mentoring holds significant promise for advancing the careers of African American protégés in cross-race mentoring relationships, it remains underexplored and poorly understood. Their study conceptualizes the dynamics, practices, and challenges of cross-race sponsorship through an identity based lens. Drawing on existing literature in identity, diversity, and mentoring, the authors develop a theoretical framework that outlines how identity processes influence different stages of cross-race sponsorship for both African American protégés and their mentors. Their findings highlight areas where the sponsorship function can be improved to better support the career progression of African American protégés and offer meaningful theoretical insights into the intersections of identity, diversity, and professional development.

Baran and Zarzycki (2021) emphasize that numerous studies have reaffirmed mentoring as a vital mechanism for human capital development. Their study sought to explore the mentoring process within Polish companies, specifically focusing on the benefits experienced by employees who had undergone mentoring. The research was guided by two key questions: firstly, what personal and professional development outcomes do mentored employees report (RQ1)? And secondly, does participation in mentoring enhance the likelihood of promotion or salary advancement compared to employees who have not been mentored (RQ2)? The study involved 392 participants and employed a mixed-methods approach to ensure robustness and credibility. This included a longitudinal analysis, comparisons between expected and actual outcomes, and evaluations contrasting mentored and non-mentored employees. Data collection methods comprised online survey questionnaires, HR data provided by two selected companies, and in-depth interviews. This triadic methodology was designed not only to strengthen the reliability of the findings but also to identify any inconsistencies across methods. A central measure of mentoring programme effectiveness was the participants' intrinsic satisfaction levels which were assessed through both surveys and interviews.

Toh et al. (2022), highlight the central role mentoring plays in shaping professional identity formation (PIF), particularly when used alongside other developmental tools such as supervision, coaching, tutoring, instruction, and teaching a collective framework referred to as the "mentoring umbrella. Despite its frequent application, the integrated effects of these components remain insufficiently understood. Their systematic scoping review aimed to map the existing knowledge on the mentoring umbrella and its influence on PIF. Employing a Systematic Evidence Based Approach, the review explored literature published between 2000 and 2021 across databases including PubMed, Scopus, ERIC, and Cochrane. From 12,201 abstracts screened, 657 full text articles were examined and 207 were ultimately included. Thematic and content analyses yielded three core domains: definitions of the mentoring umbrella, its impact on PIF, and the enablers and barriers to its implementation. Findings reveal that the mentoring umbrella supports PIF through a three stage process: first, by establishing a cognitive foundation of knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes; second, by guiding early clinical experiences through Communities of Practice (COP); and third, by promoting socialization that integrates emerging professional identities. Through its individualized and continuous support, the mentoring umbrella facilitates the internalization of core values, goals, and behaviors necessary for professional growth. Understanding this structure is essential for addressing existing challenges and enhancing the effectiveness and timing of developmental support in professional training.

Grocutt et al. (2022), examine research on mentoring relationships, leadership development programs and the intersection between them. The study also offers a qualitative review of the three existing longitudinal intervention studies that have specifically assessed the effects of mentoring programs on leadership development. Findings suggest that mentoring programs hold significant potential for enhancing leadership skills in both mentees and mentors; however, additional evidence is required to draw firm conclusions. The article ends with practical recommendations for human resource development professionals interested in leveraging mentoring for leadership growth.

Ivey and Dupré (2022) argue that mentoring is a widely embraced workplace practice, supported by extensive literature highlighting its positive effects on protégés and organizations. However, the potential risks and costs of workplace mentorship receive less attention. Their study synthesizes existing knowledge on workplace mentoring and draws from organizational justice research, self-determination theory, and studies on indirect exposure to explore its possible negative aspects. Their thorough review indicates that while workplace mentorship can yield positive outcomes for certain employees in specific contexts, the strength of this evidence is limited due to notable research gaps. To help weigh the benefits against the risks, they provide a set of considerations for individuals contemplating mentorship relationships and for those responsible for implementing workplace mentoring programs.

Afandi (2021) emphasizes that the demand for high quality employees is essential, as they play a crucial role in helping organizations achieve their objectives. Top performing employees can significantly accelerate progress and give companies a competitive edge amid global business challenges. Recognizing this, organizations are increasingly turning to mentoring programs as an effective strategy for employee development. Afandi's study seeks to explore how to effectively nurture employee growth through such programs. Employing a qualitative research approach, the study gathered data through observations and interviews with employees of Hutama Karya who participated in a mentoring initiative. Using descriptive analysis, the findings reveal that mentoring programs can significantly enhance employees' skills and open up greater professional opportunities.

Lin, Cai, and Yin (2021) investigated the link between career mentoring and work engagement from the perspective of mentors, focusing on work meaningfulness as a mediating factor. Using quantitative survey data from 309 employees involved in mentoring junior colleagues during on the job training programs in Japanese companies, the study found that career mentoring indirectly boosted mentors' work engagement by increasing their sense of psychological meaningfulness. Furthermore, a learning goal orientation positively influenced participation in career mentoring, which in turn enhanced work engagement by deepening the perceived meaning of work. The findings suggest that mentors with a strong learning orientation derive greater psychological fulfillment from their roles, thereby increasing their engagement. The study highlights the importance of setting meaningful goals in mentoring programs to reduce potential negative effects and adds to the literature by exploring how mentoring experiences influence mentors' own behaviors and attitudes.

4. METHODS

This study adopted a correlational research design the purpose is to examine and compare the individual effects of coaching and mentorship on career advancement using statistical techniques such as Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The population of this study comprises employees from various public and private sector organizations where coaching and mentorship programs are practiced. The selection spanned diverse industries including banking, education, and telecommunications to ensure broader generalizability. Questionnaires were distributed to employees who have experienced either coaching, mentorship, or both in the course of their careers. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 310 were returned and 300 were found valid for analysis, yielding a usable response rate of 85.7%. The content and face validity were ensured by HR experts and academic reviewers while the confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess construct validity. All constructs exceeded the acceptable threshold of Composite Reliability ($CR \geq 0.70$) and Average Variance Extracted ($AVE \geq 0.50$) and the Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.87 to 0.93, indicating high internal consistency.

Data collected were analyzed using AMOS for CFA and SEM. The following analyses were conducted such as CFA to test measurement model fit, SEM to test hypothesized paths between variables and Model fit indices such as CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and Chi-square/df were evaluated to determine the adequacy of the model

5. RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the study, structured in alignment with the research objectives which focuses on the comparative effectiveness of coaching and mentorship on career advancement outcomes.

The validity of the research variables was assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), specifically by examining the Critical Ratio (CR), Standardized Estimate, and Standard Error (SE) values. The results indicate that all constructs Coaching, Mentorship, and Career Advancement are valid and reliable as all item indicators exceeded the recommended thresholds.

Table 1: Composite Reliability Table.

Construct	Number of Items	Average Standardized Loading	Composite Reliability (CR)	Threshold	Result
Coaching	6	0.765	0.91	≥ 0.70	Acceptable
Mentorship	6	0.782	0.92	≥ 0.70	Acceptable
Career Advancement	7	0.804	0.94	≥ 0.70	Acceptable

All constructs exceed the recommended threshold of **0.70**, indicating high internal consistency.

The objective of this study was to examine and compare the individual effects of coaching and mentorship on career advancement outcomes among employees. The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) showed that all measurement items for coaching, mentorship, and career advancement had high factor loadings (ranging from 0.68 to 0.86), with critical ratios above the 1.96 threshold and p-values < 0.001, indicating strong reliability and construct validity.

Table 2: CFA Table Format: Coaching, Mentorship & Career Advancement.

Item	Variable	Reliability (Std. Loading)	Estimate	S.E.	C.R. (t-value)	P-Value	Result
X1_1	Coaching 1	0.74		0.06	12.34	***	Significant
X1_2	Coaching 2	0.80		0.06	13.91	***	Significant
X1_3	Coaching 3	0.68		0.07	10.87	***	Significant
X1_4	Coaching 4	0.76		0.06	12.99	***	Significant
X1_5	Coaching 5	0.79		0.05	13.70	***	Significant
X1_6	Coaching 6	0.82		0.05	14.45	***	Significant
X2_1	Mentorship 1	0.77		0.06	13.11	***	Significant
X2_2	Mentorship 2	0.81		0.06	14.00	***	Significant
X2_3	Mentorship 3	0.75		0.06	12.55	***	Significant
X2_4	Mentorship 4	0.73		0.06	11.92	***	Significant
X2_5	Mentorship 5	0.84		0.05	15.02	***	Significant
X2_6	Mentorship 6	0.79		0.06	13.66	***	Significant
Y1_1	Career Advancement 1	0.83		0.05	14.88	***	Significant
Y1_2	Career Advancement 2	0.86		0.04	15.71	***	Significant
Y1_3	Career Advancement 3	0.78		0.05	13.22	***	Significant
Y1_4	Career Advancement 4	0.74		0.06	12.03	***	Significant
Y1_5	Career Advancement 5	0.81		0.05	14.05	***	Significant
Y1_6	Career Advancement 6	0.76		0.05	12.75	***	Significant
Y1_7	Career Advancement 7	0.85		0.04	15.35	***	Significant

Note: Reliability Estimate: Standardized factor loading; values ≥ 0.7 are desirable.

S.E.: Standard Error of the estimate.

C.R.: Critical Ratio (t-value); values > 1.96 indicate significance at p < 0.05.

P-Value: *** indicates p < 0.001.

Result: All items are statistically significant and reliable indicators.

In the measurement model, the most dominant indicator for the Coaching variable was item X1_6 (Regularly participation in coaching programs aimed at career development) which had a standardized estimate of 0.82, SE = 0.057, and a CR = 14.45, with a significance level of p < 0.01. This suggests that structured and ongoing coaching initiatives are the most impactful elements contributing to employees' perceptions of coaching effectiveness.

For the Mentorship variable the most dominant indicator was item X2_5 (Mentorship empowers people to take initiative in career related tasks) with an estimate = 0.84, SE = 0.056, CR = 15.02, and p < 0.01. This highlights the role of empowerment and autonomy as key aspects of effective mentorship.

Within the Career Advancement construct (the endogenous variable), item Y1_2 (Feeling confident about long term career prospects) recorded the highest loading with estimate = 0.86, SE = 0.055, CR = 15.71, and p < 0.01, making it the strongest indicator of perceived career progression.

The overall CFA results confirm the validity of each variable, with all CR values exceeding the critical value of 1.96 and all p-values below 0.01. The standard errors were low across items further supporting the model's stability and accuracy.

Regarding model fit, after applying modification indices as recommended by AMOS (e.g., adding covariances between error terms of closely related items), the model achieved acceptable goodness of fit values (e.g., CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.045), indicating that the model is a good representation of the observed data.

In the hypothesis testing phase as presented in the hypothesis summary table below.

Table 3: Hypothesis Test Table.

Hypothesis	P-value	DE (Direct Effect)	TE (Total Effect)	Info	Results
H1: Coaching → Career Advancement	0.001	0.42	0.42	Positive significant direct effect	Supported
H2: Mentorship → Career Advancement	0.003	0.38	0.38	Positive significant direct effect	Supported
H3: Coaching vs Mentorship (Comparative Strength)	—	Coaching = 0.42 Mentorship = 0.38	—	Coaching has slightly stronger direct effect	Coaching stronger

H₀₁: Coaching Have a Positive and Significant Effect on Career Advancement And

H₀₂: Mentorship Have a Positive and Significant Effect on Career Advancement.

Both hypothesis were supported with significant positive effects ($p < 0.05$). Coaching had a direct effect of 0.42, while Mentorship had 0.38, suggesting that although both contribute meaningfully, coaching exerts a slightly stronger impact on career advancement outcomes.

No hypothesis was rejected in the model structure. Both independent variables showed direct positive effects without negative or indirect outcomes, contrasting with more complex models that often contain suppressor paths or insignificant mediations. This study confirms that both coaching and mentorship are statistically valid, reliable and impactful methods for promoting career advancement with coaching slightly outperforming mentorship in direct influence. Organizations aiming to enhance employee career development should consider integrating structured coaching programs alongside mentorship opportunities for comprehensive growth. This suggests that while mentorship is effective in providing long term guidance and professional insight, structured coaching programs may offer more immediate, performance driven support that translates into tangible career advancement outcomes such as promotions, role changes, or skill upgrades. These results align with the expectation that coaching is a goal oriented, time bound development tool, while mentorship is more relational and long term. Organizations should consider integrating both approaches strategically with an emphasis on coaching where quicker outcomes are required and mentorship for sustained holistic development.

6. DISCUSSION

This study investigated the influence of coaching and mentorship on career advancement using Confirmatory Factor Analysis and structural equation modeling. The results revealed that both coaching and mentorship have statistically significant and positive effects on career advancement. Specifically, coaching had a slightly stronger impact (direct effect = 0.42) than mentorship (direct effect = 0.38), indicating that structured coaching programs are somewhat more effective in facilitating employees' upward career mobility. These findings affirm that both interventions are critical tools for employee development, and that their structured application can significantly enhance career trajectories in organizational settings.

Based on the findings it is recommended that organizations should institutionalize structured coaching programs with clearly defined goals, timelines and regular feedback mechanisms. This approach can significantly enhance career development pathways and accelerate the progression of high potential employees. While coaching demonstrated a stronger direct impact but mentorship remains essential for providing long term guidance, knowledge transfer and emotional support as such organizations should have a formal structure of mentorship as it fosters a culture that values and promotes mentorship networks which is vital.

A strategic blend of both coaching and mentorship is recommended to ensure well rounded employee development, coaching should be in place for immediate performance enhancement and mentorship for sustained professional growth. To maximize the effectiveness of these initiatives human resource departments should implement continuous monitoring and evaluation frameworks. This includes tracking key performance indicators such as skill acquisition, promotion frequency and employee retention rates. Furthermore, organizations should invest in training and engage well certified internal coaches and mentors because well-equipped facilitators not only provide consistent developmental support but also elevate the overall quality of talent management within the workplace.

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