

UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOSOCIAL FUNCTIONS IN ENHANCING MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS FOR BLACK WOMEN OF AFRICAN ORIGIN: A WOMANIST PERSPECTIVE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research on the use of mentoring to enhance the careers of Black women has yielded mixed results. This has prompted calls for further investigation into the approaches by which mentoring produces positive outcomes for these women. Consequently, in this study, which aims to address the need to improve mentoring to support career progression for Black women of African Origin residing in the United Kingdom (UK), we employ ‘womanism’ as a theoretical lens and conduct qualitative, semi-structured interviews with 30 women of African origin living and working in the UK. These women are all considered first-generation black women of African origin who migrated to the UK for study and work. We explore how and why these women of African origin engage in mentoring practices. Contributing to IHRD discourse, our findings demonstrate the usefulness of adopting womanism as a socio-cultural theory sensitive to the lived experiences of women of African origin, thereby enabling a better understanding and formulation of solutions that carefully consider mentoring processes. These findings carry both theoretical and practical implications for scholars and practitioners in mentoring, careers, diversity, and inclusion.



KEYWORDS

- Womanism
- Psychosocial functioning
- Inclusion
- Intentional mentoring

RESEARCH RELEVANCE

- Psychosocial function contributes to personal growth and professional development
- Womanism underscores the need for inclusion and belonging as key outcomes of the intentional mentoring process.
- Prioritising networking and relationships, as well as contributions to work, is a necessary psychosocial function within the mentoring process.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Kagher, L. (Accepted/In press). Understanding Psychosocial Functions in Enhancing Mentoring Relationships for Black Women of African Origin: A Womanist Perspective. Human Resource Development International.
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“Womanism theory reflects it well: see her truth, and you unlock her potential. Mentorship begins with understanding, honouring the lived experience of African women as the foundation for growth and advancement”

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