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Capacity Building of Mentors in the Mentoring of Trainee Teachers

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Abstract

This study examined the capacity building of mentors in the mentoring of trainee teachers as a way of improving mentors' practices. The study employed the interpretive paradigm and used the qualitative approach and case study research design. Purposive sampling was used to select 27 participants perceived as rich informants. These participants included six mentors, 15 trainee teachers, five college lecturers, two lecturers from the teaching practice office, three senior lecturers in charge and one university lecturer who is a link person between the college and the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Zimbabwe. Data were obtained through face-to-face interviews, focus groups and document analysis. It emerged from the study that mentors were not at all being trained to become mentors, therefore, mentors needed to be trained before the mentorship programme. The study revealed that most mentors depended on the knowledge they attained from college when they were training as teachers and a few from school staff development programmes. Thus, there was a gap in the capacity building of mentors and mentor selection.

Keywords: trainee teacher's practices, teaching practice, capacity, policy, management

INTRODUCTION

Capacity building of both the mentor and the mentee is paramount and schools and colleges are expected to arrange centrally managed training and preparation programmes for all mentors in line with the needs of schools (Mohamed and

Beagan, 2019). Structured evaluation with mentors and mentees occurs at the end of each programme and qualitative evaluation is done by staff. Sometimes, mentors are given honoraria, presents or comments on their academic transcript as recognition of their effort and contribution (Geist and Cohen, 2010; Kimmelman and Lang, 2019). E-mentoring is also used to develop and sustain mentoring relationships, linking a mentor and a mentee independent of geographical or scheduling constraints (Schofield, 2019). It is mostly for trainee teachers in remote locations, involved in distance education as well as in low socio-economic status settings (Kutsyuruba *et al.*, 2016).

Capacity building of mentors involves coaching leadership skills and building leadership capacity in individuals within institutions (teachers' colleges) through professional relationships (Robertson, 2016). Full-time mentorship programmes are affiliated with colleges or universities but, in some countries, the programmes are a project of the school or district itself. In Zimbabwe, college or university-based mentorship programmes for new teachers are based on partnership with a single large university. For example, many colleges are affiliated with the University of Zimbabwe. Mentor programmes should be sponsored by colleges and universities but the rate at which these programmes are held has been affected by some economic constraints.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of theoretical framework is to suggest additional studies to test the theory further. However, the main purpose of a theoretical framework, apart from informing the study, is specifically to guide the researcher in his or her analysis, explanation and interpretation of the data (Rakatsaone, 2006:14)

The theoretical frameworks that underpinned this study is Andragogy Theoretical Model of Adult Learning by Malcom Sherpherd Knowles (1980). The theory enables an informed interrogation of mentorship practices in relation to the capacity building of mentors in various sectors or organisation **Andragogy Theoretical Model of Adult Learning by Knowles (1980)**

As indicated above, the study is guided by Knowles‘ Andragogic theoretical model. He is well known for the use of the term Andragogy as synonymous with adult education (Knowles, Holton III and Swanson, 2014; Pappas, 2013). Knowles states that the adult learner is self-directed, is responsible for his or her learning, wants to perform real life tasks to solve problems and wants learning that is collaborative rather than didactic (Melnik and Novoselich, 2017). The Andragogic model is the most appropriate and widely used learning and teaching model when training adult learners (Brockett and Hiemstra, 2018). However, Pappas (2013) said that Knowles‘ model is based on five assumptions about characteristics of adult learners that are different from the assumptions about child learners (Pedagogy) as illustrated in Figure 1.

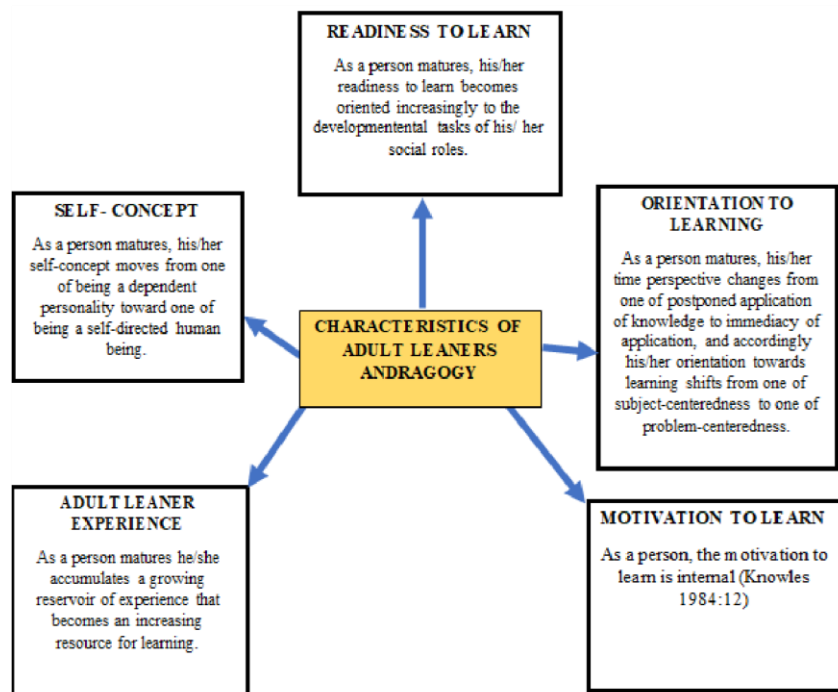


Figure 1: *Five Assumptions of Adult Learners* (Pappas, 2013)

In line with the above assumptions, Chan (2010) asserts that andragogy, as advanced by Knowles, is a well-known approach to address the distinct needs of adult learners. Knowles' concept of andragogy has been widely adopted by educators from various disciplines around the world. In addition to Knowles' (1980) five assumptions, Chan (2010) adds another assumption to the Andragogy theory of adult learning to make them six, namely; (a) self-directedness, (b) need to know, (c) use of experience in learning, (d) readiness to learn, (e) orientation to learning and (f) internal motivation.

The study placed central importance on the Andragogy adult learning theory since it assists mentors and trainee teachers to prepare themselves for their working environment. For instance, when a trainee teacher goes for teaching practice (TP), he/she is already prepared to learn and has the internal motivation or drive to pass and complete the course through working hard. The trainee teachers would have already learnt the theory part of their training at college, now they would be doing the practical teaching work. Learning by doing is emphasised by the andragogic theory of learning which stipulates that as an individual matures, the motivation to learn is driven more by internal motivators (an inner desire) rather than extrinsic motivators (external stimuli) (Bates, 2019; Steyn, and van Tonder, 2017).

Forrest and Peterson, cited in Chan (2010), further agree that:

—modern management requires practical implementation of skills learned, not regulation of principles. Without implementation, mentors and trainee teachers cannot adapt to the ever-changing workplace (114).

Using the andragogy principles, the mentor can tailor the instruction to meet trainee teachers' interest, by involving them in planning the learning objectives and activities and solving real-world problems (Pletcher, Hudson and Watson, 2019). Accordingly, Andragogy improves communication between the trainee teacher and the mentor. They work together as partners to design instructional content and methods to suit the learners' needs (Henschke, 2011; McCall, Padron and Andrews, 2018). As a result, the principles promote trust between the trainee teacher and the mentor and enhance self-awareness in the trainee teacher, as well as improving the mentor's practices in facilitating career development and providing psychosocial support (Pappas, 2013; Chan, 2010; Ozuah, 2016).

The adult learning theory is oriented towards explaining the reasons specific things are done (Londy, 2007). Therefore, the mentor needs to explain to trainee teachers why they are expected to use media in teaching, scheming and planning and the use of record books and other activities. Thus, instruction should be task-oriented, instead of promoting memorisation. Learning activities should be in the context of common tasks to be performed by the others (Chan, 2010). This study acknowledges the use of various strategies by mentors to provide career development and psychosocial support to trainee teachers during TP.

Bates (2019) suggests the following points to be noted by mentors when mentoring a trainee teacher. Trainee teachers, who are supposedly adult learners:

- have their own views of themselves and their needs and are goaloriented;
- bring a vast array of life experiences and knowledge which can be a valuable resource of learning;
- are more concerned with learning to complete tasks or solve problems than just learning subjects; and
- have a need to be valued and respected.

The above points are important to the mentor and Jesus (2012) suggests that mentors should also allow for different levels/types of previous experiences or individual differences to accommodate trainee teachers with different learning styles.

Wilson (2019) concurs with Jesus (2012).

Since adults are self-directed, instruction should allow trainee teachers to discover things and knowledge for themselves without depending on the mentor all the time (Rishel and Hartnett, 2019). However, adult learners should be offered guidance and counselling when mistakes are made. The adult learning theory is suitable in that mentors and trainee teachers are all adults who need to learn during the TP programme. Trainee teachers and mentors are confronted with real teaching and learning challenges which they need to solve with real solutions by marrying theory and practice (Mathews and Mercer-Mapstone, 2018).

According to Hartnett (2019), Knowles' theory of andragogy maintains that trainers should recognise that the richest resource for learning resides in adult learners themselves and emphasis should, therefore, be on experiential techniques that tap into their experiences. These include group discussions, problem-solving, case study, role-play, field trips, rather than transmission techniques such as lecturing or presentations (Moxham and Moxham, 2019). Thus, in capacity building of mentors, learner-centred methods, instead of teacher-centred methods, are encouraged. Using a combination of the above methods will have the greatest impact on adult learning (Bates, 2019) Thus, the present study's objective is to establish the strategies used by trainers and mentors to provide career development and psychosocial support to trainee teachers during TP.

This study also acknowledges the contribution of the adult learning theory by Knowles (1980), which suggests four principles that are applied to learning, illustrated by Figure 2.

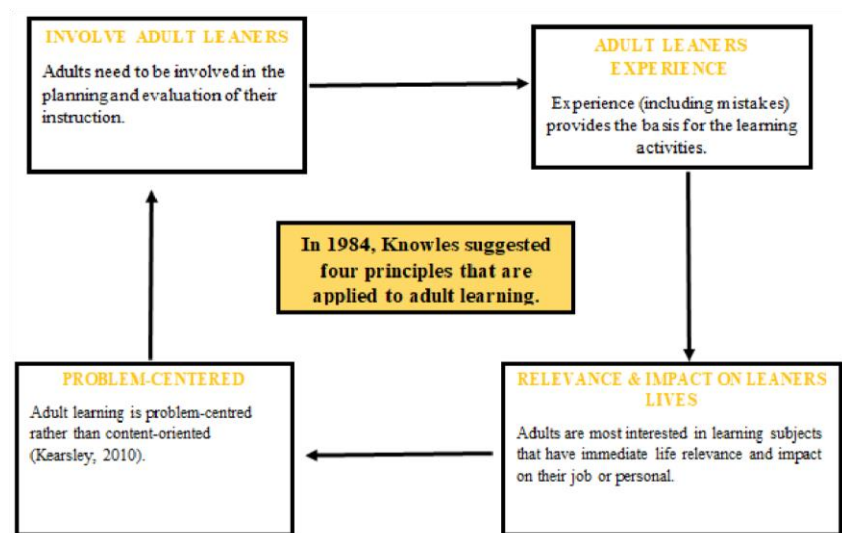


Figure 2: *Four Principles of Andragogy* (Pappas, 2013)

These principles are connected to the assumptions of the adult learning theory which have been discussed above. The Andragogy theory principles are relevant to the present study on the mentor's practices and capacity building of mentors in facilitating career development in that, initially, the trainer of mentors is supposed to involve the mentor in planning and evaluation of all the activities to be done during TP (van Tonder and Steyn, 2018). As shown in Figure 2, the first step is to plan before conducting teaching and learning activities, just as the mentor and trainee teachers are expected to do (Green, 2018).

During TP, both the mentor and the trainee teacher experience new things. They sometimes make mistakes during the learning process, but they keep on working, doing some corrections. The mistakes are considered as the basis for new learning activities until they accomplish their goals (Pletcher *et al.*, 2019). Both the mentor and the trainee teacher value their work as having immediate relevance and direct impact on their personal lives. Finally, adult learning is more of problem-solving than content-oriented and the trainee teacher will be involved in problem-solving activities on a daily basis (Pappas, 2013).

Mentors need training to have concrete experience of what they are going to do during mentorship. Concrete experience involves scheming, planning, making media, teaching, marking children's books, managing the classroom, supervising, controlling and getting involved in co-curricular activities (Illeris, 2015). According to Defined, Goals and Content (2018), the trainee teacher observes and reflects upon the activities he or she has done and the mentor needs to undergo the same process. After the second phase, the trainee teacher or the mentor interprets (abstract conceptualisation) the events that have been done and finally experiences and modifies his/her behaviour (active experimentation), thereby improving practice. During TP, the trainee teacher is given the opportunity to give feedback to the mentor. Since TP is done with ongoing assessment, the trainee teacher gets the opportunity to go through the full cycle with the help of the mentor (Alkhawaldeh, 2017).

Andragogy theory is ideal for this study because it will equip both the trainee teacher and the mentor with strategies and methods which will enhance the trainee teacher's pedagogical development in TP. It is the intention of this study to establish the strategies used by mentors in providing and psychosocial support to trainee teachers during TP.

Knowles's theory of andragogy has, however, been criticised for assuming that adults are always self-directed (Merriam, 2013). Because of the different backgrounds, some adults may need to be self-directed as to what is to be done in the training. During TP, some trainee teachers, if not properly directed, may fail it, withdraw or defer (Cuzzo, Dumay, Palmaccio and Lombardi, 2017). In this case, mentors must assume a dominant role. Mentors may have to play a directive role. Kop and Fourand (2017) observe that some of the experiences adults encounter in the training may not be relevant to what is being taught and may, therefore, not be of any use to the learning process. For instance, some of the issues may be political, sexual abuse by supervisors or mentors, negative attitudes and misunderstanding among staff members.

Despite the few criticisms, Knowles' theory of andragogy remains one of the most effective models for adult learning and that is why this research found it relevant (Bates, 2019). Mentors should use interactive methodologies which focus on an individual's life experiences, such as discussions, case studies, problem-solving, role-play and field trips (Baron *et al.*, 2019). The model was used to ascertain whether mentors use training methods/techniques and strategies which promote effective provision of career development and psychosocial support to trainee teachers during TP.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Capacity building of mentors involves coaching leadership skills and building leadership capacity in individuals within institutions (teachers' colleges) through professional relationships (Robertson, 2016). Full-time mentorship programmes are affiliated to colleges or universities but, in some countries, the programmes are a project of the school or district itself. In Zimbabwe, college or university-

based mentorship programmes for new teachers are based on partnership with a single large university. For example, many colleges are affiliated to the University of Zimbabwe. Mentor programmes should be sponsored by colleges and universities but the rate at which these programmes are held has been affected by some economic constraints. Some institutions have stopped training mentors due economic hardships (Morrison, Ross, Morrison and Kalman, 2019)

The state is also expected to provide financial support for mentor programmes. Support seminars can be held as periodic meetings related to the teacher standards, to provide adequate training. Mentors can be trained in various ways such as:

- provision and assistance with policies and procedures by the college,
- emotional support by the college,
- introduction of school-based mentor programmes,
- use of traditional face to face classroom format,
- emails
- distance learning
- web based instruction

Basic mentor training can be done just after the selection of prospective mentors. There is no stipulated time for mentor training. Staggering training over a semester or even an entire year can be more effective when properly planned and done, but it may be challenging in terms of schedules within the situation calendar (Merriam and Grenier, 2019). The present study sought to establish whether the training of mentors is done in Zimbabwean schools and colleges, how it is done and its impact on the mentors' practices in facilitating career development and providing psychosocial support to trainee teachers during teaching practice.

Dessel, Kulick, Wernick and Sullivan (2017), in their study on the importance of teacher support. The reviewed literature on the training of mentors has not clearly explained who should train the mentor and how should it be done, to provide career development and psychosocial support.

The study wanted to establish whether mentors in Zimbabwe secondary schools are trained for the mentorship programme, how they are trained and how this impacts on the provision of career development and psychosocial support with the view to coming up with better ways to improve the mentors' practices in career development and psychosocial support. Having reviewed the literature on various aspects of mentors' practices in facilitating career development and providing psychosocial support, the next section summarises these literature findings.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was adopted in this study, where the research understood the events and individuals in their natural state (Alvesson and Sköldbberg, 2017). Findings by Thanh *et al.* (2015:25) show that interpretivists usually tend to use qualitative methods such as case studies and ethnography which provide rich reports to fully understand contexts. Moreover, interpretivists portray a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex and ever-changing (Steyn *et al.*, 2017).

RESULTS

The training of mentors is very essential in the mentorship programme since it equips the mentor with skills necessary for the facilitation of career development and provision of psychosocial support to trainee teachers on teaching practice.

Considering this, participants were requested to shed light on capacity building or training of mentors and its importance in the facilitation of career development and provision of psychosocial support to trainee teachers during TP. In response to the question, most of the participants agreed that the Department of Teacher Education (DTE) and colleges must train mentors, but mentors were not being trained at all. The participants suggested that mentors were supposed to be trained before mentorship to effectively facilitate career development and provide psychosocial support to trainee teachers during TP. This was despite some financial constraints which may hinder the training process. It also came out from the participants' responses in this study that there should be a policy on mentor selection, since it has become an issue of concern in many schools and colleges. FGTSI had this to say,

The Department of Teacher Education is supposed to come in conjunction with the college to teach the mentors but it is very rare. The assessors from the college just come and assess their students. Sometimes, they don't even talk to their mentors. They just come and go. So, some of the mentors have not received this training. That makes it very difficult for some mentors to supervise these students.

FGT1W:

They should have some workshops before they give us students because it will be a burden for us to think about what I am supposed to do. And the students don't know what they are supposed to be doing. Mentors are not aware of what to do. So, if they have workshops before they give us their students, I think it will be very helpful to us.

FGT3T:

There are many problems encountered in the training of mentors, such as lack of resources in terms of finances and even time to conduct workshops, because the teacher at those schools will be busy with their work and the college will come with another load.

Regarding the same issue, the mentors' answers also reiterated what came out from other participants and the three focus groups. It emerged from the participants' responses that mentors needed to be trained before mentorship, to be fully equipped with necessary skills.

MS1a said,

If they train us, we are going to be aware of what to assess when assessing their students. I think if they give us the assessment documents before because sometimes the students give us the assessment documents asking us to just put our signatures, not aware of what I should be assessing.

MS1B said,

Normally, it is just once and they at times don't hold any workshops because we just see them once, especially in the Department of Teacher Education. I was not trained really, but am just a HOD. That's how I become a mentor.

MS2 said,

The government and the teachers' colleges should set a provision where there should be some workshops for the training of the mentors. The challenge is the issue of time. There is no time to spare for the training of mentors during school days. All mentors may want to be trained to be mentors. No one will want to be left out alone and in so doing, it means

that this will affect the whole learning process, disturbing the teaching and learning process.

MS2B noted that,

Well, rarely, we don't get much training. It is like what happens is that they only pick one person from the school who is trained, you know, apparently attends a workshop and when that person attends workshops, brings the feedback to school and tells us what has been happening.

MS3A said,

I suggest they should come to the schools to train mentors and invite them at one central point. There are so many challenges that are faced by schools in training the mentors, such as shortage of cash. So, every institution is suffering from the economic crisis, which is facing every institution. We also do not have resources material. We also do not have human resources as well as the personnel to train the mentors.

MS3B stated,

I've not been trained. Like now, I'm mentoring students. Perhaps it is because we're in rural areas. Maybe, they do such workshops in town. So, there's no training that is being held. As for now, we are using our own experience which we acquired during the same process when we were doing the teaching practice.

MS3A said,

So, no training has been offered so far to us. I think the Department of Teacher Education, in conjunction with the college, is to make sure that they deploy the trainee teachers to mentors after training them for mentorship. It is very important and it is necessary to train mentors to

equip them with adequate skills for mentorship. So, it will improve the quality of supervision that will be done by mentors to the trainee teachers.

The responses given by the lecturers in charge of the mathematics, science and physical education departments about the same issue indicated that they were also in accord with other participants' responses but they gave an excuse that the colleges could not train the mentors due to financial constraints. They also mentioned the issue of resources as a barrier to the training of mentors before TP starts. LICM noted that,

It is not being done. Overall, mentors are not being trained for mentorship. Some of the mentors leave our students with social problems and they don't assist them in any way. So, maybe training, that might help and also the training needs some resources since it is done through workshops.

LICS noted that,

For example, the college must budget for that. Yes. That's a big challenge, that of money and time to do it. Training can be done during the weekend.

LICM also observed that,

Mentor training is very important, given the technological advancements and also the change in syllabus. It is the other way around now. The trainee teacher is at an advanced stage than the mentor who is at the school because the practices that are in the school are old. Their curriculum or what they did is now outdated and new topics have been taken aboard in the schools.

LICS states that, The major problem is the financial crisis which has struck our nation because we are looking at people from all over the country, who need to

be trained. We are supposed to synchronise everything about teaching practice, including the colleges themselves. They should have a common ground on what is expected of the mentors.

LICPE also stated that, Sometimes, the mentors will be expecting too much from the trainee teachers and there are certain misconceptions that these mentors might have in terms of how they should work with the trainee teachers. As I have alluded to earlier, some schools need somebody to work on their behalf. It is one of those challenges that colleges face in dealing with mentors. Another challenge is that of mentors not showing up for the workshops. Yes, it could be an attitude problem.

The Department of Teacher Education further explained the procedures to be followed for effective mentor training. However, it acknowledges the importance of mentor training before the beginning of the mentorship programme. For example, DTELK said,

I said we engaged aggressively with the teacher training colleges, by holding training, workshops and even presenting papers to colleges on mentorship. DTE can be invited during training to offer training on mentorship of these teachers. This is two-way but normally, the teachers' colleges train and the university is invited to be the core facilitator. So, in a way, we can say we both train, the university as well as the teacher's colleges and it cascades down even to the heads of schools who will also be monitoring the mentors to make sure that they are doing their work as per mandate.

The DTELk further explained the importance of mentor training when he said, Once mentors are trained, they will be able to give exactly what we want. We want noble teachers and we want this profession to remain as noble as it

should be. So, without training, we will not be able to catch up with the social, economic as well as cultural values.

The data presented in this article revealed that mentors were not trained at all. There was a gap in how mentors were selected. Most participants showed that mentors are supposed to be trained before they start the mentorship programme. There were challenges, such as financial constraints, that affected the capacity building of mentors. It came out from the participants' responses that Zimbabwe has been economically crippled for a long time and as a result, it has become too difficult for the Ministry of Education, DTE and colleges to sponsor the training programme since there is no money to buy the needed materials and pay the facilitators and also to train mentor trainers. It came out as a suggestion from the participants that both mentors and trainee teachers may need to be remunerated or given any other form of appreciation to meet the cost of various commodities and materials to use during TP. It was also revealed that, without the training of mentors, the mentors' practices in the facilitation of career development and provision of psychosocial support will be ineffective. However, the findings of the study have not defined the content to be taught to the mentors during training, when and where training should take place, as well as who should train the mentors. This remains a big gap which also needs to be attended to.

DISCUSSION

There is need for the training of mentors in career development and psychosocial support of trainee teachers during teaching practice. It emerged from the findings of the current study that teachers were not trained as mentors. Most mentors depend on knowledge they attained from college and a few on school staff development programmes. The above view is supported by recent studies showing that mentors are often not sure about their roles (Shumba, Rembe,

Chacko and Luggya, 2016).) Regarding in-service training, the study established that some teachers in the selected schools had not received any form of inservice training,

The findings of the study showed that there was a gap in how mentors were selected. These were confirmed by recent research conducted by Maphosa and Namba (2012) which revealed that 19% of the mentors volunteered, while 81% were simply asked by school heads to be mentors. This is strongly backed by literature and documentary analysis data. It was found that there was a mismatch between the reality of today's schools, and the introduction of the new curriculum in Zimbabwe and the traditional teacher preparation paradigms still existing in teachers' colleges. This has also raised eyebrows concerning the preparation of trainee teachers in teacher education and the type of mentors they will encounter in schools (Marais and Meier, 2004; Makura and Zireva, 2011; Mapfumo, Chitsiko and Chireshe, 2012). However, literature from the background of the study has revealed that in most African countries in the last two decades, school based mentoring has become an increasingly important component of the process by which trainee teachers begin to learn how to teach (Mpofu and Chimenga, 2016).

It was revealed in other schools that there were no stipulated regulations or a policy for mentor selection. Thus, literature confirmed that in most schools, mentor selection was done by the heads of the schools and in some rare cases mentors volunteered. On the contrary, most participants from the current study revealed that mentors are supposed to be trained before they go for mentorship. In support of the above idea, reviewed literature indicates that some institutions have automatically stopped training mentors due to economic hardships (Morrison, Ross, Morrison and Kalman, 2019).

Support seminars can be held as periodic meetings that are related to teacher standards, to provide adequate training. Mentors can be trained in various ways such as provision and assistance with policies and procedures, emotional support, introduction of school-based mentor programmes, use of traditional face-to-face classroom format and use of e-mentoring. However, literature advises that the mentors' basic training be done just after the selection of prospective mentors. There is no stipulated time for mentor training. Staggering training over a semester or even an entire year can be more effective when properly planned and done, but it may be challenging in terms of schedules within the situation calendar (Merriam and Grenier, 2019).

Ndamba and Chabaya (2011) suggest that the most effective way of recruiting mentors is by asking for volunteers. Literature review has also established that selected mentors are expected to have the following characteristics: display capability in classroom teaching, be an experienced senior teacher, be able to use a variety of teaching techniques or skills, be knowledgeable, enthusiastic, receptive, informed, eloquent, reliable, able to guide, have wisdom, be personally involved, be people oriented, open minded, flexible, empathetic and collaborative (Freedman, 2009; Ngara and Ngwarai, 2013; Tshuma and Ndebele, 2015). However, mentor selection continues to be a challenging issue in Zimbabwe (Ngara and Ngwarai, 2013; Tshuma and Ndebele, 2015).

It came out as a suggestion from the participants' responses that both mentors and trainee teachers may be remunerated or given any other form of appreciation to meet the cost of various commodities and materials to use during TP. However, it was revealed that without the training of mentors, the mentor practices in career development and psychosocial support were inefficient. Literature suggests that

mentors can be trained during the school holidays in April, August or December, which adds up to three months per annum, as an ongoing programme throughout the year (Mudavanhu and Majoni, 2003).

Literature also concurs with the findings of the study, that mentors are expected to consistently attend staff development workshops at which they must receive food and transport allowances, so that they are well informed on what to expect from trainee teachers and how to use the supervision or assessment documents used by the teacher training colleges (Asiyai, 2017). Furthermore, they are supposed to be trained in communication and active listening techniques, relationship skills, effective teaching, models of supervision and coaching, conflict resolution and problem-solving (Ndamba and Chabaya, 2011).

However, literature shows that local colleges and universities and non-profit making organisations may find it challenging to consistently conduct mentoring programmes. It also emerged from literature that mentors can also commit themselves to meet regularly with trainee teachers for a minimum of six months, to strengthen their relationship and to achieve the goals of mentoring or have a positive impact on trainee teacher achievement. Experienced teachers must help in inducting beginner teachers on mentoring programmes such as in-service training of teachers and staff development activities (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez and Tomlinson, 2009). Mentorship programmes, peer teacher mentoring and induction programmes must be introduced to support mentorship. The results of the current study concur with reviewed literature which notes that there are also challenges such as financial constraints, negative attitude towards mentorship programme by some of the stakeholders, emotional, career and psychosocial problems, affecting the capacity building of mentors. It has been found that the major challenges relate to financial constraints. Zimbabwe has had chronic

economic challenges which make it difficult for the Ministry of Education, DTE and colleges to sponsor the training programmes. Thus, experienced and qualified teachers in schools need consistent and effective inhouse training in mentorship.

The crucial issues that have emerged from the discussion are that mentors' basic training can be done just after the selection of prospective mentors, since there is no stipulated time for mentor training. Staggering training over a semester or even an entire year can be more effective when properly planned.

The study also came up with recommended characteristics of a good mentor which are: displaying capability in classroom teaching, being an experienced senior teacher, being able to use a variety of teaching techniques or skills, being knowledgeable, enthusiastic, receptive, informed, eloquent, reliable, being able to guide, having wisdom and personal involvement, being people-oriented, open-minded, flexible, empathetic and collaborative (Hudson, 2017). Mentors and trainee teachers should be remunerated or given any other form of appreciation to meet the cost of various commodities and materials to use during TP. Mentors should be trained during the school holidays, which constitutes three months per annum, as an ongoing programme throughout the year. Mentors are expected to consistently attend staff development workshops at which they must receive food and transport allowances so that they are well informed on what to expect from trainee teachers and how to use the supervision or assessment critique forms used by the teacher training colleges.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It emerged from the study that mentors were not trained, therefore, mentors needed to be trained before the mentorship programme. It came out from the current study that most mentors depended on knowledge they attained from the

college where they trained as teachers and a few on school staff development programmes. Thus, mentors were to be trained to effectively provide career development and psychosocial support. It emerged from the study that mentors were not at all being trained to become mentors. Thus, there was a gap in capacity building of mentors and in mentor selection.

It emerged from the study that mentors were supposed to be trained before the mentorship programme commences. Furthermore, the study found that there were also challenges, such as financial constraints, that were affecting the capacity building of the mentors during TP.

The important issues that emerged from the study are that mentors should be well informed on what to expect from trainee teachers and how to use the supervision or assessment forms or documents used by the teacher training colleges. Mentors are supposed to be trained in communication and active listening techniques, relationship skills, effective teaching, models of supervision and coaching, conflict resolution and problem solving. Schools and colleges are expected to develop and implement an ongoing mentor training programme that continues throughout the mentoring process to produce the greatest positive effect on trainee teachers.

The colleges and schools should constantly review their codes of conduct so that they are relevant to the prevailing situation. There is need for initiation of the mentor training, staff development and in-service training programmes for school mentors since some mentors are not trained. The effectiveness of this programme is depended on a fully functional and trained staff so that trainee teachers are developed holistically. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) and schools should reduce the workloads of mentor teachers so that

they can focus more on provision of career development and psychosocial support.

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