

**Mentoring Under the Lean Startup Method: A Conflicting Role**

Elda Barrón\*

& José Ernesto Amorós

EGADE Business School, Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico.

\*Correspondent author: Address Victoria Monarca 2216 Centrika Victoria. Monterrey, Nuevo León. México. email: [elda.barron@gmail.com](mailto:elda.barron@gmail.com)

**Abstract:**

Entrepreneurship mentoring implies a support relationship between an experienced professional or entrepreneur (the mentor), and a novice entrepreneur (the mentee). Existing studies suggest a positive impact of mentors on the mentee's entrepreneurial activity—from increasing their managerial knowledge to improving their entrepreneurial identity. Following an embedded case study method, we analyzed eleven teams from a lean startup program. We describe and theorize about the main role of mentors and their main contributions for mentees in a lean startup program. We identify that the mentors' main role is to support entrepreneurs with networking and their main contribution to them is to provide them with relationship capital. Our main findings extend the literature of entrepreneurship mentoring adding roles and activities. We contribute to show how under certain contexts the main activities and impact of mentors can be focused beyond developing entrepreneurial and business skills.

**Keywords:** mentoring, entrepreneurship, lean startup method.