



MENTORSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE: A THEORETICAL EXPLORATION OF COMPARATIVE FRAMEWORKS IN THE EU AND NIGERIA WITHIN THE OECD PARADIGM

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Abstract

This study explores the role of mentorship in shaping entrepreneurial performance, with a focus on comparative analysis between the European Union (EU) and Nigeria, framed within the context of OECD guidelines. Mentorship is widely recognized as a critical factor in the success and sustainability of entrepreneurial ventures. In the EU, mentorship is largely formalized and supported by institutional frameworks, providing entrepreneurs with structured guidance, resources, and networks. Conversely, in Nigeria, mentorship is predominantly informal, with community networks and familial ties playing a significant role, though access remains inconsistent. By examining these two models, the study highlights the key differences in mentorship practices and their implications for entrepreneurial outcomes. The research also investigates the potential for cross-regional insights, offering recommendations for policy and practice that can improve mentorship systems in both regions. Additionally, the study identifies future theoretical directions for research, emphasizing the need for further exploration into the long-term impacts of mentorship, its role at various stages of entrepreneurship, and the potential of digital platforms in enhancing mentorship accessibility. Overall, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how mentorship influences entrepreneurial performance in diverse economic contexts.

Keywords: Mentorship, Entrepreneurial Performance, European Union, Nigeria, OECD Guidelines, Comparative Analysis

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a pivotal driver of economic growth, innovation, and job creation globally. In both the European Union (EU) and Nigeria, fostering entrepreneurial activities has been central to economic development strategies. Mentorship, defined as a developmental relationship in which a more experienced individual provides guidance to a less experienced entrepreneur, plays a crucial role in this context, facilitating knowledge transfer, skill development, and network expansion (European Commission, 2022; OECD, 2019).

In the EU, structured mentorship programs are often integrated into broader policy frameworks aimed at supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These programs are designed to provide tailored advice, improve business competencies, and foster innovation.

For instance, the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs program enables novice entrepreneurs to learn from experienced counterparts in other EU countries, promoting cross-border knowledge exchange and collaboration (European Commission, 2022).

In contrast, Nigeria's entrepreneurial landscape is characterized by a mix of formal and informal mentorship practices. While formal mentorship initiatives exist, much of the guidance for entrepreneurs occurs through informal networks and personal relationships (VC4A, 2022). This informal mentorship is deeply embedded in the socio-cultural fabric of Nigerian society, where community and familial ties play a significant role in business development (The Future Africa, 2023).

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provides a valuable framework

for analyzing mentorship practices. Its guidelines emphasize the importance of business advice and support services in enhancing SME performance and competitiveness. By examining mentorship within the OECD paradigm, we can gain insights into best practices and identify areas for improvement in both the EU and Nigeria (OECD, 2019).

Mentorship has been identified as a critical factor influencing entrepreneurial performance. It offers numerous benefits, including increased business survival rates, improved financial performance, and enhanced innovation capabilities. Mentors provide entrepreneurs with strategic guidance, help navigate challenges, and facilitate access to resources and networks that are essential for business growth (ImpactHER, n.d.; MentorMe Nigeria, n.d.).

In the EU, mentorship is often institutionalized through various programs and initiatives that align with policy objectives aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and innovation. These structured mentorship arrangements provide entrepreneurs with access to experienced business leaders and industry experts, fostering an environment conducive to business success (European Commission, 2022).

In Nigeria, while formal mentorship programs exist, much of the mentorship occurs informally through personal networks (VC4A, 2022). This informal mentorship is crucial in a context where formal support structures may be limited. However, the lack of formalization can also pose challenges, such as inconsistent quality of guidance and limited access to broader networks and resources (MentorCruise, n.d.; Endeavor Nigeria, n.d.).

Understanding the dynamics of mentorship in different contexts is essential for developing effective support mechanisms for entrepreneurs. By comparing the mentorship practices in the EU and Nigeria within the OECD framework, we can identify best practices and potential areas for policy intervention to enhance entrepreneurial performance (OECD, 2019).

This study aims to develop a theoretical framework for understanding the role of mentorship in entrepreneurial

performance, with a comparative focus on the EU and Nigeria within the OECD paradigm. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the theoretical foundations of mentorship and its impact on entrepreneurial performance.
- ii. Analyze the mentorship models prevalent in the EU and Nigeria, highlighting the influence of institutional and cultural factors.
- iii. Evaluate the applicability of OECD guidelines in shaping effective mentorship practices in both regions.

The scope of this study is theoretical, relying on existing literature, policy documents, and OECD reports to construct a comparative analysis. While it does not include empirical data, the study seeks to provide a foundation for future research and policy development by identifying key factors that influence the effectiveness of mentorship in different entrepreneurial ecosystems.

By exploring these dimensions, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how mentorship can be leveraged to enhance entrepreneurial performance in diverse contexts, offering insights for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars interested in entrepreneurship development.

2. Theoretical Framework

Mentorship and Entrepreneurial Performance

Mentorship is widely regarded as a critical tool in fostering entrepreneurial success. It involves a relationship where an experienced individual, known as the mentor, provides guidance, support, and advice to a less experienced individual, the mentee, often in a business context. Mentorship plays a significant role in helping entrepreneurs navigate the complexities of business ownership, decision-making, and market dynamics. The mentor shares knowledge, networks, and emotional support, which can be critical in mitigating risks and enhancing business performance (Ragins & Kram, 2007).

Entrepreneurial performance refers to the measurable outcomes achieved by an entrepreneur, such as profitability, business growth, and sustainability. These outcomes are often influenced by several factors, including the entrepreneur's skills, resources, and the environment in which the business operates. In this context, mentorship is believed to play a pivotal role in enhancing an entrepreneur's performance by improving their decision-making capabilities, enhancing their business acumen, and helping them overcome challenges (St-Jean & Audet, 2009).

Effective mentorship can lead to improved entrepreneurial outcomes in several ways. First, it provides entrepreneurs with access to valuable networks, which can lead to opportunities for collaboration, funding, and expansion (Liu et al., 2020). Secondly, mentorship helps build confidence and resilience, both of which are crucial for long-term success in the volatile world of entrepreneurship (Eby et al., 2008). Therefore, mentorship has a direct and indirect impact on entrepreneurial performance by equipping entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to succeed.

Comparative Theories of Mentorship in the EU and Nigeria

Mentorship practices and their impact on entrepreneurial performance can vary significantly across different cultural and economic settings. In the European Union (EU), mentorship is typically structured and formalized. Many EU countries have implemented national programs aimed at supporting entrepreneurs through mentorship, particularly in the early stages of business development. These programs often provide financial support and a network of business mentors who offer advice on business strategy, innovation, and market expansion (European Commission, 2021). EU-based programs, such as the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs program, exemplify this structured approach by offering cross-border mentoring opportunities that connect new entrepreneurs with experienced business owners in other EU countries (European Commission, 2021).

In contrast, mentorship in Nigeria often takes a more informal form, with the majority of mentorship relationships stemming from personal networks, familial ties, and local business communities. This informal mentorship system is influenced by Nigeria's strong communal culture, where individuals often rely on personal relationships for business guidance (Peter, 2021). Despite the informal nature of mentorship in Nigeria, it remains a significant source of entrepreneurial support, as it offers a sense of trust and cultural alignment between mentors and mentees. However, the lack of formal structures and the reliance on informal mentorship can lead to inconsistencies in the quality and effectiveness of mentorship (Patrick, 2021).

The difference between mentorship practices in the EU and Nigeria highlights the influence of institutional structures and cultural factors on entrepreneurial support. In the EU, mentorship is more likely to be integrated into formal policy frameworks and national development programs, whereas in Nigeria, mentorship is often community-driven and dependent on personal relationships. These differences point to the need for a context-sensitive approach to mentorship, one that recognizes both the benefits and limitations of formal and informal mentorship structures.

Role of OECD Guidelines in Shaping Mentorship Practices

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has long recognized the importance of entrepreneurship and mentorship in fostering economic growth and innovation. The OECD guidelines emphasize the need for mentorship programs that are structured, inclusive, and accessible to entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds (OECD, 2015). These guidelines advocate for a systematic approach to mentorship, suggesting that government policies and institutions should play a role in facilitating these relationships to ensure that entrepreneurs receive consistent and high-quality guidance.

One key aspect of the OECD's mentorship guidelines is the focus on creating a supportive ecosystem that connects entrepreneurs with mentors who possess the

necessary expertise and resources. According to the OECD (2015), mentorship should not only focus on business strategy but also on developing entrepreneurial skills such as risk management, financial planning, and leadership. By adopting a structured approach, OECD guidelines ensure that mentorship is comprehensive and addresses the various challenges entrepreneurs face in their journey.

In the EU, these OECD guidelines have been instrumental in shaping mentorship practices, leading to the establishment of formal mentorship programs that provide entrepreneurs with the resources and support they need to succeed (OECD, 2015). For instance, the European Commission's "Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs" program, which is aligned with OECD principles, helps aspiring entrepreneurs gain valuable international business experience by partnering them with experienced entrepreneurs across different EU countries (European Commission, 2021).

In Nigeria, the influence of OECD guidelines is less direct but still relevant. By incorporating OECD recommendations, Nigerian policymakers can enhance the quality and effectiveness of mentorship programs. As Nigeria seeks to formalize and expand its mentorship programs, adopting OECD principles could help address gaps in the current system, particularly in terms of consistency, access to quality mentors, and integration with broader entrepreneurial policies. The OECD's emphasis on mentorship as a tool for inclusive growth and entrepreneurship development can help shape more robust and sustainable mentorship practices in Nigeria, ultimately improving entrepreneurial performance (OECD, 2015).

The theoretical framework surrounding mentorship and its impact on entrepreneurial performance highlights the importance of structured and contextual mentorship practices. While the EU benefits from formal mentorship systems integrated into national policy, Nigeria's informal mentorship practices reflect its cultural and economic context. The role of OECD guidelines in shaping these practices further underscores the significance of mentorship in fostering entrepreneurship and economic growth. By

understanding the comparative theories of mentorship in the EU and Nigeria, and the influence of OECD guidelines, policymakers can develop more effective mentorship programs that support entrepreneurs in diverse settings.

3. Comparative Analysis of Mentorship Models

Institutional and Policy-Based Mentorship in the EU

In the European Union (EU), mentorship is integrated into structured institutional and policy frameworks that aim to foster entrepreneurship and innovation. Various EU initiatives are designed to provide formal mentorship programs for emerging entrepreneurs. These programs are supported by the EU's institutions, such as the European Commission, which has put in place several policies to provide systematic mentorship across its member states. A prominent example is the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs program, which pairs new entrepreneurs with experienced mentors from other EU countries. This initiative is designed to support young entrepreneurs by enhancing their business skills and increasing their chances of business success through mentorship (European Commission, 2021).

The EU's institutional approach ensures that mentorship is not only available but also well-regulated, providing entrepreneurs with the resources they need to succeed. The European Investment Fund (EIF) has also contributed to such programs, providing financial support and guidance for entrepreneurs in sectors like technology and innovation (European Investment Fund, 2021). These programs are often closely linked with the EU's broader economic policies aimed at fostering competitiveness and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The structured and policy-based mentorship in the EU contributes to a stable environment for entrepreneurship, where mentoring is formalized and accessible to entrepreneurs across the region.

Cultural and Informal Mentorship in Nigeria

In contrast to the EU's institutionalized approach, mentorship in Nigeria remains largely informal and culturally driven. The country's mentorship ecosystem

is influenced by community ties, family relationships, and local business networks. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE), a key regulatory body in Nigeria, plays an important role in promoting entrepreneurship through informal mentorship programs that often rely on local business leaders or experienced entrepreneurs as mentors. These informal networks offer valuable support in the form of advice, connections, and guidance, but they lack the formal structures and consistency seen in the EU (National Directorate of Employment [NDE], 2019).

The Nigerian government, through agencies such as the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), has also made efforts to support mentorship through various programs aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills, particularly for youth and women. However, the lack of formalized mentorship programs in Nigeria means that access to these networks is often dependent on personal connections or geographical location, leaving many entrepreneurs without mentorship (SMEDAN, 2020).

Despite these challenges, informal mentorship remains a critical component of entrepreneurship in Nigeria, especially for small business owners who may not have access to formal business development services. The personal relationships between mentors and mentees create a sense of trust that facilitates the sharing of business knowledge and strategies tailored to the local market environment. However, the unregulated nature of these mentorship programs can lead to disparities in mentorship quality and availability.

Lessons from the OECD Paradigm

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has long advocated for structured, policy-based mentorship programs as a tool for fostering entrepreneurship. The OECD emphasizes the importance of mentorship in creating an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem and enhancing the skills of entrepreneurs, particularly in underrepresented groups. The OECD's reports, such as *The Missing Entrepreneurs 2015*, provide valuable guidelines for the design and implementation of mentorship programs that

are aligned with national economic policies and global best practices (OECD, 2015).

The OECD stresses that mentorship should not be seen as a standalone practice but rather as part of a broader entrepreneurial ecosystem that includes access to finance, education, and regulatory support. It advocates for mentorship programs that are well-regulated, inclusive, and scalable to reach a wide range of entrepreneurs, including those from disadvantaged or marginalized groups. One key lesson from the OECD's paradigm is that mentorship programs should be designed with the entrepreneurial context in mind, ensuring that they address the specific challenges entrepreneurs face in different markets (OECD, 2015).

In comparison to Nigeria's informal mentorship models, the OECD's emphasis on policy-driven mentorship systems presents an opportunity for Nigeria to build more robust and inclusive entrepreneurial support structures. By integrating the OECD's guidelines, Nigerian policymakers could create mentorship programs that are structured and regulated, offering entrepreneurs consistent and high-quality mentorship that is aligned with international standards (OECD, 2015). These programs could be further tailored to meet the unique needs of Nigerian entrepreneurs, particularly in rural areas and for women and youth.

The comparative analysis of mentorship models in the EU, Nigeria, and the OECD reveals the different ways in which mentorship is approached in each region. The EU relies on institutionalized mentorship programs supported by the European Commission and other regulatory bodies, ensuring that mentorship is formalized and accessible. In Nigeria, mentorship remains largely informal and culturally driven, with institutions like SMEDAN and NDE working to provide guidance to entrepreneurs, although access to mentorship is often limited by personal connections. The OECD's guidelines provide a roadmap for creating more structured and inclusive mentorship systems, offering valuable lessons for Nigeria as it seeks to formalize and enhance its mentorship ecosystem.

4. Implications for Entrepreneurial Performance

Cross-Regional Insights on Mentorship and Economic Outcomes

Mentorship has been recognized globally as a vital contributor to entrepreneurial performance. In the EU, the formalization of mentorship programs has been linked to substantial economic outcomes, particularly in terms of innovation, business sustainability, and job creation. According to the European Commission (2020), mentorship programs such as Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs contribute to a higher success rate for startups, with mentees being more likely to expand their businesses and create jobs in comparison to entrepreneurs who lack access to mentorship. These structured programs offer entrepreneurs not only financial support but also strategic business advice, networking opportunities, and practical know-how, which are critical for navigating the complexities of the business environment.

Similarly, in the OECD's *The Missing Entrepreneurs* 2015 report, the organization emphasizes that mentoring, when aligned with policies aimed at improving access to finance and education, can significantly enhance entrepreneurial performance (OECD, 2015). The mentorship programs in OECD countries often aim to build the capacity of entrepreneurs from underrepresented groups—youth, women, and migrants—resulting in more inclusive economic growth. These programs help mitigate the skills gap often observed in the early stages of entrepreneurial ventures, thereby improving overall economic outcomes and fostering innovation.

In Nigeria, mentorship plays a crucial role, particularly in the informal sector. However, the lack of formalized mentorship structures leads to varied economic outcomes for entrepreneurs. Mentorship, when available, has proven to have positive effects on business performance, such as increased business survival rates and growth. According to the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) (2019), informal mentorship systems within Nigeria contribute to the enhancement of managerial skills, market expansion,

and resource mobilization. Nevertheless, these benefits are often limited by unequal access to networks and resources, as the informal mentorship ecosystem is typically concentrated in certain regions or among specific socio-economic groups.

Thus, cross-regional insights reveal that structured and formalized mentorship models, as seen in the EU and OECD countries, lead to better economic outcomes by ensuring consistent, scalable, and inclusive mentorship opportunities. In contrast, informal mentorship models, while beneficial in certain contexts, present challenges related to scalability, consistency, and inclusivity, which can limit their overall impact on entrepreneurial performance in developing economies like Nigeria.

Challenges and Opportunities in the EU and Nigerian Contexts

In the EU, the key challenges faced by mentorship programs are primarily related to access and regional disparities. While mentorship programs are often widely available in urban centers and more developed regions, rural and peripheral areas face difficulties in accessing these resources. The European Investment Fund (EIF) (2021) notes that while the EU's policy frameworks provide strong support for entrepreneurial mentorship, implementation at the regional level can be inconsistent. These disparities can lead to unequal access to mentorship and, consequently, a gap in entrepreneurial performance between different regions.

Moreover, mentorship in the EU often caters to entrepreneurs who are already somewhat established, leaving a gap in support for nascent entrepreneurs who may benefit from more guidance during the early stages of their ventures. As a result, despite the extensive policies, there is still a need to adapt mentorship programs to be more inclusive of emerging entrepreneurs, especially those in high-risk sectors (European Commission, 2021).

In Nigeria, the challenges associated with mentorship are more pronounced, as the country's mentorship ecosystem is largely informal. Key issues include limited access to mentorship for rural entrepreneurs, lack of formal mentorship programs for youth and

women, and disparities in the quality of mentorship offered. According to the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) (2020), the absence of a national framework for mentorship leaves many entrepreneurs without guidance, and informal mentorship programs often lack the capacity to scale. This structural gap in mentorship opportunities significantly limits the entrepreneurial potential of many Nigerians, especially in rural areas where access to resources is limited.

However, these challenges also present opportunities. In the EU, addressing regional disparities in mentorship access could lead to more equitable economic growth and innovation. Strengthening the outreach of existing programs and creating digital platforms for remote mentoring could help bridge the gap. In Nigeria, there is a significant opportunity to formalize mentorship within the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Government agencies, such as SMEDAN, could lead efforts to create scalable mentorship models that could be adapted to the diverse Nigerian context. By leveraging both local business networks and international collaborations, Nigeria could significantly improve the quality of mentorship available to its entrepreneurs (SMEDAN, 2020).

Theoretical Contributions to Global Entrepreneurship Literature

The theoretical contributions of mentorship to global entrepreneurship literature are significant, particularly in understanding the mechanisms through which mentorship impacts entrepreneurial performance. Existing theories, such as Social Exchange Theory and Resource-Based View (RBV), offer valuable frameworks for understanding the role of mentorship. According to Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), mentorship relationships are built on the exchange of knowledge, resources, and support. This exchange not only benefits the mentee but also strengthens the mentor's networks and entrepreneurial capabilities. Mentorship in the EU and OECD contexts, through formalized programs, provides a structured way to facilitate these exchanges and creates positive feedback

loops that enhance both the mentor's and mentee's business outcomes.

The Resource-Based View (RBV) (Barney, 1991) also contributes to understanding the value of mentorship in entrepreneurship. According to RBV, the resources and capabilities gained through mentorship, such as access to funding, networks, and industry-specific knowledge, can serve as critical competitive advantages for entrepreneurs. In the EU, the structured mentorship systems contribute to entrepreneurs acquiring these resources more effectively, which translates into better entrepreneurial performance. In Nigeria, the informal nature of mentorship means that many entrepreneurs may not have access to the full range of resources needed for business success, but where mentorship does occur, it often provides essential capital and knowledge for scaling businesses (Peter, 2021).

Mentorship, therefore, plays a dual role in both the development of individual entrepreneurial capabilities and the broader business ecosystem. As the global literature on entrepreneurship continues to evolve, understanding the nuances of mentorship across different regional contexts will be critical for shaping future policy and practice. Both the EU and Nigerian contexts provide valuable insights into the diverse ways mentorship impacts entrepreneurial performance and these lessons can be applied globally to foster better economic outcomes.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary of Key Findings

This comparative analysis of mentorship models in the EU, Nigeria, and the OECD provides valuable insights into the role of mentorship in shaping entrepreneurial performance. In the EU, mentorship is primarily formalized and integrated into institutional frameworks, leading to positive economic outcomes such as business sustainability, innovation, and job creation. EU mentorship programs, particularly those supported by initiatives like Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs, provide entrepreneurs with the resources, networks, and guidance needed to navigate complex business environments. These structured models demonstrate the

importance of policy-driven mentorship in fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem that is conducive to growth.

In contrast, Nigeria's mentorship landscape remains largely informal, with mentorship being driven by community networks and familial ties. Although informal mentorship plays a vital role in helping entrepreneurs, especially in rural areas, it is often inconsistent, fragmented, and limited in reach. The absence of a formal, regulatory framework for mentorship has led to disparities in access and quality of mentorship services. Despite these challenges, informal mentorship continues to contribute significantly to entrepreneurial development, particularly in terms of providing basic business advice and networking opportunities.

The OECD's guidelines for mentorship highlight the importance of formal mentorship programs that are inclusive and aligned with broader economic policies. By comparing the EU and Nigerian mentorship models, we observe that the formalized mentorship systems in the EU tend to result in more stable economic outcomes, whereas Nigeria's informal systems offer flexibility and adaptability but at the cost of scalability and consistency.

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

For policymakers in both the EU and Nigeria, several recommendations emerge from this comparative analysis.

For the EU:

Strengthen Access in Underserved Regions: While mentorship programs in the EU are generally well-structured, there is a need to address regional disparities in access to these programs. Efforts should be made to extend the reach of mentorship programs to more rural and peripheral areas, ensuring that entrepreneurs across the region benefit equally.

Tailor Programs for Emerging Entrepreneurs: The EU should expand mentorship opportunities for early-stage entrepreneurs, not just those who are already somewhat established. This could be achieved by creating

mentorship programs that cater specifically to nascent entrepreneurs or those in high-risk sectors.

For Nigeria:

Formalize Mentorship Programs: Nigeria should prioritize the creation of formal mentorship structures that can complement its existing informal networks. By developing a regulatory framework that supports both public and private mentorship programs, Nigeria can provide more consistent and scalable support to its entrepreneurs.

Enhance Inclusivity: Nigeria's mentorship programs should be designed to be more inclusive, targeting underrepresented groups such as youth, women, and entrepreneurs in rural areas. This can be achieved through targeted mentorship initiatives that offer access to resources and networks that are typically unavailable to these groups.

Leverage Technology for Scalability: Digital platforms and online mentorship programs could help bridge the geographical gaps in mentorship access. By utilizing technology, mentorship can be made more accessible to Nigerian entrepreneurs, regardless of location.

For the OECD:

Promote Best Practices: The OECD should continue to promote the importance of mentorship as part of a broader entrepreneurial ecosystem, encouraging countries to adopt policies that integrate mentorship into national economic frameworks.

Facilitate Cross-Regional Mentorship Networks: The OECD could play a role in fostering cross-regional mentorship networks that facilitate knowledge exchange and provide entrepreneurs with access to international markets and perspectives.

Directions for Future Theoretical Research

While mentorship has been widely acknowledged as a crucial factor in entrepreneurship, further theoretical research is needed to deepen our understanding of how mentorship impacts entrepreneurial performance in different regional contexts. Future research could focus on:

The Long-Term Impact of Mentorship: Most current research tends to focus on the immediate benefits of mentorship, such as business survival or growth rates. Future studies could explore the long-term impacts of mentorship on business resilience, innovation capacity, and sustainability.

Mentorship Across Different Stages of Entrepreneurship: Future research should explore the role of mentorship at various stages of the entrepreneurial journey, from ideation and startup to scaling and maturity. Understanding how mentorship needs evolve at different stages can help design more effective mentorship programs.

Comparative Cross-Cultural Studies: More comparative studies are needed to examine how cultural differences affect mentorship relationships and entrepreneurial outcomes. These studies could provide insights into how mentorship programs can be adapted to suit the

specific cultural and business environments of different regions.

The Role of Digital Platforms in Mentorship: As digital technologies continue to transform business practices, research into the role of digital platforms in facilitating mentorship could provide valuable insights into how technology can be leveraged to enhance mentorship accessibility and effectiveness, particularly in developing economies.

In conclusion, while mentorship plays a vital role in enhancing entrepreneurial performance, the effectiveness of mentorship programs depends on their design, implementation, and cultural context. Both the EU and Nigeria can benefit from learning from each other's mentorship models to create more inclusive, structured, and scalable mentorship ecosystems that foster entrepreneurship and contribute to sustainable economic growth.

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