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teacher trainee mentoring: a case study
at a Malaysian university

Christina P. Ligadu
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Developing an alternative program for teacher trainee mentoring: A case study at a Malaysian university.

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the
degree

Doctor of Philosophy

From

University of Wollongong

By

Christina Peter Ligadu
B.Sc & M.Ed Family and Consumer Science Education
(Iowa State University)

Faculty of Education

2008

Thesis Certification

CERTIFICATION

I, Christina Peter Ligadu, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for qualification at any other academic institutions.

Christina Peter Ligadu

1 December 2008

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I lovingly dedicate this thesis to my parents, the late Peter Ligadu and Theresa Santi Bhatt, who raised me and instilled in me that education is the key to success. Without them I could have not become what I am today.

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ABSTRACT

Mentoring practices have been an important part of the practicum in initial teacher training. The purpose of this study was to develop and investigate the impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for teacher mentors and mentees at two secondary schools in the state of Sabah, Malaysia. It also explored the institutional, cultural and pedagogic factors that influenced the impact of the mentoring program. Nine mentees and twelve teacher mentors participated in the study. A qualitative, case study method was utilized to investigate the impact of the mentoring program and factors that influenced that impact. Combined data sources from semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document review were used to gather data on mentoring experiences in the study.

The results indicate that the impact of the program was varied but generally positive for both mentees and mentors, professionally and personally. Both mentees and mentors gained from different aspects of mentoring support advocated in the mentoring program. Institutional, cultural and pedagogic factors that impacted on the mentoring program were identified as classroom practices support, peer mentoring, mentoring relationships and interpersonal communications, personal qualities and attitudes of participants, reflective practices and teaching observations. Major constraints identified were availability of mentors, particularly, and mentees, time and timing, and personal qualities and communication skills of both mentors and mentees. Cultural factors also seemed to have influenced the mentoring process.

The study overall provides insights and guidelines for modifications in a revised mentoring program and recommendations for SESD, UMS, schools, higher education institutions, and education policy makers, and for further research.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	i
Table of Contents.....	Ii
List of Figures.....	Vii
List of Tables.....	Vii
List of Appendices.....	Viii
Chapter 1	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the study.....	2
1.2.1 The context of the practicum at the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah.....	5
1.2.2 Challenges faced by the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah.....	7
1.2.3 The context of the mentoring program.....	11
1.3 Purpose of research.....	13
1.4 Significance of the study.....	14
1.5 Methodology.....	15
1.6 Theoretical Framework.....	15
1.7 The Conceptual Framework.....	16
1.8 Limitations of the study.....	18
1.9 Definitions of Key Terms.....	18
1. 10 Outline of the chapters.....	120
Chapter 2	
Review of Literature	22
2.1 Introduction.....	22
2.2 Definition of mentoring.....	22
2.3 The context of mentoring practices in teacher education.....	24
2.4 Theoretical approaches to mentoring in teacher education.....	27
2.4.1 Mentoring models.....	27
2.4.1.1 Apprenticeship Model.....	28
2.4.1.2 Competency-Based Model.....	29
2.4.1.3 Reflective Model	30

2.4.1.4 Knowledge-Building Community Model.....	32
2.4.1.5 Anderson and Shannon’s Model	32
2.4.1.6 Furlong and Maynard’s Staged Mentoring Model	34
2.4.1.7 The Clinical Supervision Model	36
2.4.1.8 Summary of mentoring models	38
2.5 Mentoring programs.....	42
2.5.1 Approaches to Mentoring Program.....	43
2.5.2 Elements in mentoring program.....	45
2.6. Mentoring practices in teacher education.....	50
2.6.1 Mentoring support.....	50
2.6.1.1 Professional learning support.....	52
2.6.1.1.1 Observing mentors and peer teaching.....	54
2.6.1.1.2 Collaborative teaching (team teaching).....	56
2.6.1.1.3 Peer mentoring.....	58
2.6.1.2 Personal support.....	59
2.6.1.2.1 Personal qualities and attitudes.....	60
2.6.1.2.2 Selection criteria and matching.....	63
2.7 Mentoring relationship and communication.....	65
2.7.1 Developing mentoring relationship and communication.....	67
2.7.2 Interpersonal communication skills	69
2.7.3 Phases of mentoring relationships.....	70
2.8 Mentoring roles.....	72
2.9 Reflective practice.....	74
2.9.1 Reflective journal.....	76
2.10 Teaching observations and assessment by mentors	78
2.11 Culturally appropriateness.....	80
2.12 Conceptual Framework of the study.....	81
2.13 Summary.....	87
Chapter 3	89
Methodology	89
3.1 Introduction.....	89
3.2 The mentoring program context.....	89
3.3 Research questions.....	90

3.4 Research design.....	90
3.4.1 Case study	90
3.4.2 Qualitative research.....	92
3.5 Participants and site of the study.....	94
3.6 The sequence and design of the study.....	96
3.7 Methods of data collection.....	102
3.7.1 Interviews.....	102
3.7.2 Focus groups.....	106
3.7.3 Document reviews.....	107
3.8 Data analysis process.....	109
3.9 Triangulation.....	111
3.10 Member checking.....	112
3.11 Ethical considerations.....	113
3.12 Summary.....	114
Chapter 4	
Research Question 1: Results & Discussion	116
4.1 Introduction.....	117
4.2 Professional learning support.....	117
4.2.1 Tips on effective teaching and familiarity with school culture and policies.....	117
Discussion.....	128
4.2.2 Provision of teaching resources.....	132
Discussion.....	136
4.2.3 Classroom management skills.....	137
Discussion.....	140
4.2.4 Observing mentors teaching.....	141
Discussion.....	145
4.2.5 Collaborative teaching (team teaching).....	146
Discussion.....	147
4.2.6 Peer mentoring.....	148
Discussion.....	150
4.3 Mentoring relationships and communication.....	151
4.3.1 Establishing mentoring relationships and communication	152

Discussion.....	156
4.3.2 Interpersonal communication skills.....	158
Discussion.....	163
4.3.3 Availability	164
Discussion.....	166
4.4 Reflective practices.....	167
4.4.1 Self- awareness in reflective discussions.....	168
Discussion.....	176
4.4.2 Availability for reflective practices	178
Discussion.....	180
4.4.3 Interpersonal skills	181
Discussion.....	184
4.4.4 Time for reflective practices.....	184
Discussion.....	186
4.4.5 Reflective journals.....	187
Discussion.....	189
4. 5 Teaching observation and assessment	190
4.5.1 Mentor observation.....	191
4.5.2 Joint observation, assessment and discussions with university supervisor.....	195
Discussion.....	199
4.5.3 Pre and post discussion and assessment of lessons	200
Discussion.....	204
4.6. Mentoring roles.....	204
4.6.1 Guide and Advisor.....	205
4.6.2 Friend.....	208
4.6.3 Partner.....	209
4.6.4 Supervisor and Assessor	210
4.6.5 Role model.....	211
4.6.6 Emergent mentoring roles.....	212
Discussion.....	213
4.7 Chapter summary.....	215
Chapter 5	
Research Question 2: Results and Discussion.....	220

5.1 Introduction.....	220
5.2 Mentor selection criteria and matching.....	221
5.2.1 Gender.....	226
Discussion.....	227
5.2.2 Mentor credibility.....	228
Discussion.....	229
5.3 Personal qualities and attitudes of mentors and mentees.....	230
Discussion.....	239
5.4 Prior meetings during the mentoring workshops.....	241
Discussion.....	243
5.5 Mentor peer discussion group.....	244
Discussion.....	246
5.6 Incentives for mentors.....	246
Discussion.....	247
5.7 Mentoring phases.....	248
Discussion.....	253
5.8 Chapter summary.....	254
Chapter 6	
Conclusion, Implications and Recommendations.....	258
6.1 Introduction.....	258
6.2 Impact of the mentoring program.....	260
6.3 Factors influencing impact.....	261
6.3.1 Institutional Factors.....	261
6.3.2 Cultural and structural factors.....	264
6.3.3 Pedagogic, personal and interpersonal factors.....	267
6.3.4 Summary.....	269
6.4. Implications and recommendations.....	270
6.4.1 School.....	270
6.4.2 Program revision at SESD, UMS.....	272
6.5. Further research.....	274
References.....	276
Appendices.....	296

List of Figures

Figure 1.1 The Conceptual Framework.....	17
Figure 2.1 The Conceptual Framework.....	84
Figure 6.1 The Conceptual Framework.....	259

List of Tables

Table 1.1 Undergraduate Programs for Bachelor of Education, SEDS, UMS.....	6
Table 1.2 Number of mentees involved in Practicum 1999 -2005 at SEDS,UMS.....	9
Table 1.3 Areas of emphasis in the integrated, Culturally a Appropriate Mentorin Program.....	12
Table 2.1 Examples of Mentoring Programs	49
Table 2.2 A summary of the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for mentors and mentees.....	85
Table 3.1 Profiles of teacher mentors.....	96
Table 3.2 Profiles of mentees.....	96
Table 3.3 Research sequence and design.....	101
Table 4.1 Shows a summary of the major findings on Research Question 1...	218
Table 5.1 Shows a summary of the major findings on Research Question 2...	257

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: The letter of Approval from the University of Wollongong/Illawarra Area of Health Service Human Research Ethics Committee.....	296
Appendix 2: Letter of Approval from the Ministry of Education Malaysia (Research & Development Division).....	297
Appendix 3: Letter of Approval from the State Education Department, Sabah, Malaysia.....	298
Appendix 4: Guidelines for Writing A Reflective Journal.....	299
Appendix 5: Results of the survey and feedback from previous mentors and mentees.....	300
Appendix 6: Letter to the School Principal	301
Appendix 7: Participant Information Sheet.....	302
Appendix 8: Information Form for Research – Student Participant.....	304
Appendix 9: Information Form for Research – Mentor Teacher.....	305
Appendix 10: Consent Form.....	306
Appendix 11: Consent Form of Student Teacher.....	307
Appendix 12: Consent Form of Teacher Mentor.....	308
Appendix 13: Sample Interview Questions for Teacher Mentors.....	309
Appendix 14: Sample Interview Questions for Student Teacher.....	310
Appendix 15: Sample Questions for Focus Groups for Mentors.....	311
Appendix 16: Sample Questions for Focus Groups for Mentees.....	312

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

In recent years teacher mentoring has emerged in many countries, such as the United States of America, Australia, Britain, Europe, and Asia, as a common response of school authorities to the needs of new teachers at both the preservice and induction levels (Furlong & Maynard, 1995; McIntyre & Hagger, 1993; Ismail, 2001; Jonson, 2002; Wang & Odell, 2002; Cederqvist, Dackenberg, Ganser & Nordenqvist, 2003). As a consequence, numerous models and programs within teacher education have been developed to provide guidelines for mentoring.

The aims of this study were to investigate the impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program in Malaysia and to explore the many factors that influenced that impact.

This chapter provides an explanation of the background of the study, the purpose of the study, the research questions which directed the investigation of the study, the methodology used, the theoretical framework, the limitations of the study, definitions of key terms used and descriptions of the remaining chapters.

1.2 Background of the study

Mentoring in Malaysia has been extant in schools since 1993. With the introduction of the Diploma in Teaching in 1996, mentoring was included as part of the school practicum for beginning teachers (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 1996). In universities, the majority of education faculties have included mentoring as part of their practicum program with teacher mentors assigned to preservice mentees. Some studies have been conducted on mentoring in Malaysian schools and higher education institutions. Most of the research has focused on the relationships between mentors and novice teachers (Maynard & Furlong, 1995); the problems faced by school administrators managing mentors and novice teachers, especially in the first year of teaching (Cullingford, 2006); partnerships in mentoring between schools and institutions of teacher training to facilitate the mentoring system during the practicum (Hagger & McIntyre, 1993); career development and advancement in higher education (Ismail & Akrokisamy, 2007); and university students mentoring students in selected schools in the teaching of science and mathematics (Idris, 1999).

Ng and Osman (1995) indicated that there were problems faced by mentees during the practicum as a result of lack of support by teacher mentors. Some of the practicum environments were not conducive to professional development and there was lack of commitment towards the practicum (Tan & Hamid, 1992; Salleh, 1999). Achievement of some of the goals of the induction mentoring programs conducted in schools was constrained, by various factors (Narayanasamy, 1995).

Salleh and Hoon (1997) indicated that there was an increasing trend towards greater involvement of schools in the training of preservice teachers either in relation to new teachers or student mentees in teacher training colleges and universities in Malaysia. Tuah (2003) and Salleh (1995) observed that mentoring promotes collaboration, cooperation and teamwork between schools and university.

Mentoring has also been used to establish partnerships between schools and teacher training institutions and higher education institutions. Ismail (2001) studied the mentoring system in teacher training institutions in Malaysia that focused on ESL primary school student teachers. She found that mentoring had some influence on mentees' performance but there was still a need for more appropriate training of the mentor teachers. This suggested a need for better ways of mentoring during teaching practicum that would improve on the existing systems.

To date, the findings on the effectiveness of the mentoring systems in schools in Malaysia have not been conclusive (Kunjambu, Chung, Hassan, Abdullah, Sani, Jaafar, Abdullah, Ali & Yusof, 2002), and there are still many grey areas in mentoring that need to be explored and investigated further, specifically focusing on the readiness of mentors for their mentoring roles (Sanggura, 1998, Ismail, 2001). However, Salleh and Hoon (1997) indicated that mentoring is still new and still not fully understood in Malaysia. Hence, more studies are needed to gain better insights into the effectiveness of mentoring in initial teacher education and its impact on mentees.

Over the years, many different models of mentoring and mentoring programs have been developed and implemented, tailored to meet the needs of different situations in

different education institutions. Some examples of the mentoring models being used by schools and higher education institutions identified in the literature are Furlong and Maynard's *Apprenticeship, Competence-based and Reflective* mentoring models (Furlong & Maynard, 1995); *Anderson and Shannon's* model (Anderson & Shannon, 1995); the *Knowledge Building Community* model (Kiggins & Cambourne, 2003); the *Theory-and-Practice Connection* approach, the *Situated Apprenticeship* approach and the *Critical Constructive Theory* approach (Wang & Odell, 2002). These mentoring models are differentiated in terms of goals, objectives and characteristics, and practical applications, however, many characteristics overlap. For example, all mentoring models emphasize the importance of emotional support during the mentoring process.

Support of mentees through mentoring can contribute to the professional growth of novice teachers (Brooks & Sikes, 1997). However, not all mentor-mentee relationships are considered effective or beneficial (Young, 2001). Despite the many benefits of teacher mentoring noted in the literature, there are still some gaps. For example, some studies indicated that the mismatch of mentors and mentees could be damaging and can cause anxiety (Fish, 1995).

There are relatively few studies on the beliefs and knowledge about learning and teaching that beginning teachers bring to their teaching and their relationships with their mentors (Wang & Odell, 2002). It is also apparent that there has been relatively little systematic research done on mentoring of novice teachers during the teaching practicum period as part of their professional development. It is therefore essential to consider each model and how the models may be integrated to support mentoring relationships most effectively in assisting student mentees during their teaching practicum.

1.2.1 The context of the practicum at the School of Education and Social Development (SESD), University Malaysia Sabah

The main goal of the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah (SESD, UMS) is to produce trained graduate teachers to teach in upper secondary schools. Practicum is a compulsory component and is graded in order to fulfil requirements for the bachelor degree in education at the SESD, UMS. If students fail the practicum, they have to repeat the course. The practicum is a nine credit hour course that takes three months to complete (UMS, Prospectus, 2004-2005).

The mentees are eligible to carry out their practicum only after having completed all the courses conducted during the last semester of their studies. The mentees come from two strands, one comprising mentees who are either diploma, matriculation or Higher School Certificate holders, the other comprising teachers without an education degree but who have previously completed a diploma or a certificate in teaching. Most of the latter are sponsored under a special government scheme for upgrading non-graduate teachers.

From 1996 the SESD, UMS has offered four undergraduate education programs: a Bachelor of Education in Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL); in Economics; in Science and Mathematics (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Mathematics); and in Social Science (History and Geography). Each teacher trainee is required to teach a major subject and a minor subject during the practicum. The number of teaching periods for a major subject is between nine and twelve periods and for the minor subject between three and six periods a week. Table 1.1 shows individual

programs with the major subjects and minor subjects taught in a secondary school during the practicum.

Table 1.1 Undergraduate programs for Bachelor of Education, SESD,UMS 2005

Please see print copy for Table 1.1

The administration of the practicum involved the university, the state education department and the respective schools. Official letters to the state education department with full lists of names of suggested schools and mentees for the practicum were sent for approval. Upon receiving the approval from the state education department, the university then sent letters to the respective schools with the approval letters from the state education department attached, to obtain the school's consent for the practicum to be conducted. A special request related to the practicum was also attached with the letter to assign teacher mentors for both major and minor subjects to the mentees for the whole duration of the practicum. School principals had the mandate to appoint competent teacher mentors based on guidelines provided by SESD Guidelines (SESD, UMS, 2005). Once the university received the approval from the schools, the final list of student teachers for the practicum was posted to the schools concerned.

1.2.2 Challenges faced by the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah

The teaching practice is often a stressful experience for mentees (Brock & Grady, 1998). It is assumed that the teaching practicum will give student mentees the opportunity to develop a professional identity, teach, and participate in multiple, complex and concrete experiences essential for meaningful learning and teaching (Brock & Grady, 1998; Huling-Austin, 1992). Teacher mentoring is seen as a vehicle in the development of mentees' understanding how to learn and practise effectively with the support and guidance of experienced teacher mentors.

Mentoring of mentees in the practicum is conceived as essentially an interactive process which is generally concerned with achieving the objectives specified for the practicum. More particularly, it is concerned with facilitating the learning and development of mentees in planning and improving teaching performances. SEDS, UMS faces many challenges in the teaching practicum. Currently, there is no consistent mentoring system in the teacher training program at the SEDS, UMS. The common practice is to invite school principals or school representatives to attend a couple of hours of briefing on the procedures of the teaching practicum. Such a briefing would typically cover topics on practicum procedures and supervision, and include discussions on completing evaluation forms and the grading system. To date, there has been no formal training for the roles of mentors and mentees, for example in providing practical teaching knowledge, sharing methods and materials, observation, planning, organizing, personal (emotional) support and reflective teaching.

Some changes have been made in initial teacher education in Malaysia by introducing mentoring in schools by the Teacher Training Division in the Ministry of Education (TED) in 1993 (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 1996). The aim was for teacher institution supervisors and teacher mentors to work together in schools to provide maximum support for teacher trainees during the practicum (Harun, Othman & Ismail, 2003).

Often, there is a lack of communication and interaction amongst school mentors, mentees and university supervisors in the supervision and assessment of mentees. The need to improve the current mentoring practice by working closely to build rapport with school management and especially with teacher mentors is imperative. As pointed out by Elliot (1991) the establishment of good communications and relationships between school mentors and mentees is important in the mentoring process and in their working together collaboratively to shape the process as well as its consequences (Wilderman, Magliaro, Niles & Niles, 1992).

The notion that the practicum course is where the mentees are able to apply their theoretical knowledge in practice makes the SESD, UMS very much aware of the importance of providing mentoring support from both university supervisors and teacher mentors. The two strands of mentees differed in their needs, levels of expectations, and teaching confidence and skills during the practicum. Matching of teacher mentors and mentees was seen as an important aspect of the mentoring process. As the selection of school mentors is done by the school principals, there have been cases in which the school's criteria in selecting the school mentors did not match those of the university. Moreover, a majority of the mentors have been unsure of their specific

mentoring roles (See Appendix 5, Feedback of survey from mentors and mentees, p. 300).

The enrolment of teaching mentees in Malaysia between 2000 and 2005 increased especially at SESD, UMS. The move made by the Ministry of Education in Malaysia to have graduate teachers in secondary schools, and eventually in primary schools, has resulted in an increasing number of teachers entering the university to upgrade their qualifications (SESD, JPPG Report, 2005).

Table 1.2 Number of mentees involved in practicum 1999-2005 at SESD, UMS

Please see print copy for Table 1.2

With the increasing number of mentees in the practicum and the shortage of lecturers at SESD, UMS to supervise them, measures were increasingly taken to make sure that adequate support would be provided to mentees during the practicum. Among these, the SESD, UMS opted to make the practicum more school-based with the schools playing a major role in mentoring the mentees. The number of teaching observations was also reduced to five by the school and two by university supervisors. The involvement of the university supervisors will continue to include visiting, mentoring and assessing mentees in the schools. The involvement of the teacher mentors became so critical in this practicum that support for teacher mentors needed to be enhanced and optimized to assist the SESD, UMS to maintain the quality of teacher training.

In addition to the lack of a systematic mentoring program, the number of schools within the vicinity of UMS was not sufficient to accommodate the large number of mentees in the teaching practicum. This presented the problem that mentees assigned to distant rural schools have restricted access to their university supervisors. Travel time to these schools from the university involves a minimum of three hours and up to one day, which makes it difficult for mentees to contact university supervisors and for supervisors to visit schools. This increases the need to provide additional in-school practicum support for distant practicum schools, possibly through a sound and effective mentoring program that could meet needs of both teacher mentors and mentees during the teaching practicum.

These challenges faced by SEDS, UMS, such as the lack of a consistent mentoring system in the practicum of formal training of mentors and mentees, of communication and interaction between mentors and university supervisors; roles of mentors not being clearly defined; and increased enrolment of mentees in teaching practice; the practicum became more school-based involving higher participation of mentors with reduced direct university support; and lack of mentoring support for mentees by mentors. Survey results clearly indicated that there was need for a formal and systematic mentoring program to train both mentors and mentees. For these reasons and guided by a review of literature, the researcher deemed it appropriate to develop, implement and investigate the impact of the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program.

1.2.3 The context of the mentoring program

The design of this mentoring program was primarily shaped by the different challenges faced by the SESD, UMS during practicum. In order to give the researcher clearer perspectives on current mentoring practice, a preliminary survey was carried out and feedback obtained from previous cohorts of mentees and teacher mentors (See Appendix 5 for survey results, p. 300). This feedback gave the researcher insights into current mentoring practices. For example, currently, there is no mentor training of mentors and mentees.

The combination of these data, a study on mentoring (Ligadu, Daud, & Talin, 2001), examination of different mentoring models, programs and positive outcomes gleaned from the review of literature on teacher mentoring, and discussions with academic staff at the SESD, UMS, assisted the researcher in developing the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for the teaching practicum. Care was taken to ensure that the program was related and appropriate to the context and culture of Sabah, Malaysia. In support of this mentoring program, approval was obtained from the dean of SESD, UMS for it to be conducted in two secondary schools in Sabah.

The purpose of conducting this program was to improve and enhance current mentoring practices in schools during the teaching practicum. Incorporated in the program were two mentoring workshops carried out separately for teacher mentors and mentees to provide training in the mentoring program to be implemented during the teaching practicum. Three-day courses of training were designed for each group. However, due to time and the busy schedule of the mentors their workshop schedule was condensed to

two and a half days. Approval to carry out the workshops was obtained from the school principals and the respective schools.

The two and a half day workshop for the mentees was conducted at the university venue. It had to be conducted in stages on different days to accommodate the busy schedule of the mentees who at this time were still attending lectures. During the implementation of the mentors' workshops at the schools, the mentees also participated in activities which allowed teacher mentors and mentees to socialize and interact with each other. The researcher was the key person in conducting the mentoring workshops.

The mentoring program was implemented during the practicum. Details of the sequence of the mentoring program are explained in Chapter 3 (Section 3.6, p. 96).

Table 1.3 Area of emphasis in the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program

Issues	Area of emphasis
Professional learning support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching strategies/lesson planning/teaching resources • Classroom management skills • Observations of teacher mentors teaching • Collaborative teaching (team teaching) • Peer mentoring (mentees only)
Personal Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal qualities and attitudes • Selection criteria and matching
Mentoring relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing mentoring relationships • Interpersonal skills to communicate • Emphasis on development of phases in mentoring
Mentoring roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided by emphasis of different mentoring models and approaches: Guide, advisor, friend, partner, co-inquirer, and coach
Reflective practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective reflective practices • Reflective journaling • Teaching observation and assessment to become more reflective approach

Table 1.3 shows the new components developed and incorporated in the mentoring program in 2005 to enhance the mentoring process during the practicum.

The mentoring program is described as *integrated* because it represents an amalgam of selected elements from the different mentoring models and approaches in the studied mentoring programs. They were selected as *culturally appropriate* because of their suitability for and relevance to the needs, values of the local cultural context of the practicum at SESD, UMS in which it was conducted (See details in Section 2.11, p. 80)

1.3 Purpose of research

The main purpose of this research was to implement and investigate the impact of the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program and secondly, to examine institutional, cultural and pedagogic factors that influenced the implementation of the mentoring program. The first part of the study involved examining existing mentoring models and mentoring literature and conducting a short survey to get preliminary feedback on existing mentoring practices in order to develop a mentoring program for the specific cultural and educational context in Sabah, Malaysia. The second part of the study involved the implementation of the mentoring program, and investigation of factors which influenced these.

The study, therefore aimed to answer two research questions:

Question 1:

What is the impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program on teacher mentors and mentees at the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah?

Question 2:

What institutional, cultural and pedagogic factors influenced the implementation of this mentoring program?

1.4 Significance of the study

This study has important specific implications for SESD, UMS in teacher training. The outcome of the study will benefit teacher mentors and mentees in improving the mentoring process through providing more effective professional and personal mentoring support, and more effective mentoring relationships generally. SESD, UMS will be able to use the information from the study to plan more adequate and effective mentoring programs for the training of mentors and mentees and thereby improve the quality of the mentoring process in SESD, UMS and other higher education institutions and schools in Malaysia should benefit similarly. Partnerships and rapport between schools and SESD, UMS will also be improved, and directly and, indirectly, the standard of education in schools and teacher education in Sabah will also be improved.

This study may also contribute to a developing body of information on mentor-mentee relationships and extend the relevant teacher education literature benefiting mentors, mentees and the teaching profession generally.

1.5 Methodology

To answer the two research questions, a qualitative, case study approach was used to obtain the perceptions of the teacher mentors and mentees on the impact of the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program. It was envisaged that this method would be able to garner rich data from the participants within the cultural context. Semi-structured individual interviews, focus group discussions and document reviews were the primary data collection methods used to examine and analyze the experiences of the teacher mentors and mentees during the practicum. Constant comparison approach was used to code the data and triangulation of the different data sources was employed to discover commonalities and differences and the consistency of the findings. Member checking was also employed to ensure the credibility of the interpretations of data. The sequence and design of the study are explained in Chapter 3 (Section 3.6, p. 96)

1.6 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study was based on selected, relevant theories underpinning the different mentoring models and programs such as Furlong and Maynard's *Apprenticeship*, *Competence-based* and *Reflective* mentoring models

(Furlong & Maynard, 1995); *Anderson and Shannon's* model (Anderson & Shannon, 1995); the *Knowledge Building Community* model (Cambourne, 2001); *Furlong and Maynard's Staged Mentoring Model* (Brooks & Sikes, 1997); *Clinical Supervision Model* (Goldhammer, Anderson & Karajweski, 1980); the *Humanistic* approach, the *Situated Apprenticeship* approach and the *Critical Constructive Theory* approach (Wang & Odell, 2002). (Details of this will be explained in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1, p. 27).

1.7 The Conceptual Framework of the study

The conceptual framework reflects the development, design and the implementation of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for mentors and mentees.

The details of this framework will be explained in Chapter 2 (Section 2.12, p. 81)

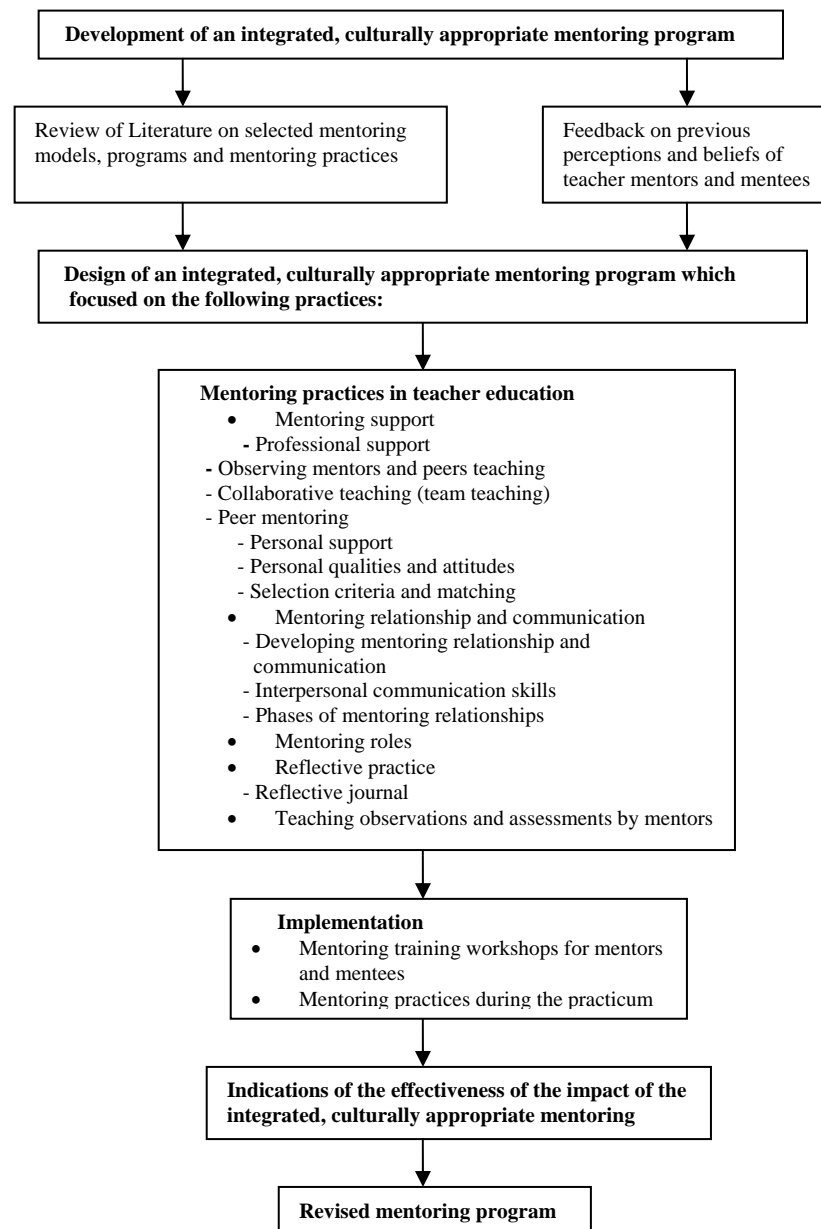


Figure 1.1 The Conceptual Framework of the Study

1.8 Limitations of the study

As mentioned earlier, the mentoring program was only implemented in two secondary schools. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other schools or programs in Malaysia or elsewhere. The sample involved nine mentees and twelve teacher mentors and it might be argued that such a small sample of teacher mentors and mentees cannot be representative of all mentees and teacher mentors. However, the in-depth rich data and triangulation from different sources provide support for the trustworthiness of the findings in this study.

The duration of the practicum may also pose limitations as there may not have been sufficient time for the teacher mentors and mentees to fully implement the various components of the mentoring program and this may have been compounded by particular constraints in the schools. It is also possible that the design of the mentoring program may not have fully explored every aspect of the mentoring process.

Another possible limitation of this study is that the data from the teacher mentors and mentees may have been influenced by the researcher, who was a key participant as the university supervisor who trained the teacher mentors and mentees.

1.9 Definitions of Key Terms

For the purpose of this study, clarification of key terms is provided and drawn from the review of literature.

Teacher mentor:

An experienced teacher assigned by the school principal to work with and provide support for the mentee during the practicum.

Mentee:

Student teacher who is undergoing teaching practicum and who as being mentored by teacher mentors. “Mentee is now the preferred term since it reflects a more open less formal relationship with a mentor” (Field, 2001, p. 270).

University Supervisors:

Lecturers from the SEDS, UMS who are assigned to supervise student teachers during the practicum.

Novice teachers:

Mentee teacher trainees who have no teaching experience and are completing their initial year of teaching or in this study their teacher training, as distinct from other mentees who have some teaching experience.

Professional development:

Defined as workshops, meetings, and seminars, which offer opportunities for teacher development in the areas of curriculum and instruction, classroom management and other subject matter. Opportunities for less formal dialogue, sharing of ideas and teaching strategies are also included.

Practicum:

A three month period of in-school teaching experience. It is in this period that the mentees are able to apply their theoretical knowledge into practice. It is very structured with guidelines, observations and evaluations conducted to guide and assess teaching competencies.

1.10 Outline of chapters

This thesis is presented in five chapters:

Chapter 1 introduces the intention and context of the study. This chapter provides the introduction, the background including the context of the SEDS, UMS practicum, and the mentoring program, the purpose and significance of the study, the methodology, theoretical framework, limitations of the study, the definition of key terms, and the outline of chapters of the thesis.

Chapter 2 provides the review of literature on teacher mentoring. This chapter discusses the definition of mentoring, mentoring models and programs, theories underpinning these models and mentoring functions and benefits.

Chapter 3 explains the methodology used in this study, provides literature in support of the methodology, and detail of procedures used in the implementation of the research, the data collection tools used and data analyses.

Chapter 4 details results and analysis of data, together with discussions of findings. This chapter deals more specifically with Research Question 1 and findings related to it.

Chapter 5 details results and analysis of data, together with discussions of findings. This chapter deals more specifically with Research Question 2 and findings related to it.

Chapter 6 draws conclusions on the mentoring program implemented in the two secondary schools. From these, the implications of the study are identified and suggestions on further development and implementation of the revised mentoring program in schools are highlighted along with suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature on mentoring which forms the basis of the conceptual framework of this thesis. It examines selected relevant mentoring models and programs in education and related factors affecting the mentoring process.

2.2 Definition of mentoring

A wide range of definitions of mentoring has emerged in different forms and contexts in the literature. Mentoring has been widely used in many disciplines such as education, business, and nursing (Wang & Odell, 2002; Ganser, 2006; Jones, 2006), and there appears to be no single, clear, commonly accepted definition of mentoring as it is difficult to identify and conceptualize (Broadbridge, 1999). Some suggestions by different authors on mentoring are:

Mentoring is a one-to-one relationship that evolves through distinct phases between the mentor and the adult learner (student or employee)...to develop separately or in combination, his or her personal, educational or career potential. (Cohen, 1995)

[The mentor] may act as a teacher...[and]...as a sponsor...He [the mentor] may be a host and a guide, welcoming the initiate into a new occupational and social world and acquainting him [or her] with its values, customs, resources and cast of characters. Through his [or her] own virtues, achievements, and way of living, the mentor may be an exemplar that the protégé can admire and seek to emulate. (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & Mckee, 1978, p. 2)

A mentor supports, guides, and counsels a young adult as he or she accomplishes mastery of the adult world of work. (Kram, 1985, p. 111)

A highly cited definition by Anderson and Shannon (1988, p. 40) describes mentoring as:

... a nurturing process in which a skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development. Mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and the protégé.

Such definitions indicate how mentoring is applied and in which context (Garvey & Alfred, 2000). For example, in education most definitions have something to say about the relationships involved in mentoring, the qualities of effective mentors, roles and responsibilities of mentors, mentoring support, benefits of teacher mentoring and the reflective practitioner (Rowley, 1999). Along this line, Merriam (1983) defined mentoring as “ a powerful emotional interaction between an older and a younger person, in a relationship in which the older mentor is trusted, loving, and experienced in the

guidance of the younger” (p. 162). A view of mentoring in education is that it can be a means of guiding change by constructing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching, and learning (Little, 1990). At the same time, mentoring can also act as an agent of change where mentors and their mentees can learn together (Malderez & Bodoczky, 1999).

In this study, the mentoring program was initiated and built on the amalgam of some of these definitions. For the purpose of this study, mentoring is defined as the support and professional development provided by experienced teachers (teacher mentors) to mentees (student teacher trainees) with specific mentoring roles and mentoring functions which include the provision of professional support and personal or psychological support delineated in the mentoring program.

2.3 The context of mentoring practices in teacher education

Teacher mentoring programs became a popular means of supporting novice teachers at the preservice and induction levels in the United States in the early 1980s (Wang & Odell, 2002). The practice of mentoring beginning teachers was seen as a professional development strategy for achieving a variety of goals (Mutchler, 2000). Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) suggested that mentoring has become an integral part of professional cultures in schools and also outside schools to improve school systems as part of “transforming teaching into a true learning profession” (p. 55). Today, mentoring is a common activity in teacher education, generally referring to situations in which prospective teachers are mentored by experienced teachers as part of their training and induction into the profession (Fresko & Wertheim, 2006).

Some studies in teacher education indicate that mentoring plays a role in accommodating the needs of mentees (Fish, 1995). The aims of mentoring in education now have changed to meet the different needs of mentees. It is not seen as just providing basic support for their professional and personal development but to fulfil the overall aspects of development in the learning process. The notion is that mentees need to be proactive, learning but through a rich variety of personal and educational experiences, learning best through observing, doing, commenting and questioning rather than simply by listening (Bond, 1999). It entails a relationship of coaching, counselling and, most importantly, caring, which enables both mentor and mentee to grow and develop. This is commensurate with Britton's suggestion that it could also contribute to learning, growth, and support in "building something desirable – a teacher, a teaching force, a professional, a kind of learning for pupils in schools...encompassing not only support and assessment but also learning and have more far reaching benefits than we often hope for" (2006, p. 119). Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) argued that mentoring should be less hierarchical, less individualistic, more wide-ranging, and more inclusive in its orientation than it has been in the past.

Programs have been designed to reduce novice teachers' attrition; some were intended to move novices smoothly and efficiently into the existing teaching culture; some required mentors to be a substantial support for novices' learning to teach; finally, some were developed to transform the teaching profession and culture (Huling-Austin, 1990). According to Mullen (2000), educators have pushed for new patterns of mentoring within preservice teacher education. Mentoring is now incorporated in a collaborative program for developing teaching practice, which occurs within professional experiences in schools and in institutions of higher learning.

Recently, mentoring practices have become widespread and growing influences on the professionalization of academics in higher education institutions (Blackwell & McLean, 1996; Garvey & Alfred, 2000). One of the main reasons for introducing mentoring practices in institutions of Higher Education (HE) was that mentors could contribute and perform more effectively in assisting new staff adjust, acquire new skills and gain experience, and become productive. Increasing the number of mentors is now perceived to be valuable in providing support for student learning (Geber, 2003). According to Trorey and Blamires (2006) mentors and mentees in HE have now begun to recognize the value and status of mentor-mentee relationships.

The mentoring context in HE institutions is different from schools as protégés are all adult learners. The audience is typically adult learners. The purpose of mentoring at HE institutions is basically to foster the development of individuals to fulfil their potentials (Zhao & Reed, 2003). According to McMahan and Fritzberg (2003, p. 362) building a community of learners through cohorts can make way for new entry in mentoring in HE. It should focus on "...building a collaborative and supportive culture that would enhance student ability to develop close relationships and form networks of learning".

With the introduction of mentoring in higher education, there have been some indications that both mentors and mentees have benefited from the provision of direct teaching and training, career guidance, socialization into academic culture, provision of collegial and accessible friendship, assistance with reducing anxiety and recognizing unrealistic expectations. Mentoring also offers valuable perspectives and developing maturity,

increasing mutuality and a strong focus on mentor professionalism, specifically of mentors (Jonhson, 2007).

In general it appears from the literature that mentoring in teacher education is seen as a professional development strategy to assist mentors, mentees, lecturers and students in schools and institutions of higher learning. It is seen also as a mechanism as part of the activities to improve the school support system in meeting the needs of professional learning, a conducive learning environment, and also to overcome attrition especially of novice teachers.

2.4 Theoretical approaches to mentoring in teacher education

2.4.1 Mentoring models

A number of mentoring models have been selected for consideration: Furlong and Maynard's *Apprenticeship*, *Competence-based* and *Reflective* mentoring models (Furlong & Maynard, 1995); *Anderson and Shannon's* model (Brooks & Sikes, 1997) and the *Knowledge Building Community* model (Cambourne, 2001); *Furlong and Maynard's Staged Mentoring Model* (Brooks & Sikes, 1997); and the *Clinical Supervision Model* (Goldhammer et al., 1980). These mentoring models each have their own strengths and weaknesses. They are not discrete and share many components. The models are discussed throughout the literature on teacher mentoring, sometimes with different names but having similar characteristics and functions. They are discussed in detail below because of their importance in this study and their potential relevance to the development of the mentoring program here.

2.4.1.1 Apprenticeship Model

The Apprenticeship model has received some attention within educational and training fields (Zeegers & Smith, 2002). The apprenticeship model views the mentor as a skilled craftsperson who possesses the necessary skills and is an expert in the field. In the context of initial teacher training, the mentor, or craftsperson, has the necessary expertise in teaching and learning. The relationship between mentor and student teacher is strictly a *pupil-master craftsperson relationship* and is one built on subordination in the mentoring process. This model has a long tradition in education and is best practised through emulating of and supervision by an experienced practitioner (Al-Jamal & Cullingford, 2006). Brooks and Sikes supported this approach as modelling can make a valuable contribution to enhancing teaching and learning in the classroom (1997).

The limitation of this model, however, is that the student teacher faces many problems getting access to the *craft knowledge* or *intelligent skill knowledge* of the mentor, knowledge which encompasses intellectual, cognitive, and attitudinal dimensions as well as professional skills (Furlong & Maynard, 1995). It is argued that the task of the teacher mentor is to provide the teaching skills, techniques, resources and culture of teaching as well as to give advice and suggestions when novices are struggling with immediate problems, and to “withdraw support as the novices gain confidence and increasingly function independently as teachers” (Odell, 1990, p. 10).

Despite some concerns, this model is still regarded as useful, valued and recognized as a strategy among others in student teachers’ professional development (Maynard &

Furlong, 1993; Tomlinson, 1995). Particularly in the initial stage of practical teaching, novices can benefit from observing and emulating the mentor.

2.4.1.2 Competency-Based Model

Brook and Sikes (1997) describe the competency-based mentoring model as a rational move from the apprenticeship model of learning to teach by observing and modelling to a process of mastering certain competencies expected of student teachers in teaching practice. In this model the teacher mentor acts a *systematic trainer* of the student teacher (Al-Jamal & Cullingford, 2006). Like the craftsperson mentor in the apprenticeship model, the trainer in the competency-based model also possesses the necessary knowledge and skills in teaching and learning. The difference is that the mentor in this model has a heavier responsibility in making sure the mentoring processes and planning for each student teacher are more systematic, structured and well-planned to facilitate the student teacher's acquisition and mastery of pre-defined competencies to be achieved during the teaching practice (Brook & Sikes, 1997; Al-Jamal & Cullingford, 2006).

This model is based on pre-specified behavioural outcomes and skill-related competences which the training and assessment procedures are tailored to meet. Hence, it emphasizes the performance criteria of the mentee's teaching and learning in practice. As defined by Brooks and Sikes (1997) "the competency model, in which the mentor performs the role of a trainer, is central to government thinking and provides the basis for regulations with which all initial teacher education must comply" (p. 51). However, Schön (1987) argued that by establishing pre-defined competencies to be mastered, this

model limits parameters of expected competencies and thus the practitioner lacks the flexibility to be able to choose from the standard competencies to solve unexpected problems that may be encountered. Al-Jamal and Cullingford (2006, p. 135) also argued that when mentees acquired and learned the teaching skills, they may “stop learning and reach a *plateau*”. The mentors then need to think of overcoming this by ensuring that the mentees need to be proactive and that learning is an ongoing process. A more integrated approach and extended routines such as the reflective model of mentoring could be adopted to make mentoring more effective.

2.4.1.3 Reflective Model

This model has been widely used in teacher education and has been very influential in enhancing teaching and learning processes especially in the supervision of student teachers. Different terms such as *inquiry-oriented teacher education*, teacher as a *decision-maker*, and teacher as a *professional* and teacher as a *problem solver* are related to the model. All these terms encompass some notion of reflection in professional development (Brooks & Sikes, 1997).

Schön (1987) indicated that there are two approaches in reflection. Reflection-in-action is embedded in automatic, tacit knowledge, and reflection-on-action takes place when professionals stand back and reflect on their practices through feedback from other people as well as themselves. He emphasized the importance of using relevant previous experiences and contextual knowledge rather than relying on present knowledge acquired during initial training.

Similar to Schön's approaches to reflective practices, Ghaye and Ghaye (1998) defined two types of reflections: reflection-on-practice and knowing-in-action. Reflection-on-practice is reflection after the event primarily designed to improve further action. It is a natural process of making sense of professional action; it is about using and learning from experience. Not only is this necessary for good teaching, it is also a fundamental human necessity. It helps us to make sense of teaching and learning.

Reflection-on-practice helps teachers make wise and principled decisions. It is about making meaning of what is happening in their classroom and school. In this sense it is a creative process which involves reflections, providing teachers with the courage and intellectual capacity to turn insight into improved action. It is not just about learning from experience but enlightening and empowering teachers to be creative in building their knowledge. This process helps them envision, nourish and imagine the complexity of improved teaching and learning situations (Ghaye & Ghaye, 1998; Schön, 1987).

Knowing-in-action is another important idea and is about the professional knowledge that we use in our daily practice. It begins with reflecting on what we actually do in our own teaching and this generates a rich and detailed knowledge because it is based on hands-on practice. This knowledge is then used in our own teaching. It becomes knowledge or knowing-in-action. Our knowledge is reflected in what we do, how we teach and this is revealed in our teaching actions (Ghaye & Ghaye, 1998; Schön, 1987).

2.4.1.4 Knowledge-Building Community Model

The Knowledge-Building Community Model (KBC) was identified by Cambourne (Cambourne 2001, 2002; Kiggins & Gibson, 2002; Kiggins & Cambourne, 2003). It is a new and innovative model in teacher mentoring in New South Wales, Australia in which the main strategy used is reflection. The Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong together with the Department of Education and Training (DET) and the New South Wales Teachers' Federation initiated this approach. *Community learning* and, *school-based learning* and *problem-based learning* are three principles that characterize this model. The Knowledge-Building Community is based on a constructivist problem-based approach to preservice primary teacher education. In its implementation, it has replaced traditional lectures, tutorials and exams with a Knowledge-Building Community environment. The emphasis is on student teacher-centred, friendship-based school groups, co-learners with mentors and facilitators, linking theory to practice, collaborative practice, problem-solving and teaching as life-long learning (Kiggins & Cambourne, 2003).

2.4.1.5 Anderson and Shannon's Model

The Anderson and Shannon model sees mentoring as a nurturing process in which the mentor is someone who is experienced and performs various nurturing roles to assist the mentee's professional and personal development through an ongoing caring relationship in the mentoring process (Anderson & Shannon, 1995; Brooks & Sikes, 1997).

The essential attributes from this definition are (a) the process of nurturing, (b) the act of serving as a role model, (c) the five mentoring functions (teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling and befriending), (d) the focus on professional and or personal development, and (e) the ongoing caring relationship (Anderson & Shannon, 1995, p. 29).

According to Anderson and Shannon (1995, p. 30) nurturing implies that “the nurturer helps provide an environment for growth, considers the total personality of the person being nurtured in deciding how best to be helpful, and operates with a belief that the person being nurtured has the capacity to develop further maturity”. By acting as role models, mentors are seen to assist mentees in stimulating their growth and development.

The five mentoring functions suggested by Anderson and Shannon (1988) include teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counselling and befriending. Teaching is linked to teaching behaviour including modelling, informing, confirming/disconfirming, prescribing and questioning. Sponsoring involves mentors protecting, supporting and promoting their mentees in their environment. Protecting means that a mentor could help a mentee with pupils’ discipline problems in the classroom. Supporting mentees means providing assistance in teaching activities and promoting means mentors could introduce their mentees to other teachers and to other working committees in schools.

Encouraging means affirming, inspiring, and challenging activities which may help and enhance their experiences. Counseling involves listening, probing, clarifying and advising and befriending involves spending time, being able to relate and making the mentee feel accepted. In addition, Anderson and Shannon (1995) also suggested that

mentoring should involve an on-going relationship and describe the relationship as that of a “good substitute parent to an adult child” (p. 30).

In this model, the role of the mentor is multifaceted and incorporates an interactive developmental process between the experienced mentor and the mentee through three suggested dispositions (Anderson & Shannon, 1995): First, is the mentor’s disposition to be open to the mentee, providing opportunities for the mentee to observe them in action and providing the reasons and explanation of decisions and outcomes of their performances; second, is the mentor’s disposition to lead their mentee over time; third, is the mentor’s disposition to be supportive and concerned to facilitate the personal and professional development of the mentee.

2.4.1.6 Furlong and Maynard’s Staged Mentoring Model

This model is based on the view that mentors take responsibility for ensuring the continued high levels of professionalism that teaching demands, where it is essential that they develop an understanding of how students learn to teach. This model proposes a framework for mentoring similar to those of the apprenticeship, competency and reflective mentoring models. However, this model is divided into four levels or stages in mentoring to match the teacher student’s developmental needs in professional development. (Furlong & Maynard, 1995). These stages are (Brooke & Sikes, p. 30):

Beginning teaching characterized by:

- Focus on student learning: rules, rituals and routines, establishing authority
- Mentoring role: model
- Key mentoring strategies: student observation and collaborative teaching focused on rules and routines.

Supervised teaching characterized by:

- Focus on student learning: teaching competences.
- Mentoring role: coach.
- Key mentoring strategies: observation by the student, systematic observation and feedback on student's performance.

From teaching to learning characterized by:

- Focus on student learning: understanding pupil learning, developing effective teaching.
- Mentoring role: critical friend.
- Key mentoring strategies: student observation, re-examining of lesson planning.

Autonomous teaching characterized by:

- Focus on student learning: investigating the grounds for practice.
- Mentoring role: co-enquirer.
- Key mentoring strategies: partnership teaching, partnership supervision.

The mentoring process in this model moves from apprenticeship, through learning of simple strategies, to reflection and on to attainment of autonomy. In the process, the role of the mentor changes and so do the interactions with the student teacher toward achieving the goals of learning to teach and professional development.

Maynard and Furlong (1993) described the role of a *critical friend* as a facilitator in providing change and encouragement to support the student teacher in their professional development. They view this role as *doubly challenging* because the mentor needs to look critically at the mentee's teaching procedures and evaluate their effectiveness and to challenge the student teacher to re-examine, and reflect on their teaching.

The *co-inquirer* mentor as for *critical friend* adopts a relationship of equal partnership with the student teacher in terms of supervision and teaching. Observation and collaborative teaching are the key strategies in this model. Partnership in supervision is similar to partnership in teaching. Both mentor and student teacher will be involved in planning, developing of resources, lesson delivery and evaluation.

This approach provides opportunities for professional development for both parties. However, it is argued that for student teachers to put this into practice, they may need to attain certain competencies before they gain the confidence to form a co-enquirer partnership with their mentors. If it is practised too early in the initial training, the student teacher may not have the appropriate skills and knowledge with which to engage. Nevertheless, co-inquiry could be incorporated gradually until the student teacher is ready. This can be a way for student teachers, through reflection, to take responsibility for their own professional development, gain motivation and encouragement to move on, and not just rely on content or basic competencies and a limited repertoire of practices (Brooks & Sikes, 1997).

2.4.1.7 The Clinical Supervision Model

According to Machado and Botnarescue (2001), clinical supervision was introduced as a method to improve teaching practices by providing more structured and cooperative approaches to teacher supervision and accountability. Goldhammer et al. (1980) indicated that clinical supervision involves *face-to-face* interactions between a supervisor and teachers for the purpose of analyzing and improving teaching behaviours and these data are made available from *first-hand* observations of actual teaching

performances. Similarly, Gaies and Bowers (1990) suggested that this model is based on direct observation of ongoing classroom teaching performance involving a cyclical process of three stages: pre-observation, observation and post observation which should take place during the practicum.

Acheson and Gall (2003, p. 4) described clinical supervision as a process, a distinctive style of relating to teachers. For this process to be effective, the clinical supervisor's mind, emotions, and actions must work together to achieve the primary goal of clinical supervision-professional development of the preservice or inservice teacher. Symth (1984) stated that clinical supervision involves teachers in conducting more reflective practices in their teaching, analyzing and understanding the meaning of teaching and its content, and putting more emphasis on elements of certainty and predictability in the process of self-evaluation. Machado and Botnarescue (2001) noted that clinical supervision was first introduced by Cogan in the 1950s at Harvard University in the faculty of Arts. It was then adopted and used by other universities in teacher education and schools in supervising teachers.

For Acheson and Gall (2003, p. 9) the cyclical process of clinical supervision has three major components. The supervisor:

1. meets with the teacher and plans for classroom observation;
2. observes a lesson systematically and records information related to the objectives set during the planning conference; and
3. meets with the teacher to (a) analyze (together) the data recorded by the observer, (b) interpret the meaning of this information from the teacher's perspective, and (c) reach decisions about the next steps.

This is an ongoing process to provide assistance particularly for preservice teachers and teachers who have difficulty in the field.

However, the clinical supervision model is not without problems. According to Acheson and Gall (2003), some teachers tend to be defensive and do not find it helpful. Cogan (1973) stated that it appears to lack reciprocity and may cause a lot of stress and pressure due to frequent supervision with ongoing probing questions.

Yusko (2004) argued that supervision has become more learner-centred with most supervisors sharing their power and responsibility by allowing the supervisee to identify learning goals, to choose the focus for classroom observations, to assist in the analysis of observational data, and to participate in the selection of learning materials and resources. The roles of the supervised teacher shifts from being the object of supervision to being an active participant in supervision through setting individual goals, choosing a focus for their professional growth, and discussing their teaching with the supervisor. The supervisor shifts from being a bureaucratic evaluator to one who listens to the teacher's concerns, assists teachers in selecting appropriate goals, observes the classroom according to a jointly agreed-upon focus and helps teachers analyze their teaching practices. This collegial supervision can enable mentees to be self-directing, self-evaluating, and self-correcting within collaborative relationships (Poole, 1994).

2.4.1.8 Summary of mentoring models

Each model has its own characteristics, objectives and goals but highlights important factors in teacher mentoring. Each model has its own strengths and weaknesses

especially to the teaching practicum for student teachers. In the Apprenticeship Model modelling is a powerful strategy to use for initial teacher training. Student teachers at this stage are still primarily novices who have limited exposure to teaching and learning to teach. At this early stage, modeling would be able to guide and assist the student teacher in planning teaching and learning as the acquisition of *intelligent knowledge* in the beginning is difficult. Student teachers should be given enough time to adapt and adjust to the new environment so that they will face the anticipated *reality shock* in a relatively smooth transition during the teaching practicum.

The *master-apprentice* situation can be enhanced through the Competency-based model. This model specifically focuses on specified intended outcomes and values of the practicum and provides a comprehensive set of pre-defined competencies to be set out by SEDS, UMS against which mentees' performance could be assessed. Specified competencies to be mastered should play an important role in guiding mentors and mentees toward achievement of outcomes through scaffolding, planning, demonstrating, providing resources, observing and planning. Both apprenticeship and competency-based models emphasize developing teaching competencies have been implemented in the practicum to some extent by SEDS, UMS and the final assessment of the teaching practicum there is still based to some extent on mastering predefined competencies.

In the Reflective Model teaching goes beyond learning teaching as a craft that there is more to teaching than just an accumulation of efficient teaching skills. Student teachers and mentors are expected to work as partners side by side and to reflect upon their own practices. Reflection could also contribute development of self-awareness and understanding of personal qualities and roles in an effective mentoring relationship.

Critical and creative thinking are incorporated in mentor-mentee discussions and interactions. Both participants need to reflect and develop personal insights into their professional practices to enhance their development as thinking teachers. The reflective model may be more useful when mentees have achieved basic competencies and have gained confidence in their own teaching.

It is assumed that the reflective model will achieve its optimal goal when student teachers are at the latter, autonomous stage of the teaching practicum, when they have gained confidence in their own teaching and have established good relationships with mentors. The Reflective Model suggests some new approaches for SESD, UMS where some forms of reflection have been practised previously but this aspect was highlighted as an important component of the practicum experience.

The Knowledge-Building Community Model (KBC) promotes the creation of a conducive environment for mentoring with emphasis on collaboration, cooperation, and collegiality between mentors and mentees. This model is relevant because one intention of the *integrated culturally appropriate* mentoring program was to build positive relationships among mentors, mentees, school staff and the university. Peer coaching is fundamental to the KBC model. Here peer coaching is used for team building in mentoring and peers play an important part in assisting each other during the teaching practicum. At SESD, UMS, this aspect has not been practised in the teaching practicum. Its inclusion would open up another potentially valuable area of mentoring in extending peer support and assistance. This model could also build a strong learning community through collaborative planning, immersion in the culture of the school, and generally

creating an environment of co-operation on and mutual support among those involved in the practicum experience.

The Anderson and Shannon model highlighted the *nurturing* environment as essential for an effective mentoring program. It promotes an ongoing and caring atmosphere where there are defined roles that the mentor is assigned to carry out and it emphasizes the establishment of a good relationship, rapport and communication, and technical and emotional support as crucial components of any mentoring model.

The SEDS, UMS practicum environment could be enhanced by the Anderson and Shannon Model's emphasis on nurturing in mentoring. Such an environment could provide and facilitate both professional learning and personal support, sustaining an ongoing caring, collegial relationship between mentor and mentee with emphasis on the development of positive personal qualities such as the ability to lead, to be open, and on teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counselling and befriending between mentor and mentee in the practicum

Furlong and Maynard's Staged Model specifically defines different stages or phases in mentoring. Awareness of these and their importance to mentees could help them understand what to expect, to anticipate and to be prepared for and have a better understanding of changing mentoring functions and roles as the practicum proceeds.

As indicated earlier in Section 2.4.1.7, p. 36, the Clinical Supervision Model has been utilized in the past but without adequate emphasis on proper structure or procedures to be implemented in existing mentoring practices. A more effective Clinical Supervision Model would emphasize the cyclical process of clinical supervision analyzing teaching

to make it more meaningful by undertaking reflective and self evaluation. A more student-centred learning environment could be built through clinical supervision so that mentees could be increasingly empowered to make their own decisions on strategies in planning, teaching using resources and classroom management.

The Clinical Supervision Model has been implemented in SEDS, UMS at a superficial level. This model involves providing pre-discussion before observations of lessons and post-discussion afterwards. Clinical supervision, however, has become much more learner-centred supervision which allows for more negotiation and open discussion than is currently occurring.

As can be seen, almost all the mentoring models indicate more or less similar, but important, elements for an effective teacher mentoring program. However, no one of these models can be considered the best or only model of effective mentoring. An intelligent approach therefore, would be to select, modify and integrate the most valuable features of all models to increase the effectiveness of the SEDS, UMS mentoring program.

2.5. Mentoring programs

Mentoring programs that were initiated in the United States in the early 1980s had the intention to reduce novice teacher attrition, assist novice teachers to have a smooth transition into the teaching culture, and provide comprehensive support to promote personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers (Wang and Odell, 2002; Huling-Austin, 1990).

2.5.1 Approaches to Mentoring Programs

Wang and Odell (2002) reviewed existing mentoring programs and practices and identified three distinct approaches: the Humanistic approach, the Situated Apprentice approach, and the Critical Constructive approach.

The Humanistic approach is based on the premise that emotional support is central in mentoring. The mentor provides this emotional support to enable novice teachers to have a smooth transition into teaching and not experience *reality shock*. Veenam (1984, p. 144) stated that this deals with “the assimilation of a complex reality which forces itself incessantly upon the beginning teacher, day in and day out”. Villani (2002) described this as “the state of mind new teachers often enter when first dealing with the demands of teaching”. Such support may help to reduce psychological stress and hence teacher attrition in the profession (Odell & Ferraro, 1992). The development of self-esteem is the main focus here, and the notion that when the novice teacher has high self-esteem the result would be an enhancement of their learning of specific content and personal development, and hence they become more effective teachers. The mentor role here is that of a counselor who provides overall personal emotional support and satisfies mentor needs, who uses interpersonal skills to solve problems, is open-minded, encouraging and not judgmental, and establishes personal mentoring relationships (Wang & Odell, 2002). However, Kennedy (1993) argued that even though emotional support is provided, it may not mean that the novice teacher improves their knowledge and teaching skills.

According to Wang and Odell (2002) the Situated Apprentice Approach is based on providing the technical support necessary in the practice of teaching, on the notion that novice teachers apply their theoretical knowledge into practice in schools through coaching and demonstration (Corley, 1998) by a competent expert teacher mentor who is a guide in a linear process (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). This approach is one of learning through practice in a professional community through apprenticeship (Wang & Odell, 2002). Mentoring involves assisting and providing pedagogical knowledge of teaching skills, resources, problem-solving in teaching, and the culture of teaching (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). Zeichner and Gore (1990), however, argued that this approach reveals narrow functional perceptions of teacher learning and may not encourage novice teachers to be creative and to look for alternative approaches in teaching.

The Critical Constructive approach is based on the premise that teacher mentoring is a continuing process of collaborative inquiry into teaching practice (Feiman-Nemser, 1996; Schön, 1987). Both mentors and novice teachers examine, share, and generate new knowledge in their teaching. This encourages novice teachers to pose questions and challenges with regard to existing teaching practice and enables mentor and novice to be innovative and seek alternatives to improve the quality of teaching. The limitation of this approach is that it reduces the opportunity to observe specific content knowledge and skills.

All these three approaches in mentoring programs are reflected to varying degrees in the mentoring models described above. However, each program has a particular focus. The focus of the Humanistic Approach is on providing personal support in the mentoring

process. The Situated Apprenticeship Approach is focused on providing professional learning support, while the Critical Constructive Approach involves seeking new knowledge to improve the quality of teaching through sharing and reflective practices.

2.5.2 Elements in mentoring programs

The goals and purposes of mentoring programs vary in different settings and according to Odell (1990) such programs vary in structure. However, they share a common fundamental goal of providing beginning/novice teachers with well structured and supportive foundations in their profession. Specific aims and goals identified in some programs include: improving trainees' classroom performance and strengthening commitment to teaching; providing emotional and material support to decrease isolation of new teachers; introducing curriculum materials, program goals and school culture; building collegiality; encouraging reflective practice; conducting action research; participating in collaborative learning communities; managing; enhancing planning skills; and providing clinical teacher education that focuses on student learning and pedagogical reasoning (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1990; Mullinix, 2002; Evertson & Smithey, 2000).

The literature suggested that for a teacher mentoring program to work, there must be interactions that allow for the establishment of rapport especially between teacher mentor and mentee (Lick, 1999; Villani, 2002; Johnson, 2007; Jonson, 2008). Only when these relationships are positive will it be possible to implement a successful mentoring program in a particular working environment. The capacity for both encouraging and managing professional intimacy is a key mentoring ingredient.

“Without a strong relationship built on common experience, trust, and a nonjudgemental stance, a mentoring program is not likely to succeed” (Jonson, 2008).

As Lacey (1999) pointed out, there are essential components of an effective mentoring program. Some of these components are the accessibility of mentors to student teachers; collaboration in terms of sharing ideas on teaching and learning experiences and strategies; and provision of emotional and psychological and professional support to motivate and increase self-esteem. In addition, mentors and mentees need to work together, hand-in-hand, be able to share in problem-solving, and finally, the mentor needs to be matched to the mentee.

Specifically, among the important elements for incorporation in a mentoring program are effective questioning strategies; teacher roles and relationships; professional and personal development; and effective support systems including provision of resources by mentors to improve the induction program and thus the experience of the novice teachers (Dawson, 2002). McCormack (2007) argued that the mentoring program needs to be more than just supervision or formal assessment. It should not just emphasize professional learning and development but the mentoring relationship should be based on mutual agreement and open communication and trust.

A well structured mentoring program should facilitate professional development, personal development and empowerment, promote diversity and provide on-going support. Most mentoring programs provide some forms of orientation, induction and/or training. Some use a team approach in which mentor teachers fulfil the support function while others judge the novice’s performance for purposes of employment or

certification. Other programs give mentor teachers a prominent role in *gate keeping* student teachers, and accountability (Feiman-Nemser, 1990).

Mentor teachers appear to benefit from the support and the training to become successful mentors. The abilities, personal and professional characteristics of the mentor are also critical components of a mentoring program. Consequently, a quality mentoring program defines criteria for selection of mentors. Suggestions for criteria include experience, knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, and the process and content of mentor training should be determined by the goals of the mentoring program and the context within which it operates (Ganser, 2002).

The literature on mentor training and preparation is helpful in understanding what is essential to include in the training and preparation of mentors and mentees. According to McIntyre and Hagger (1993) the literature emphasized the need for such training. However, training involves highly contextualized learning and it is not always easy to determine what is most relevant in an effective training program (Carter & Francis, 2001).

Most teacher mentor training mentoring programs are designed to train mentors and mentees in similar ways. Topics covered normally included the functions of mentoring such as learning coaching skills, trust-building, problem definition, problem-solving, planning alternatives, and formulation and improvement of action plans (Mutchler, 2000). Other important areas are basically centred in training and learning for the improvement and refinement of teaching behaviours such as lesson planning, classroom

management skills, observation, evaluation of teaching, and reflection (Furlong & Maynard, 1995).

Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman and Liu (2001) identified the professional culture that would be most effective in the mentoring process in a school. The *integrated culture* is one which provides a conducive, working environment for student teachers. This culture is characterized by cooperation, communication, and collegiality; it is flexible, adaptive to the changing needs of student teachers; and responsible for and committed to educating students as well promoting professional growth. Collegial support is an important factor in teacher development and effective teacher mentoring programs should be designed and formalized to provide this support (Guyton & Hidalgo, 1995).

Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) believed that a mentoring program must be integrated to realize its potentials. They identified three characteristics of such a program. Firstly, it should be an agent of change which means preparing teachers to be flexible and adaptable. Secondly, providing mentoring training improves in teacher education in the school. The third characteristic is creating a teaching profession to face challenges of the future.

In general, it appears that there are several elements essential to an effective mentoring program. Specific goals and purposes need to be articulated as they determine the direction of the program. Other than supervision, professional learning and personal support are important elements to consider when planning and implementing a mentoring program. Training and preparation of mentors and mentees is also important.

The following section details a number of existing mentoring programs. These mentoring programs come from various sources, summarized in Table 2.1. Analysis of these programs provides insights into and guidelines for adapting and implementing different approaches in planning a mentoring program for SED, UMS.

Table 2.1 Examples of Mentoring Programs.

Examples of Mentoring Programs	Target Group	Sources
Reformed-oriented-preservice program - Conversations between student teachers and experienced teachers. - Expose novices to broad themes of reform through discussion of highly contextualized problems of practice.	Novice teachers	Cochran-Smith (1991)
SAGE Mentoring Program - Support new school leaders. - To assist new principals in developing capabilities, creating an educational vision, leading school improvement efforts, delivering through people and building commitment.	New Principals	Barnett, O'Mahony & Miller (2002)
The Kentucky Teacher Internship Program - Support for new teachers; to retain and nurture good teachers. - An active involvement between a mentor teacher, a university representative and school principal. - Emphasis on reflective learning.	Mentor teachers and university representative	Brennan, Thames & Roberts (1999)
The GTA Mentoring Program (Graduate Teaching Assistant) - Offers needed support for graduate students in training as teacher scholars. - Development of personal and professional relationships; discussion of teaching and research issues: increased professional support and greater confidence in classroom instruction. - Provides social support and addresses as immediate concerns. - Team work by observing and giving comments, discussion and class dynamics.	Graduate students and university lecturers	Gaia, Corts, Tatum & Allen (2003)
'Internship Scheme' Oxford University Department of Education Studies - Collaboration between school and university in the form of subject teachers becoming mentors.	Schools, university and subject teachers	Furlong & Maynard (1995)
University of Singapore, Nanyang Technical University Launched in four Polytechnics in Singapore by National Youth Council (NYC) and British Petroleum - Run by student union to help underprivileged primary and secondary school students through tutoring and mentoring. - Volunteer mentor will commit 100 hours of mentoring spread weekly over six months to a year. - Mentees are upper primary and lower secondary children.	Students and volunteer mentor	Seok Hoong Seng (1998)
The California Mentor Teacher Program - Largest state that supported mentoring in schools. - Helped beginning teachers to improve their learning and teaching as well as acknowledged the mentoring support given.	Beginning teachers	Wagner, Ownby & Gless (1995)
UTP Urban Teaching Partnership Program (UTP) - Prepare teachers to work in schools of high poverty, diverse, urban contexts; blends theory and practice of teaching. - Includes experienced teachers in the preparation and mentoring of novice teachers.	Teachers	Dandy, McKinney, Perkins, Peterson, Reiman, Peace, Williams, Terry, & Duncan (2001)

The selection of mentoring programs depicts the diverse orientations to conducting mentoring programs for novice teachers, students, university lecturers and school principals in different settings and in different countries. The majority of these mentoring programs were focused on providing professional learning support and personal support to novice teachers and students. The emphasis on effective discussion, problem solving, reflective practices and learning, team work, collaboration and partnership with schools, relationship-building, personal qualities such as commitment and leadership skills and mentoring voluntarily with diverse learners are the major focuses of these programs. They provide insights into the specifics of professional learning and personal support which are important in mentoring and these insights should be considered when planning and implementing such a program.

2.6 Mentoring practices in teacher education

Mentoring practices in teacher education are typically conducted in mentoring programs in schools and institutions of higher learning. According to the review of literature on mentoring, the goals and purposes set the directions of the mentoring practices. In this study the following mentoring practices were selected in order to enhance and improve the mentoring practices during the SEDS, UMS practicum.

2.6.1 Mentoring support

According to Feiman-Nemser (2003) it is wrong to consider beginning teachers as *finished products*, thinking that they are able to carry out their task without any

difficulties. Some studies have indicated that the teaching profession requires beginning teachers to do the same work as experienced teachers (McIntyre & Hagger, 1996). Such responsibilities include adjustment to school environment, routines, policies, procedures and familiarity with curriculum, instructional strategies and classroom management structures and procedures. The jobs of mentees are now becoming more complex with the increasing diversity of their students' backgrounds and the expectations that are placed on them to meet the academic and social and emotional needs of their students. Some student teachers find this a traumatic experience especially those without any teaching experience in the teaching practicum (Ismail, 2001; Gagen & Bowie, 2005). Giving support to mentees at this time is crucial to enable them to make a smooth transition into the real situation of teaching and reduce the experience of *reality shock* when faced with the challenges of the teaching practicum. Hence, the support from mentors provided to new teachers varies to meet their different needs (Villani, 2002). Mentor support and encouragement for the student teacher is often one of the most meaningful mentoring functions offered, particularly early in the mentoring relationship (Johnson, 2007, p. 49). To support mentees' professional development, their needs should be central.

“Mentoring support for beginning teachers has become part of a broad movement in improving teacher education” (Evertson & Smithey, 2000, p. 294). There are two types of support involved in the teacher mentoring process identified as essential: professional learning support, and emotional or psychological support. Ganser (1994) argued that the central mentor's role is to provide both types of support. Both are important components in an effective mentoring process (Ferro, 1993; Odell, 1986; Feiman-

Nemser, Schwilled, Carver, & Yusko, 1999; Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000).
Mentoring support has to be purposeful, constructive, and pro-active (Hobson, 2002).

2.6.1.1 Professional learning support

There is a convincing body of evidence that teacher mentors have the potential to assist beginning teachers in their development of an appropriate body of practical professional knowledge: learning to teach and reconstruct meaning in teaching, decision making, resolving teaching problems and developing flexibility in teaching and learning and thereby improving the quality of their teaching (Wang & Odell, 2002; Carter & Francis, 2001; Edwards & Collison, 1996; Yosha, 1991). According to Holloway (2002), mentoring can provide important professional development experience for all teachers. With support from educational leaders, schools and higher education institutions, mentoring can create significant professional learning communities.

According to Darling-Hammond and Sclan (1996) mentors and new teachers working together to improve teaching and learning can serve as a model of ongoing professional development. With appropriate assistance and scaffolding the teacher mentors could improve their own teaching approaches and strategies and their own professional competency. In a study involving 542 teacher mentors, feedback from mentees was reported to have helped them in their teaching techniques, curriculum and lesson plans (Huling & Resta, 2001). In another study, veteran teachers who mentored beginning teachers reported developing new skills in observing classrooms, examining products of teaching through the standards and descriptions of practice, and assessing teaching (including their own) (Olebe, Jakson & Danielson, 1999). Cochran-Smith and Lytle

(1999) indicated that collaboration between teacher mentors and mentees promoted and generated new knowledge for learning to teach.

Professional learning support fosters an understanding of teaching. Jonson (2002) referred this as *direct assistance* and stated that this support is more *useful* than other mentoring functions. This kind of support focuses on the basics of daily teaching, from locating materials and other resources available in the school to organizing classroom space and instructional strategies (Kajs, 2002). Learning to teach has become more complex (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; McIntyre & Hagger, 1996) and multifaceted. Not only do teachers face the challenges of integrating information and communication technologies, they have the challenge of managing a diversity of learners from different backgrounds and with special needs (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000). Teacher mentors need to properly guide the mentees to focus on the knowledge and skills that reflect most current methods of teaching and learning. As Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) observed, support from mentors enables mentees to develop their competence and understanding, and helps them to “fit in” (p. 52). Without the help of mentors, many novice teachers have difficulty adapting what they learned in the university education courses to their teaching in schools (Jonson, 2002). Hence, a teacher mentor needs to be competent in subject matter as well as the relevant skills and knowledge for advancing students’ learning in the classroom.

During the practicum, professional learning support includes a general orientation to the school culture, daily administrative and teaching duties, interaction and collaborative lesson planning. Familiarization with the school environment and general school procedures and events, explaining rules and expectations as well as providing

information on policies are additional instructional supports provided during the mentoring process. These routines, skills and techniques are regarded as developmental needs of novice teachers (Ferro, 1993; Odell, 1990) and this kind of support is necessary to assist novice teachers (Wilderman et al., 1992). Classroom management techniques are important especially in the initial phase of the teaching practicum as novice teachers are adapting to their new roles and responsibilities. For many mentees, especially in their initial teaching, classroom management creates high levels of anxiety (Denmark & Podsen, 2000).

Little (1990), argued that it may not necessarily mean that, when mentors have the expertise and knowledge, they are able to transmit these to their mentees. Even if the knowledge could be made accessible, sometimes mentors are less willing to share their knowledge. Denmark and Podsen (2000) also pointed out that there is no one way to teach, nor is there a guarantee that interns and beginning teachers will follow and adapt a mentor's techniques according to their emerging teaching styles. However, mentors can assist novices in translating content knowledge and skills into successful classroom instruction. There are a number of strategies that are generally employed such as observing collaborative teaching, discussing and planning of lessons and reflective practices.

2.6.1.1.1 Observing mentors and peers teaching

Observation appears to play a crucial role in the professional development of all teachers, regardless of their experience (Brook & Sikes, 1997). For example, Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1990) found that novice teachers were able to learn a great deal

about classroom control strategies and interaction with their mentors through observing peers. Anderson, Barksdale and Hite (2005) also indicated in their study that preservice teachers found observing peers helpful and valuable in terms of learning specific pedagogical methods and management skills and solving specific teaching problems. There is also general recognition of the importance of peer observation. A study conducted by Caruso, Beck and Graham (1993) revealed that there was an increasingly positive attitude toward the helpfulness of fellow students as one of the sources of supervisory support and suggested that this was nearly as helpful as observing their assigned mentors teaching.

Observation of teachers and peers is used for a range of purposes in the teaching profession. It is one way for mentees to find out about teaching and is normally conducted in initial teacher education (Fish, 1995). Observing an experienced teacher teach has been acknowledged widely to have contributed significantly in the preparation of new teachers to face the challenges of the classroom (Copas, 1984). It also helps mentees to analyze their own teaching and to consider alternative methods to improve and enhance their teaching. Adey (1997) stated that observing an experienced teacher is an achievement in itself as it enables the mentee to identify the different skills being used. It sets a benchmark for mentees in setting the standards for their own teaching later, particularly in dealing with the range of abilities of pupils in the classroom and monitoring pupils' progress and adjusting pacing, timing and flexibility in responding to individual student's needs (Fish, 1995).

However, being observed is not always enjoyable; it can be judgmental and cause frustrations (Fish, 1995). Some studies have indicated that most teachers generally do

not like to be observed (Ismail, 2001; Momany & Cullingford, 2006). Maynard and Furlong (1995) indicated that mentors and mentees should see observations with a more open mind. They supported the notion that mentor teachers' failures to take the opportunity to gain new insights into their teaching practice through observations are indications of an "impoverished professional attitude" (Brooks & Sikes, 1997, p. 101). Fish (1995) suggested that one of the ways to tackle these constraints is to agree that the purpose of such observations is essentially to make it a learning experience rather than an assessment.

Merely sitting in the classroom observing how experienced teachers teach does not necessarily help preservice teacher learn to teach (Ben-Peretz & Rummey, 1991). Maynard and Furlong (1995) argued that observation is not just watching and emulating. If student teachers are to get benefits from observation, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the purposes of the observation in the first place and what contribution it can make (Maynard & Furlong, 1995).

In spite of the fact that there were mixed outcomes on the observing of mentors and peers, considerable benefits are indicated in the literature review. These gains are, however, achievable and effective only when the goals and purposes of observations in the mentoring program are clearly defined and understood.

2.6.1.1.2 Collaborative teaching (team teaching)

Al-Jamal and Cullingford (2006) argued that the benefits of getting access to knowledge and skills of mentors should not just be limited to observation and modelling; it should

extend to working alongside as well as observing each other. In order to make the environment more conducive for the mentees, collaborative teaching (team teaching) offers another avenue of professional learning support for mentees' professional development. Some studies referred to this as *co-teaching*.

Working together provides both mentors and mentees with exposure to best practices (Moore & Wells, 1999). It allows mentors and mentees to work side by side in sharing and planning preparation, teaching and evaluation of lessons (Brooks & Sikes, 1997). When a mentor and a mentee take joint responsibility for a lesson, they plan it together, and can play different roles in the teaching. Collaborative teaching is a highly flexible approach and having two teachers teaching at the same time can be a great asset to students. It provides the opportunities to share an experienced teachers' thinking, especially in classroom practices, and the teacher's craft knowledge (McIntyre & Hagger, 1996). The collaborations also stimulate the classroom situations through interpersonal interactions between mentors and mentees (Zhao, Anand & Mitchell, 2004). However, Gately (2005) stated that collaborative teaching can be difficult to achieve due to factors such as lack of professional preparation, poorly defined roles, lack of expectations and anxiety.

In general, collaborative teaching (team teaching) is seen as another way to provide the mentee direct exposure to mentor's professional learning knowledge and experience, but only when there is full cooperation and collaboration between mentor and mentee.

2.6.1.1.3 Peer mentoring

Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) believed that peer mentoring should play a major role in the professional culture of the school. Peer mentoring has been advocated as an alternative strategy to enhance the professional development of teachers (Colvin, 2007). Some studies have also indicated that peers are often considered the most powerful influence in undergraduate education, more so than advisors and instructors (Carter, 1988).

Colvin (2007) indicated that students teaching other students has become more prevalent in institutions of higher learning. This can be achieved in one-to-one interaction or in small groups involving activities such as continuing classroom discussions, developing and trying new skills and approaches in the classroom, evaluation using peer input to evaluate and revise teaching strategies, and resolving specific problems, by interacting with and motivating each other (Glickman, 1990; Britton, 2006; Colvin, 2007). “When novices hear tales of peers, it can provide tremendous validation that what they were going through is normal. They realize they are not uniquely suffering a bad fate, or that they are a failure” (Briton, 2006, p. 107).

In essence, peer mentoring is seen to assist in developing mutual support and responsibility, sharing a common learning need or goal, and working collaboratively to gain greater understanding to meet joint needs (Holbeche, 1996; Beattie & McDougall, 1994). A successful mentoring relationship will make the most of this kind of peer collegiality as such interactions do not involve power relationships (Denmark & Podsen, 2000; Cornu, 2005). Such descriptions complement Wood’s (1997) suggestion

that the very nature of peer mentoring requires a learning culture rather than a hierarchical culture. Considering the apparent benefits of peer mentoring it could play an important part in the mentoring process in the teaching practicum.

2.6.1.2 Personal support

Personal support involves providing emotional or psychological support. Underpinning this support are the personal qualities and attitudes of mentors and mentees. Emotional or psychological support is one of the strongest and important needs of beginning teachers (Johnson, 2007; Tickle, 1991) in particular during the practicum where teaching is considered an emotional experience (Hargreaves, 1998). Johnson (2007) suggests that emotional or psychological support is particularly important in the eyes of mentees and argues that “consistent support creates a safe climate in which students can take risks and do the work of developing personally and professionally” (Johnson, 2007, p. 49). Such support is needed to reassure and guide beginning teachers and to reduce their anxieties and frustrations with in the current demanding classrooms (Hargreaves, 1994). It seems that a nurturing environment that meets personal and emotional needs results in mentees being better able to meet their daily demands and challenges (Kilburg, 2007).

Emotional or psychological support that makes novices feel comfortable and addresses their personal and emotional needs in the classroom includes such things as providing moral support and suggesting ways in which to balance the demands and expectations of students and teachers in the new environment. It involves assisting in building self-concept and self-esteem, good communications, positive interactions and effective listening skills, and caring personalities. Teacher mentors who work along with novices

effectively have been found to be those who interact directly in helping and facilitating teaching processes, helping in the construction of teaching and learning situations and providing emotional and professional learning support (Wang & Odell, 2002).

Incorporating the humanist element in teacher mentoring is crucial in providing positive direction for personal and professional development as the humanist approach recognizes that every individual has the potential to be self-directing under the right conditions. These conditions include openness to the possibility of change and growth, willingness to break old habits and try out alternatives, commitment to deepening self-knowledge, and involvement in non-directive, developmental and collaborative approaches (Yost, 2002; Kulman, 1998).

Both professional learning and personal support are important in ensuring the success of the mentoring process especially for mentees who discover an array of new responsibilities during the practicum. Mentors' availability to sustain regular, ongoing and continuous support is vital to the successful teacher mentoring process (Rowley, 1999). Excellent mentors are not just physically accessible to students; they are socially accessible as well (Bippus, Brooks, Plax & Kearney, 2000).

2.6.1.2.1 Personal qualities and attitudes

Effective teacher mentors appear to possess a range of important personal characteristics in the mentoring process. For example, the National Education Association (NEA, 1999) suggested that the characteristics of effective mentors involve attitude and character, communication skills, interpersonal skills, professional

competence and experience. These appear in many studies that focus on characteristics of effective mentors. For example, pedagogical knowledge, teaching skills, positive attitudes and values have been deemed essential for effective mentoring (Bowers & Eberhart, 2001; NEA, 1999). Such characteristics as experience and excellence in teaching and working cooperatively with adults, ability to guide effective decision making, flexibility, receptivity and sensitivity to other people's views, openness to providing constructive feedback, competence in social and public relations skills are also seen as valuable (Linderberger & Zachary, 1999; Odell, 1990). Other writers (Gordon & Maxey, 2000; Crocker & Wilder, 1999; Scherer, 1999) emphasized that a mentor needs to have exceptional listening skills and the ability to define problems and generate alternative solutions for the novice to consider.

The literature reveals numerous positive personal qualities and attitudes of mentors. Godshalk and Sosik (2000) reported that mentors who were most "humble about their abilities were the ones who offered the highest quality of relationships to students" (p.80). Congruent with this finding, Brockbank and McGill (2006) stated that the mentor needs to have empathy, described as "...understanding the world from the other's point of view, their feelings, experience and behaviour..." (p. 187) and that there must be a "way of being genuine, being real, sharing feelings and attitudes as well as opinions and beliefs or judgments" (p. 207). It is assumed that when there is openness and the willingness to help on the part of the mentor then the mentoring process will work (Janas, 1996). Yip Heung-Ling (2003) believed that successful mentors have to adopt personal interest in their mentees, consider their ideas and assist them in building their self-confidence.

Attitudes and mentoring functions also appear to be associated with the length of the mentoring relationship. It seems that trust and role modeling and psychosocial support functions develop over time as mentors and mentees work to establish a more mature, mutual, and collegial friendship in informal mentoring relationships (Bouquillon, Sosik, & Lee, 2005). Freedman and Jaffe (1993) indicated that it appears that collaborative, cooperative skills are essentially important as are qualities of receptiveness, responsiveness, openness and dependability. Kochan (2002) identified a number of personal qualities that must be present in order for the mentoring relationship work successfully: commitment; caring; collegiality; reciprocity in a relationship nourished with common values; and mutual respect and joint benefits. Mentor enthusiasm, willingness, caring, and commitment to the mentoring role are essential principles in fostering a positive relationship and necessary to provide the right kind of personal support (Huling-Austin, 1990; Rowley, 1999; Hall, Draper, Smith & Bullough, 2008).

Maynard and Furlong (1995) indicated that where teacher and student both had *strong personalities*, students maintained that they were not being given enough room to develop or let their personalities shine through. It seems important that mentors need to be sensitive and attentive to accommodate mentees' needs. Another personal quality of a good mentor is availability; being available to the mentee for discussions and explorations (Jonson, 2002) is highly desirable to facilitate the success of the mentoring process. Gordon and Maxey (2000) agreed that commitment to providing personal time and attention to beginning teachers is essential.

Self-disclosure or being open is apparently not a personal quality that mentors and mentees are comfortable with. One way to improve communication is to have informal

dialogue such as in a story-telling form. Brockbank and McGill (2006) asserted that “telling like a story” involves emotions and it is also a form of invitation, “an opening the door to yourself” (p. 156). It is also the basis of bringing real meaning that will make connections with mentors. However, Brockbank and McGill (2006) also argued that sometimes this will cause embarrassment. There may also be cultural limitations on self-disclosure and the expression of emotion.

Mentoring seems to have a positive effect on a mentor teacher’s efficacy and consequently can enhance teacher’s professional development (Yost, 2002). It is apparent that teacher mentors who believe in themselves and their abilities to teach also believe in their student teacher’s abilities to learn and teach. Such mentors tend to provide the most beneficial learning environment (Yost, 2002; Sparks, 1988). Increased self-esteem and development as well as enhanced positive self concepts of both mentors and mentees are some of the benefits resulting from the establishment of a trust-relationship in mentoring (Bhindi, 2003; McKenna, 1990).

2.6.1.2.2 Selection criteria and matching

The research suggests that selection of mentors is an important consideration in any mentoring program. As Bhindi (2003) pointed out, proper selection of mentors is essential in a formal mentoring program. The complexity of the mentor role and the importance of the characteristics the mentor brings to it are essential considerations in this selection process.

According to Bhindi (2003, p. 9) “the matching criteria must take into account the relevance of mentor expertise, their experience in mentoring and their current

workload”. It appears that mentees would benefit most if selection involved teachers who were willing to be mentors voluntarily and who were people-oriented, open-minded, flexible, and empathetic (Janas, 1996).

Considerations of mentor qualifications are vital in the mentor selection process (Mutchler, 2000). The mentor’s competence in teaching provides a solid foundation (Conyers, Ewy & Vass, 1999) and Gabriel (2005) suggested that teacher mentors should have at least five to seven years experience before mastery and stability and an expertise as a professional would be appropriate to becoming mentors.

Matching up participants is one of the most difficult but most crucial aspects of mentor selection and the mentoring process (Southworth, 1995). The quality of the professional and personal match between mentors and mentees will greatly impact on the success of the mentoring experience, since the level of exchange between mentors and mentees is affected by the quality of the relationship (Cover, 1997; Hawkey, 1997). It would be most appropriate if the selection process could be a process that matches mentors and novice teachers who demonstrate a similar thinking style or who are “on the same wave-length” (Parkay, 2001, p. 197) but this may not be possible in practice. A systematic selection process for prospective mentors is, however, important in establishing a basis for compatibility between mentors and mentees as a basis for greater caring and understanding between them in building a relationship of trust (Kajs, 2002). According to Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004), effective matching appears to increase mentee and mentor satisfaction. If there is a mismatch or inappropriate selection of mentors in particular, the outcome is likely to be negative and this would be detrimental to the mentoring relationship (Ismail, 2001).

In general, the selection criteria and matching of mentors and mentees are important in making the mentoring process a success. It appears that wherever possible particular attention should be given to factors such as mentor qualifications, experience and willingness (voluntary selection), compatibility with the mentee and personal factors (open-minded, flexible, and empathetic) when selecting mentors.

2.7 Mentoring relationship and communication

According to Ferro (1993), the key to successful mentoring and one of the most important factors in the mentoring process is the formation of strong, trusting mentor-mentee relationships. A successful mentoring relationship can be defined as one in which the needs of the mentee are being met and goals are accomplished (Young, 2001). Jonson (2008, p. 29) indicated that for the mentoring relationship to be effective, both mentor and mentee must get along both “personally and professionally”. It has been shown that a successful mentoring relationship significantly improves the quality of the first year of teaching for novice teachers and is instrumental in increasing new teacher retention (Odel & Ferraro, 1992).

Studies also suggest, however, that a successful mentor-mentee relationship requires commitment by both parties (Gehrke, 1988). Capable mentors value the fact that professional intimacy is essential in collegial relationships with student teachers. It involves closeness, affection, trust and commitment and self-disclosure (Johnson, 2007). This synergistic effect of mentoring, however, depends on cooperative actions between the mentor and the novice. The successes of the mentoring relationship depend

on what the teacher mentor and mentee bring to and do in that relationship. It can largely determine whether the needs of the mentee are being met and goals are accomplished (Lick, 1999).

A successful mentoring relationship provides continuing support, knowledge and motivation over time (Selwa, 2003) and mentoring relationships can vary in their degrees of formality. Cohen (1995) defined a formal relationship as occurring when there is only formal interaction between the teacher mentor and the mentee. An example of such a relationship is when a teacher mentor interacts with a mentee only in planned learning and teaching discussions or during supervision of lessons. On the other hand, an informal relationship is one that includes interaction outside the classroom. This interaction could occur anywhere and at any time during the teaching practicum and involves informal, casual conversations or meetings between the teacher mentor and mentee within or outside the school. Jonson (2002) stated that such interactions provide the most valuable source of assistance although both types of relationship are important in the mentoring process.

When teacher mentor and mentee are able to interact informally as well as formally and establish good rapport, the possibility of positive mentoring outcomes is greater. Positive rapport and bonding are important elements in influencing the quality of the mentoring relationship and informal interactions can contribute to these (Brockbank & McGill, 2006). If there is mutual respect and each recognizing the other's commitment to a high quality of professional teaching, the closeness of that relationship can facilitate learning and can increase satisfaction. "A failure to recognize each other's commitment

and beliefs can affect learning opportunities in damaging ways” (McIntyre & Hagger, 1996, p. 94).

2.7.1 Developing mentoring relationship and communication

The relationship between the mentor and the mentee is the heart of the supportive process (Freedman, 1993). Trust, acceptance and support are necessary ingredients to all mentoring relationships (Greenberg, 1999). Building and sustaining a good relationship is important in mentor-mentee relationships (Cohen, 1995; Aways, McEwan, Heyler, Linsky, Lum & Wakukawa; 2003; Selwa, 2003). However, mentoring relationships may not always work out. Hence, it is important for mentors and mentees to understand the purpose and the needs of a mentoring program (Gay, 1994).

Some definitions of mentoring stress the importance of a personal connection that goes beyond the usual student-teacher relationship (Hollingworth, 2002). Research suggests that mentors need to have a sound understanding of the importance of good relationships in the learning process, be prepared to work with students to establish a good relationship, to accept the learner as an individual, to have mutual commitment to working together as equals, as well as to support the learner. It is crucial that communication between mentor and mentee remains open, especially on issues of mutual concern such as establishing agreement on roles and responsibilities (Aways et al., 2003; Brown, 2002; McIntyre & Hagger, 1996; Edwards & Collison, 1996).

Some studies have indicated that in addition to establishing good rapport and interactions through forming relationships over time, the mentoring process can also

benefit the mentor, especially in the working relationship where the mentee is free to provide input. This enables the mentor to experience personal satisfaction teaching the younger, less experienced person and have a sense of pride in the job that they are doing (McIntyre & Hagger, 1996). At the same time, teacher mentors and mentees are encouraged to work in a mentoring relationship rather than in a *supervisor-supervised* relationship that is often typical of the teaching practicum, especially when teacher competencies are assessed. However, Brown argued that forming effective, appropriate relationships with a mentor can be difficult (2002). “Hierarchy places social distance between the mentor and the protégé and can hinder opportunities for mutual support and openness necessary for building trust and supporting the identification processes” (Bouquillon, et al. 2005, p. 243).

According to Young (2001), the phases of developing a mentoring relationship are integral to the success of an effective relationship between the teacher mentor and the teacher mentee. If good rapport has been established between mentor and mentee in the initial phase of the mentoring process, the mentoring process will be more likely to be successful. Nevertheless, establishing an effective relationship between mentor and mentee does not happen suddenly and without effort but instead requires “sustained development, motivation, planning and orchestration” (Barrett-Hayes, 1999, p. 137). “Significant mentorship’s are not brief, formal, one-way exchanges. They take time to develop and evolve through mutual interaction” (Hardcastle, 2001, p. 202). Different authors have categorized the evolvement of different mentoring phases. These phases are discussed below in Section 2.7.3, p. 70.

2.7.2 Interpersonal communication skills

Interpersonal communication skills are one of the essential ingredients of an effective mentoring relationship. It is important to note that there is no one suggested interpersonal approach to apply in the mentoring process, however there are many suggestions of how interpersonal skills can be used to improve and enhance that process (Gordon & Maxey, 2000).

In one study, novices viewed the nurturing aspect of mentoring that is the interpersonal aspect of the role of teachers, as more important than the academic pedagogical aspect (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992). In another study by Brooks (1995), interpersonal skills were rated highest among the skills involved in effective mentoring. These studies indicated that the interpersonal aspect is central to effective mentoring and that easy two-way communication may be essential.

Interpersonal skills seem necessary to facilitate effective communications between teacher mentor and mentee, especially when both have to communicate on a one-to-one basis during the pre-conference and post-conference stages of clinical supervision. These skills “assist them to actively listen, clarify, and problem-solve in their communications with one another” (Kajs, p. 64), communication which takes time to develop and evolve through mutual interaction (Hardcastle, 2001).

It appears that good communication skills, patience, sensitivity, tact, trust, and the ability to maintain confidentiality are universal characteristics that mentees expect from their mentors (Thornton, 1996) but both mentee and mentor need to have good skills in interpersonal communications to develop a meaningful and effective mentoring

relationship (Hollingworth, 2002). The US Foundation for the improvement of Education (NEA, 1999) also suggested that effective mentors use interpersonal skills to sustain a trusting professional relationship, are sensitive and caring to mentees needs' in different cultures, patient, and able to work with novice practitioners.

Both verbal and non-verbal communication skills are important in the mentoring process. Some examples of the positive non-verbal messages suggested by Brockbank and McGill (2006) include smiling, nodding, making eye contact, waving or gesturing, touching, handshake, physical stance with heads up and appropriate distance. Verbal tips involve appropriate volume, pitch, speed, tone, and pauses.

It is therefore essential to highlight such skills in teacher mentor training (Cornu, 2005). Interpersonal skills training may be necessary to prepare both participants for their roles in the teacher mentor-mentee relationship.

2.7.3 Phases of mentoring relationships

Several authors have defined the dynamics in a mentoring relationship as involving phases or stages (Kram, 1985; Cohen, 1995; Maynard & Furlong, 1995). These are often quite distinct (Cohen, 1995; Gay, 1994) characterized by changing roles, expectations, functions, and strategies of both mentor and mentee over time.

Different views of mentoring exist and offer their own assumptions of how mentoring phases should be considered: Furlong and Maynard's discussed above (See Section

2.4.1.6, p. 34), Kram (1985), Cohen (1995) and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum, ASCD (1999) are three of these.

Kram (1985) identified four phases of effective mentoring: *initiation*, *cultivation*, *separation*, and *redefinition*. The *initiation* phase is when the initial interactions involve learning the other's personal style and work habits. Both mentor and mentee are still in the process of finding out about one another. The focus here is on providing socio-emotional support to the novice teacher. Once a mentoring relationship is established, it moves to the *cultivation* phase when the mentoring functions are maximized and emotional bonding is fostered through guidance and shaping of shared values. In the *separation* phase, the gradual withdrawal of mentors is seen as mentees become more independent. The *redefinition* phase involves maintaining ongoing friendship as peers.

Cohen defines mentoring phases as *early*, *middle*, *later* and *late* phases. The *early* phase is centred on the mentor and mentee building a trusting relationship where the mentee is comfortable to seek help from the mentor. The *middle* phase is where the mentor and mentee exchange information in order to understand the mentee's goals and concerns. The *later* phase allows the mentor to explore the interests and beliefs of the mentee and attempt to learn the reasons for the mentee's decisions. The *late* phase is when the mentor motivates the mentee to reflect on her goals, to pursue challenges, and to follow through on her own personal, educational, and career path (Cohen, 1995; Jonson, 2002).

Like Kram (1985), Cohen (1995) and Furlong Maynard's mentoring model (1995), the ASCD (1999) has a similar model with four mentoring phases in the mentor-mentee relationship (Jonson, 2002). In the beginning, there is a developing of the relationship;

the mentor takes primary responsibility, provides information and directions. Later, they build a partnership, the mentor providing assistance and seeking suggestions from the mentee. As the mentor-mentee relationship becomes stronger, sharing and discussion and making decisions together occur. Thus, the mentor-mentee relationship goes through of a period of rejuvenation. After this occurs, the mentor begins to withdraw from the relationship, encouraging the mentee to become independent and to analyze and reflect, allowing the development of self-growth.

Regardless of the terminology, all these indicate that a healthy mentor mentee relationship involves progression from relative mentee dependence at the beginning of the mentoring relationship to autonomy and self-reliance as the mentee grows into a colleague and peer. Barnett (1995) believed that training programs for mentors and mentees have to acknowledge this progression in mentor mentee relationships.

It is also important to note that phases do occur in mentoring relationship-building and in the provision of mentor support. Shaping and adjusting of positive attitudes also occur in phases of mentoring. (Chao, 1997; Jonson, 2002; Bouquillon et al., 2005). Therefore it is important that mentors particularly need to be sensitive to the nature and development of these phases.

2.8 Mentoring roles

In order to fully understand the rationale of mentoring, there is a need to examine the roles of teacher mentors. The literature has revealed various mentoring roles and according to Lacey (1999) the role of mentor is determined by the purpose of the

mentoring program. “No one person will be a suitable mentor for all programs” (Lacey, 1999, p. 12). Taking on the mentoring role is not easy. Serving as a teacher mentor differs from most of the traditional roles of teachers. It is not only complex but also emotional (Cullingford, 2006). Experienced teacher mentors bring that experience to their role (Huling-Austin, 1990), and, when mentors are effective, they are fulfilling a number of roles.

The effective mentor is a sponsor, a developer of skills and intellect, a guide and exemplar, a critical friend, a role and instructional model, a teacher, coach, advisor counselor, a nurturer, and a co-enquirer (Ronald, 1999; Furlong & Maynard, 1995; Brooks & Sikes, 1997; Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Daloz, 1986). Such a mentor is seen as a communicator, a guide or aide, a co-planner, a co-organizer in classroom management, a motivator, a coach or a life-saver, especially for novice teachers, and a friend (Huling-Austin, 1990; Rowley, 1999). Elliot and Calderhead (1993) perceived the effective mentor as leader, guide, good listener and friend. Mentor teachers need to see their role as one of supporting the student teacher’s growth in practice and as being instrumental in guiding beginning teachers as they build their knowledge, interactions and skills within the complex world of teaching (Crocker & Wilder, 1999; Scherer, 1999).

Being able to contribute to the development of a student teacher brings a sense of personal satisfaction for the mentor. Jonson (2002) indicated that when mentors are role models, they demonstrate their abilities to solve problems in realistic ways because they possess high self-confidence and competency, a strong sense of security as well as having the energy to carry out their mentoring roles. Other than being a role model, a teacher mentor needs to also serve as a counselor who helps the mentee to solve their

personal problems, redefine their needs as a teacher and feel comfortable about teaching. For the mentor, the rewards come from seeing the mentees implement their ideas. This gives the teacher mentor the opportunities to have their own practices validated, and renew their enthusiasm for their roles as teacher educators (Brooks & Sikes, 1997).

Despite the diversity of perceptions of mentoring roles there is much common ground apparent in the literature. Basically, all the roles of the effective mentor combine to fulfil the purpose of the mentoring program and provide maximum professional learning and personal support to the mentee in the mentoring process. Other mentoring roles are indirectly embedded in the various mentoring models and programs discussed in the mentoring models section (Section 2.4.1, p. 27).

2.9 Reflective practice

Critical reflection of one's teaching is necessary for personal efficacy and ongoing growth (Danielson, 2002). It is also considered to be one of the most important components in developing autonomy and expertise of novice teachers (Furlong, 2000). The concept of reflective practice is embedded to varying degrees in most mentoring models. Reflective practice provides a way for teachers to become conscious of how their own knowledge and skills are shaped by experience (Yost, 2002; Head & Taylor, 1997). It is argued that reflection will lead to greater awareness among student teachers of what constitutes appropriate pedagogic practice and will lay the foundation for development, a process which will be ongoing throughout their teaching career.

The reflective process requires a holistic understanding as the basis for professional practice, collaboration, communication and empathy, and self-reflection (Elliot, 1991). Consequently, student teachers need to be guided to reflect on their actions, to form concepts of practical knowledge and educational values, in order to give them greater control and power over their own learning and practice (Furlong & Maynard, 1995). In this process, experiential learning occurs. Kolb (1984) believed that learning to teach through experiential learning is the core of the reflective model.

The teacher mentor needs to perform the role of reflective model to assist the mentee to practise being a reflective teacher. The role of the reflective mentor, sometimes seen as *coach*, is basically one of modelling reflection and helping the mentee to experience reflection in a more systematic way, making reflections more meaningful and analytical, at the same time challenging and encouraging them to look for alternatives, widening their perspective. This approach involves planning, implementing reflecting and evaluating. A review by Veenam and Denessen (2001) showed that cognitive coaching can positively influence self-confidence, classroom management skills, teaching styles, self-awareness and instructional dialogues with colleagues.

Yost's (2002) study suggested that teacher mentors became more aware of their teaching and of the responsibilities they have to their student teachers. In other studies, there are reports that mentoring has forced teacher mentors to be reflective practitioners in terms of their own beliefs about teaching, students, learning and teaching as a career and has also validated the experience they have gained over the years (Huling & Resta, 2001). Teacher mentors who are reflective practitioners find that they are more focused in their mentoring relationships (Tomlinson, 1995). One of the most effective ways for

a mentor to help develop mentees' teaching skills is to demonstrate a reflective approach to teaching, self-evaluation, and implementing of new ideas (Denmark & Podsen, 2000). Mentoring leads both teacher mentors and mentees to reflect on and analyze their successes and failures, helping to enhance their effectiveness.

Through the reflection process, the opinions are further honed and subsequent decisions are facilitated (Lucas 2001). Comiskey and Cotson (1997) pointed out that sufficient time is vital in order to become reflective. It is important to note that the mentoring process provides the mentee the opportunity to express needs, wants, opinions, beliefs and feelings in direct, honest and appropriate ways (Brockbank & McGill, 2006). Barnett (1995) believed that reflective questions enable mentees to explore deeper meanings, alternatives, and conclusions, force them to be precise and clear in describing their thoughts, feelings, and actions. In order for the mentor to develop the trust in the mentee to reveal their innermost thoughts and feelings, the mentor must strive not to be judgmental and remain neutral as far as possible in responding to the mentee's reflections.

Reflective practices are seen as an important feature of an effective mentoring process. Engaging in reflective practices is seen to have many benefits for both mentors and mentees and should therefore be incorporated into the mentoring program.

2.9.1 Reflective journal

Journal writing has been used in many professional settings such as in education to encourage reflective thinking and learning in professional and personal development.

Specifically, in the classroom, journal writing provides a mechanism “for developing reflection skills, and becomes a discipline for capturing personal experience” (Kallaith & Coghlan, 2001). It is increasingly regarded as a popular activity and an important component in teacher training (Degago, 2007). Lee and Feng, (2007) asserted that such activity provides useful benefits which enable student teachers to discover, explore and generate ideas in their learning process. These stimulating activities enhance the reflective process as the student teachers link, and evaluate and integrate their knowledge into the realities of teaching. In order for mentees to be able to reflect in a focused, systematic, and structured way, they need to be supported and guided (Dallat & Moran, 1995)

Similarly, Densen and Podsen (2000) noted that reflection and feedback help to capture the mentee’s self-evaluation and what is working and what is not. Williams and Wessel (2004) added that these activities deepen mentees’ understanding of experiences to foster thinking skills that actively engage them in learning. Spalding and Wilson (2002) perceived reflective journals as a means of establishing and maintaining relationships with mentors and also an avenue to express personal and professional frustrations. Mentees who engaged in reflective practices were perceived to have extended analyses of their teaching (Degago, 2007).

There are, however, some contrary findings regarding journal writing. Dallat and Moran (1995) indicated that mentors sometimes feel vulnerable and threatened by mentees writing about their teaching particularly when this is used as a basis for discussions with university supervisors. Ghaye and Ghaye (1998, p. 86) identified some common problems in journal writing: procrastination; unworthy attention given particularly when

students have to face examination or assignments; superficial and unreflective entries; writing only critical reflection; waning enthusiasm in writing over time; and unwillingness or inability to reflect. Keeping such problems in mind, however, reflective journals generally are seen as providing benefits for mentees in the mentoring process.

2.10 Teaching observation and assessments by mentors.

Teaching observation involve learning as well as assessment in initial teacher training. However, if used inappropriately, without a clear purpose, and in ignorance of its nature and its potential as an approach to finding out about teaching, it can provide a thoroughly unhelpful experience not only for students but also for mentors. A focused and guided observation by an experienced teacher would provide the opportunity for the mentee to develop professionally by analyzing and thinking theoretically about what happens in specific classroom situations (Fish, 1995).

Observing beginning teachers is an important mentoring activity in order to help them improve teaching (Jonson, 2008; Showers, 1985). Traditionally, observation has centred on the mentee's subject-specific classroom practice and teaching skills. According to Maynard and Furlong (1995), such observation in initial teacher education provides opportunity for reflections to refine and improve teaching as well as other activities. Observation has to be "regular, positive and constructive in character, focused, contextualized, followed by timetabled feedback sessions, confidential and matched to the needs of the individual" (Brooks & Sikes, 1997, p. 97). In mentoring, observations

have become more diplomatic and more productive, with emphasis on negotiation and more consensual in nature instead of being confrontational (Brooks & Sikes, 1997).

A typical observation by a mentor comprises a sequence of pre-observation discussion, observation and post-observation discussion (Jonson, 2002). The pre-observation discussion normally involves a focus on planning for teaching by the mentee. Observing the beginning teacher and providing feedback through a post-observation conference are important mentoring activities that complete the sequence. The timing of the post-observations is important (Brooks & Sikes, 1997). Research findings have indicated that early feedback following formal observation is most effective for future development such as improving instruction (Jonson, 2002; Brooks & Sikes, 1997).

Brooks and Sikes (1997) stated that written feedback provides a useful record and basis for assessment as well discussion in post-observation. It seems that involving a number of assessors (observers) also enhances the reliability of assessment. The focus of observer assessment in this study draws on the competency-based framework. According to Brooks and Sikes (1997) the competency-based approach is based on specific outcomes to be achieved. They suggest this type of assessment “reduces the subjectivity of the assessment, increasing employer’s confidence” and mentees “have a clearer idea of the goals at which they are aiming” (p. 124). However, there are contradicting opinions on this type of assessment as some see it as too narrow and mechanical in its approach which only focuses on behavioural and skills outcomes (Brooks & Sikes, 1997).

2.11 Cultural appropriateness

Brooks (1992) indicated that cultures are the product of the beliefs, values and characteristics of the staff, students and community which combine to make up the shared understandings, rules and norms and involves how we should “think, feel, and behave” (Segiovanni, 1984, p. 14). According to Sendut, Madsen and Thong (1989, p. 1) culture is the “basis for a people’s value system, which in turn prompts behavioural patterns”.

Two aspects of the practicum culture of SEDS, UMS and the schools were significant in the appropriateness of this mentoring program. The first was the need to continue, as far possible, existing practice. For example, the apprenticeship model is and remains central to the mentoring process and the competency-based approach is already in place. The practices of observation and assessment are also fundamental in the SEDS, UMS practicum as are expectations that mentors will guide in planning and provide feedback to mentees. Similarly, many mentors in the past have undoubtedly provided mentees with nurturing, supportive, collaborative environment, communicated easily with them, modified their role behaviour to move mentees toward autonomy through the practicum.

It is this second aspect of the SEDS, UMS practicum culture that is expanded, formalized and given greater emphasis in the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program. It stresses the importance, along with more *traditional* expectations and practices, of interpersonal relationships and communication, of personal as well as professional support, of collegiality, respect for and awareness of traditional cultural

values such as the importance of seniority, of established customs, and of formal, rule-governed structures of interaction, and reflection in problem solving and decision making. Hence, the integrated, culturally appropriate program builds on existing beliefs and behaviours and expands the culture of SESD, UMS practicum along more humanistic lines through the training of all mentors and mentees and the extension of expectations and practices in the mentoring process in the schools.

2.12 Conceptual Framework of the study

This conceptual framework for the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program illustrated in Figure 2.1, p. 84 was based on the review of literature on selected mentoring models, mentoring programs, and existing mentoring practices together with feedback from mentors and mentees on their perceptions and beliefs and consideration of societal, and school cultures within which the program would be implemented.

The design of the program focused on specific areas to meet the needs of mentors and mentees. The specific areas on mentoring practices consisted of professional support; personal support; mentoring relationship and communication; mentoring roles; reflective practice; and teaching observations and assessments by mentors.

Professional support involved such traditional areas as lesson planning, including appropriate teaching strategies and skills, guidance and support classroom management and providing teaching resources and information on school culture and rules. Related to professional support were also observing mentors and peers teaching, collaborative teaching (team teaching), and peer mentoring. These mentoring practices were included to provide additional ways to access mentor's teaching knowledge, and skills and to

gain experience during the mentoring process and also as an avenue to additional support. In these ways, participants could build their own learning communities and solve problems collaboratively.

Personal support provided the emotional and psychological support across all mentoring functions during the practicum. It emphasized developing positive personal qualities and attitudes to create an environment that is conducive to effective mentoring. Underpinning this support were selection criteria and matching of mentors. Because the mandate was given to schools to choose mentors this mentoring program was to provide insights on the positive qualities of effective mentors.

The emphasis of developing the mentoring relationship and communication was strong in this integrated, culturally appropriate program. Incorporating interpersonal communication skills was essential to extend and sustain effective mentoring in a mentoring culture where this area was less emphasized.

Emphasis on different phases of the mentoring program highlighted the need for both mentors and mentees to be aware of their changing roles and interactions in relation to the different needs throughout the mentoring program. Different roles identified and emphasized in the workshops were mentor, guide, advisor, role model, coach, friend, and partner to suit mentee's needs.

The reflective practice was also emphasized both to improve mentees' teaching performances during the practicum and to promote more long-term critical and creative thinking and self awareness, and professional development. Writing a reflective journal provided an additional avenue for self-awareness and problem solving.

Teaching observations and assessments by mentors were traditional and important aspect of the mentor role and mandated by the SEDS, UMS practicum guidelines. The effort to incorporate more humanistic elements aimed to foster collegiality and to decrease mentee anxiety about being graded by their mentor. Observation in this study focused on "...building a conducive environment for the mentees so they would not be intimidated by addressing non-judgemental assessments, caring intentions and in understandable terms..." (Jonson, 2002) and with emphasis on negotiation.

The implementation was in two phases. The initial phases was that of the mentoring workshops where both mentors and mentees were provided training in the above mentoring practices before the beginning of the SEDS, UMS practicum. In implementation phase during the teaching practicum, the study set out to determine the effectiveness and impact of the integrated culturally appropriate mentoring program and to examine factors which affected its impact. The indicators of the impact give rise to the implications and recommendations to be considered for the revised mentoring program.

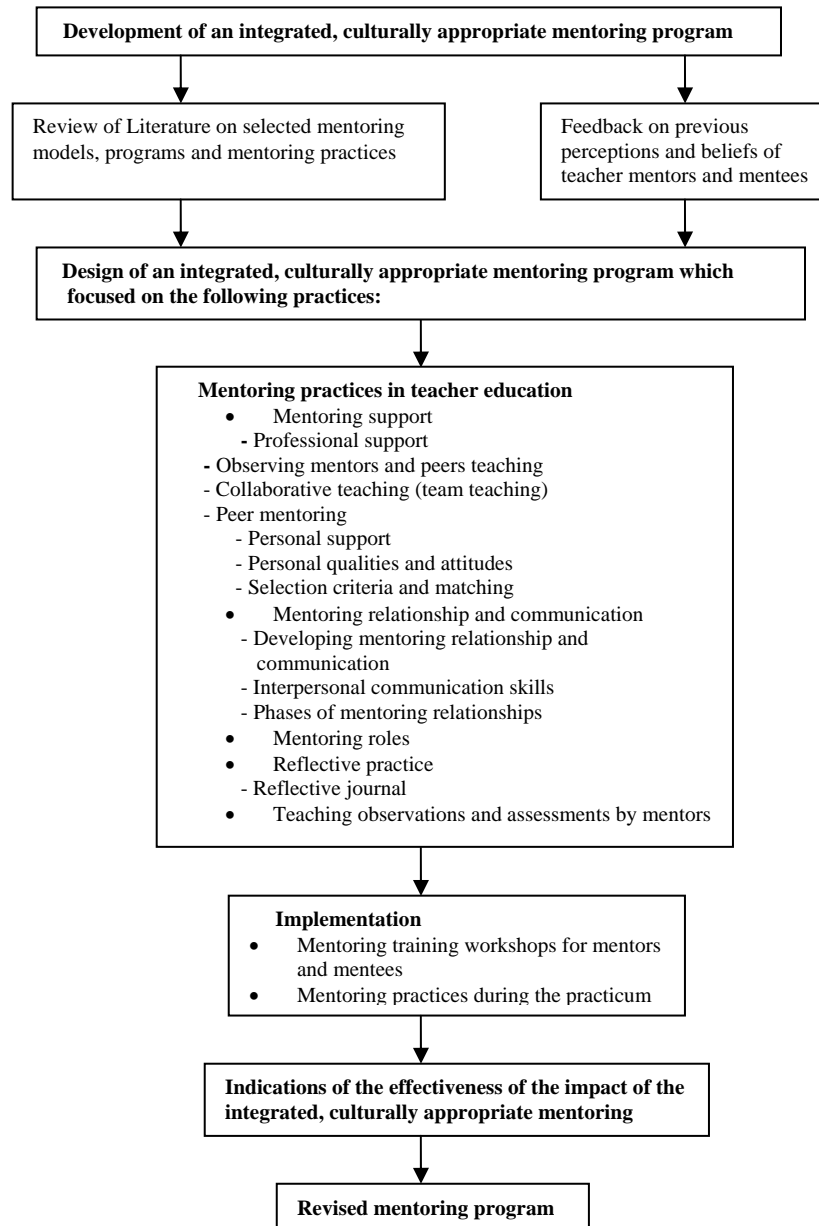


Figure 2.1 The Conceptual Framework of the Study

Table 2.2 presents a summary of the features of the models and program approaches incorporated in the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program. These features were major focus points of the pre-practicum workshops for implementation during the practicum.

Table: 2.2 A summary of the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for mentors and mentees.

Area of focus	Workshop activities	Practicum	Sources: Mentoring Models & Program
Professional learning support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing information of an overview and discussions of principles of mentoring and different mentoring models, programs and mentoring practices. -Discussions of lesson planning, teaching strategies, providing teaching resources, classroom management skills, observing mentors teaching, collaborative teaching, familiarity with school culture and policies and peer mentoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning lessons including appropriate teaching strategies and skills, and classroom management. - Provide teaching resources and briefing on school culture and rules. - Observing mentors and peers teaching. - Collaborative teaching (team teaching). - Peer mentoring (for mentees only) Training is only given to mentees. 	All models and programs.
Personal Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussions of qualities of an effective mentor. -Activities involved identifying feeling of being mentor and discussion of attributed feelings, positive, negative feelings and mentees' needs and how help could be made available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal qualities and attitudes. - Selection criteria and matching (selection is done by schools). Incorporating positive personal qualities and attitudes in all mentoring functions such as increasing motivation, being approachable and open. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anderson & Shannon's Model - Knowledge Building Community Model. -Humanistic Approach.
Mentoring relationships and communicate -ons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An overview of effective mentoring relationship and communication with emphasis on interpersonal communicative skills and mentoring phases. -To build importance of active listening, verbal and non-verbal language. -Role play and using cartoon scripts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mentoring relationship and communication. - Developing mentoring relationship and communication. - Interpersonal communication skills. -Phases of mentoring relationships. - Incorporating interpersonal skills to communicate with positive attitudes to form mentoring relationship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Knowledge Building Community Model. -Humanistic Approach.

Area of focus	Workshop activities	Practicum	Sources: Mentoring Models & Program
Reflective practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reflective practices procedures and importance of providing feedback. -Discussions and overview of sample of reflective journals. -Activities on providing feedback. Reading a handout and giving feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting reflective practices with emphasis on providing effective feedback and problem solving. - Provide motivation for improvement in teaching performance. 	All models and programs.
Mentoring roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion on mentoring existing and suggested mentoring roles. -Activities of mentoring styles (authoritarian, authoritative and permissive). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct variety of mentoring roles such as mentor, guide, advisor, role model, coach, friend, and partner to suit mentee's needs. 	All models and program.
Teaching observation and assessment of teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussions on procedures of observations and assessment. - Discussion on specified teaching competencies. - Discussions on assessment teaching forms and grades according to the stipulated sets of competencies set by SEDS, UMS 2005. - Discussions on samples of assessment and grades. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting supervision with emphasis on providing planning in pre-discussions and constructive feedback on teaching performance, including assessment on post-discussion. -Teaching observations and assessments by mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clinical Supervision Model. - Apprenticeship Model. - Competency-based Model. - Furlong and Maynard's Stage Model.

As indicated in Chapter 3, Phase 2, p. 98, mentees' workshop was conducted separately then mentees and mentors were integrated for subsequent workshop activities. Materials used were those related to the area of emphasis advocated in the mentoring program, mentioned in Table 2.2 (p. 85) and they were utilized in group work and working in pairs during the mentoring workshops. Lectures were conducted before implementing the activities.

This study, therefore, aimed to answer two research questions relating to the implementation and impact of the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program.

Question 1:

What is the impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program on teacher mentors and mentees at the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah?

Question 2:

What institutional, cultural, and pedagogic factors influenced the implementation of this mentoring program?

2.13 Summary

This chapter set out to review the literature on mentoring and characteristics of mentoring practices in the teaching practicum. The literature highlights some selected mentoring models, programs and related strategies.

The main purpose of mentoring practices in the initial teacher training practicum is to provide support for the professional and personal development of novice teachers in classroom environments that have become more demanding with the inclusion of new technology, diversity of students in the classroom with different backgrounds, capabilities and needs, socio-economic statuses, family structures, and the introduction of new approaches to teaching and learning.

Selected mentoring models and mentoring program approaches were discussed in detail and major features of these were selected for an integrated model and approaches to mentoring in the practicum in teacher education at SESD, UMS. This integrated,

culturally appropriate mentoring program was then detailed along with specific reference to sources and including particular areas of focus for inclusion in the pre-practicum mentoring training.

Mentoring practices and strategies derived from the literature and featured in the integrated culturally appropriate mentoring program are teaching knowledge, skills and gain mentoring experience, mentoring practices such as observing mentors and peers, collaborative (team teaching), peer mentoring, developing a positive mentoring relationship and interpersonal communication skills, phases of mentoring relationships, mentoring roles, selection criteria and matching, reflective practices and reflective journal writing, teaching observations and assessments were seen as important in the mentoring process during the practicum.

The following chapter details the methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to implement and investigate the impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for teacher mentors and mentees during practicum at two secondary schools in Sabah, Malaysia. The study also investigated the factors that influenced the mentoring program.

This chapter briefly describes and explains the implementation of the mentoring program, the design and methodology used to investigate it.

3.2 The mentoring program context

As explained in Chapter 1 (Section 1.2.3, p. 11) the purpose of conducting this mentoring program was to modify, improve and enhance the existing formal mentoring practices in schools during the teaching practicum. Incorporated in this integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program were mentoring workshops which provided mentoring training for teacher mentors and mentees (teacher trainees) prior to the teaching practicum.

3.3 Research questions

In this study, the following major research questions were addressed:

1. What is the impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program on teacher mentors and mentees at the School of Education and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Sabah?
2. What institutional, cultural and pedagogic factors influenced the implementation of this mentoring program?

3.4 Research design

A case study was deemed to be appropriate as a research strategy because the main aim of the researcher was to focus on the case of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for teacher mentors and mentees. Interviews, focus group discussions and document reviews of reflective journals and practicum and mentoring guidelines were the main sources of data.

3.4.1 Case study

Case study is appropriate when researchers want to define and investigate topics broadly to cover contextual conditions and not just the phenomenon of study and to utilize and rely on multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 1994). Case studies have emerged

as one of the most widely used approaches in qualitative inquiry (Stake, 2000) and as a popular strategy in educational research (Burton & Barlett, 2005).

Yin (1993) described case study research as “an essential form of social science inquiry” (p. 10). According to Stake (1995), a case may be simple or complex, which draws attention to the question of what “specifically can be learned from the single case” (p. 236). Merriam (1998) stated that it is “employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. Information-rich cases are those which can reveal a great deal and “studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalization” (Patton, 2002, p. 230). Insights gleaned from case studies can directly influence policy, practice, and future research (p. 19).

Cresswell (1998) further described a case study as an exploration of a

... bounded system or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context.

This bounded system is bounded by time and place, and it is the case being studied - a program, an event, an activity, or individuals (p. 61).

The focus of this study is on the case of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for teacher mentors and mentees during the teaching practicum.

One of the significant and unique strengths of a case study is its “ability to deal with a full variety of evidence - documents, artefacts, interviews, and observations” (Yin,

1994, p. 8). In this study interviews, focus group discussions and document reviews were used to gain valuable information from and about the teacher mentors and mentees. Based on these multiple data sources, findings were triangulated to increase the trustworthiness of the data (Patton, 2002).

Case study researchers spend “extended time on site, personally in contact with activities and operations of the case, reflecting, revising meanings of what is going on” (Stake, 2000, p. 445). For these reasons, the researcher chose case study to investigate, explore and obtain greater insights, to get deeper and more valuable information from teacher mentors’ and mentees’ perspectives on the impacts of the mentoring program. In order to obtain rich and detailed data in this case study, the researcher utilized a qualitative approach.

3.4.2 Qualitative research

According to Lankshear and Knobel (2004) one of the major reasons for the development of a qualitative approach is that researchers “often want to try and understand the world from the perspective of other people (a person or a group)” (p. 68). Meriam (1998) stated that a key concern of qualitative researchers is to understand a “phenomenon of interest from the participants’ perspectives, not the researcher’s”. At the same time, they “are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, and experiences they have in the world” (p. 6). As pointed out by Kervin, Vialle, Herrington and Okely (2006, p. 106), the “qualitative researcher aims to understand this complexity rather than to uncover a *knowable truth*, which might involve watching what people do, talking to them about it, asking other people about it

and trying to understand and explain what is going on, without any recourse to numbers or statistics or variables whatsoever”. According to Lankshear and Knobel (2004) qualitative data can provide:

... rich and detailed descriptions or be richly descriptive in the forms of participants’ own words, direct citation from documents , and journals (rather than ‘counts’ or statistical relationships) of people in action (eg. A teacher, a student, a school policy or curriculum writer), specific programmes or social practices (p. 69).

The “rich descriptions of the social world are valuable”. Qualitative researchers “see the world in action and embed their findings in it” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 10). They study “people doing things together in the places where these things are done” (Becker, 1996, p. 24). In other words, Lankster and Knobel (2004) stated that qualitative research involves providing rich and detailed descriptions of people in action, specific programs or social practices.

Others describe qualitative research as involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret in a language that is expressive, the phenomena, and the meanings brought to them (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Cresswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). In addition, not only does qualitative research investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006), but it consistently “seeks answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 8). This characteristic of the qualitative approach corresponds with the

researcher's intention to investigate in the natural setting, and understand what the teacher mentors and mentees experienced as they were undertaking the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program and how they interpreted their experiences.

Bryman (1998, cited in Arksey & Knight, 1999) suggested that qualitative researchers are "closer to, and more involved with the study participants. This proximity prompts the researcher to feel more confident about the robustness of the data and about the integrity of their preferred interpretations" (p. 31).

After reviewing the literature on the different research approaches available and giving due consideration to the purpose of the study and the cultural setting of Malaysia, a qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate. This allowed the researcher to investigate, analyze and report in-depth the impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program, which was offered for teacher mentors and mentees (teacher trainees) during a school practicum.

3.5 Participants and site of the study

A purposive sampling was used so that the researcher could collect more specific and relevant data from participants. Based on the premise "of their key involvement within the social setting and their ability to describe and report what they observe, think and feel" (Kervin, et al., 2006, p. 106), the researcher here would be able to capitalize on the rich and valuable data derived from the teacher mentors and mentees. Another reason was that the teacher mentors involved had already been selected and assigned to mentor and supervise the teacher trainees during the practicum.

The participants in this study were 12 teacher mentors and 9 mentees. A maximum of only five teacher trainees could be assigned to one school for the teaching practicum. The 9 chosen mentees were undergoing their teaching practice and the 12 teacher mentors were teachers who specialized in the different subjects taught by the trainees. As stated earlier in Chapter One, the teacher mentors were appointed by the school principals and were informed of the mentoring training workshops to take place before the practicum.

The sites of the research were in two secondary schools in the state of Sabah, Malaysia. School A is a co-ed public mission secondary school established in 1903. The school runs various levels from lower forms, bridging classes to Form Three and upper forms, Form Four to Form Six. Currently, the school has 79 teachers and has a population of 1,480 pupils from diverse backgrounds and multi-ethnic groups.

School B is a co-ed public rural secondary school established in 1968 and located about 150 kilometres from the state capital. It has 65 classrooms and the school runs two sessions; the morning session conducting classes from Form Three to Form Six and the afternoon session for Form One to Form Two classes. To accommodate and facilitate pupils staying within the district, the school has a boarding facility located within the school compound. Currently, it has 2,300 pupils and 120 teachers. The pupils' ethnic groups are mainly KadazanDusun, Malay and Chinese.

In School A, all teacher mentors attended the mentoring workshops while in School B, there were seven teacher mentors who attended the workshops and 6 of these participated in the research. One of the teacher mentors who attended was replaced by

another newly appointed mentor who did not participate in the study. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 below provide the profiles of teacher mentors and mentees who participated in the program. To protect the anonymity of participants, pseudonyms are used.

Table 3.1 Profiles of teacher mentors

Teacher Mentor	Age	Mentoring experience	Teaching Experience
Mr Gusil	30-40	2 nd time	6 years
Mr Sipin	30-40	1 st time	3 years
Mr Assim	30-40	4 th time	10 years
Mr Titus	30-40	4 th time	8 years
Mr Farish	30-40	3 rd time	5 years
Miss Andak	20-30	1 st time	3 years
Mr Alipin	20-30	2 nd time	2.5 years
Mr Pitor	30-40	1 st time	6 years
Mr Kassim	40-50	4 th time	20 years
Mr Ahmad	30-40	3 rd time	9 years
Mr Linus	30-40	1 st time	8 years
Mr Jumat	20-30	1 st time	2 years

Table 3.2 Profiles of mentees

Mentees	Age	Gender	Teaching experience
Ondu	40 – 50	Female	10 years.
Pian	30 – 40	Female	8 years.
Pius	30 – 40	Male	8 years.
Zizah	20- 30	Female	No teaching experience
Osong	20- 30	Female	No teaching experience.
Mina	20- 30	Female	No teaching experience.
Tati	20- 30	Male	No teaching experience.
Itah	20- 30	Female	No teaching experience
Posis	20- 30	Female	No teaching experience

3.6 The sequence and design of the study

Table 3.3 (p. 101) presents the design of the study, which was carried out in three phases. An explanation of each phase is presented below. The table 3.3 below is divided into three parts. Phase/ Year denotes the time of the year the different phases were conducted. *Steps* show how the research was conducted. *Data Collection* indicates the kind of data and how they were collected as the study progressed.

Phase 1

Part I:

(February-July, 2004)

In Part I, the researcher reviewed the theories and literature and identified different mentoring models and programs applied in various mentoring programs particularly in teacher education, in higher education and in schools. In addition, document reviews such as the Mentoring Guidelines from the Malaysian Ministry of Education and School of Education and Social Development (SESD), Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) were also reviewed. Relevant and feasible components were identified and considered for appropriateness and fit in the context and culture of teacher trainee mentoring at SESD, UMS. These components were subsequently incorporated in the mentoring program for teacher mentors and trainees at SESD, UMS together with the results of feedback from a preliminary survey, interviews, and focus group discussions, which were conducted in Part II.

Part II:

(September-December, 2004)

In Part II, the researcher conducted a short preliminary survey, a focus group discussion and interviews with teacher mentors and mentees including trainees from the previous cohort in 10 secondary schools on the West Coast of Sabah, Malaysia. The researcher interviewed 10 teacher mentors and conducted focus group discussions in one of the secondary schools in the Kota Kinabalu district in Sabah. The purpose of the survey, focus group discussion and interviews was to get feedback on the existing mentoring practices from mentor teachers and mentees. Discussions with 3 key staff from the

School of Education and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Sabah were also held.

The feedback from the survey and discussions with the focus group and key people in the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah, and the review of literature on mentoring models and programs, assisted the researcher in developing the mentoring program for teacher mentors and trainee teachers implemented during the practicum in Phase 2.

Phase 2:

Part 1

(January-March, 2005)

Part 1 of this phase of the study was the implementation of workshops for teacher mentors and mentees. Before the implementation, the researcher had written formal letters to inform the school principals of the selected schools to inform them of the conduct of the mentoring workshops and obtained approval to conduct the study. Once that was done, the researcher visited the school principals personally to further explain the intention and nature of the study.

The workshop for mentees was held separately and earlier to familiarize them with the topics before they met their teacher mentors during the teacher mentors' mentoring workshops. Workshops for the teacher trainees were held much earlier to accommodate the trainees' busy schedule while still attending their university lectures. The researcher then conducted the mentoring program workshop for the teacher mentors together with the mentees in the two selected secondary schools in the state of Sabah. The mentoring workshops were held two months before the commencement of the practicum.

Workshops were held at the UMS campus and evaluations of them were carried out at the end of the sessions. The purpose of the evaluations was to obtain feedback on how effectively the participants had acquired the information and knowledge on mentoring and the quality of the mentoring workshops in terms of content, delivery and facilities, and also suggestions for improvement. The researcher then analyzed the evaluations of the mentoring workshops to provide more insights into the current perceptions of the teacher mentors and mentees and their expectations for the implementation of the mentoring program.

Part II

(April- July, 2005)

This part of Phase 2 involved the implementation of the mentoring program during the actual practicum. Nine teacher trainees and twelve teacher mentors participated in the mentoring program. The duration of the teaching practicum was three months and on-going data collection was conducted throughout. The first interviews of both teacher mentors and teacher trainees were held from the third week of the practicum. The second interviews were held just before the end of the practicum period (10th week). Focus group discussions were held for both teacher mentors and mentees towards the end of the practicum period. All interviews and discussions were audio-taped and transcribed. Member checking was conducted after transcribing the interview data. This allowed all participants to verify the transcripts.

Throughout the practicum, the teacher trainees were asked to keep reflective journals and were free to send their reflective journals to the researcher either as hard copies or through electronic mail. Ongoing data collection was conducted throughout this phase.

Phase 3

(August, 2005-December, 2007)

Focus groups discussions with mentors and mentees were transcribed in this phase (see Focus groups interview schedules, Appendix 15 (mentors), p. 311 & Appendix 16 (mentees), p. 312. The data collected from the individual interviews, focus group discussions and documents were then analyzed. The researcher employed constant comparison (Strauss, 1987) to code data into categories of emerging key concepts, issues and themes. Open coding method was used where main concepts were initially identified and clustered to form categories. The researcher established a panel of two people to check the accuracy of the translations (Bahasa Melayu to English) of relevant quotations selected to be used in the data analysis.

Table 3.3 Research Sequence and Design

Phase/Year	Steps	Data Collection
Phase 1		
Part I (February-July, 2004)	Literature Review mentoring models and programs – some examples: Apprenticeship Model, Competency –based Model, Reflective Model, Knowledge Building Community Model, Anderson and Shannon’s Model, Furlong and Maynard’s Staged Model, Humanistic Approach, Situated Apprentice Approach and Critical Constructive Theory Approach.	Related resources – journals, books, document reviews.
Part II (September-December, 2004)	Surveys, interviews and focus group discussions with key people of SEDS staff. Designing of the mentoring program and workshops for teacher mentors and mentees for the teaching practicum.	- Surveys – to inform planning of program - Individual interviews -Focus group interviews - Data from the feedback of the survey, interviews, focus group’s discussions and discussions with key people (e.g., SEDS staff).
Phase 2		
Part I (January-March, 2005)	Implementation and evaluation of the mentoring workshops for teacher mentors and mentees.	Evaluation survey of mentoring workshops.
Part II (April-July, 2005)	Implementation and evaluation of the mentoring program for teacher mentors and mentees during the teaching practicum.	Ongoing data collection during the implementation - Individual interviews - Reflective journals - Focus groups interviews - Member checking - Transcribing.
Phase 3		
(August, 2005-December, 2007)	Data analysis (Impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program on teacher mentors and mentees (teacher trainees).	Coding. Check for accuracy of translation.

3.7 Methods of data collection

Merriam (1998, p. 69) informally defined data as “bits and pieces of information found in the environment”. “Unquestionably, the backbone of qualitative research is extensive collection of data, typically from multiple sources of information” (Cresswell, 1998, p. 19). These data may consist of “direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge” obtained through interviews; “detailed descriptions of people’s activities, behaviours, actions” recorded in observations; and “excerpts, quotations, or entire passages” extracted from various types of documents (Patton, 1990, p.10).

According to Marshall and Rosman (2006) there are four methods used in qualitative researches which include researcher’s participation in the setting, observations, in-depth interviews and analysis of documents and materials. The researcher here used individual interviews and focus group discussions along with document analysis of reflective journals, practicum guidelines and related documents on practicum from SESD, UMS and from the Malaysian Ministry of Education.

3.7.1 Interviews

Interviews have been used extensively for data collection across all the disciplines of the social sciences (Berry, 1999; Baker, 1997) and are probably the most common form of data collection in qualitative studies in education (Merriam, 1998). Yin (1994) stated that the interview is regarded as one of the most important sources of case study information. In addition, Fontana and Frey (2000) stated that interviews are also one of

the most “common and powerful ways in which we try to understand fellow human beings” (p. 645). As pointed out by Silverman (1997, p. 99), “interview is obviously and exclusively an interaction between the interviewer and the interview subject in which both participants create and construct narrative versions of the social world”.

Frankel and Wallen (2006) indicated that interviews can provide valuable information such as on people’s attitudes, their values and what they think they do. Major purposes of using interviews are to “generate data which give an authentic insight into people’s experiences” (Miller & Glassner, 1997, p. 99), to explore points of view, to understand the “interpretations as well as descriptions of others” (Stake, 1995, p. 64), and to enable the researcher to “gain more in-depth understanding of the participants’ perspectives, which other methods could not identify” (Patton, 1990, p. 196). Interviews can be influenced by a variety of factors including social, cultural and linguistic variables. It is important that the researcher makes the participants feel relaxed and that any power relationships between the interviewer and the interviewee are neutralized (Kervin et al., 2006, p. 88).

In this study, the researcher chose a semi-structured interview as this enabled the researcher to gather more in-depth data (Borg & Gall, 1989). Guided by the research question, Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 96) describe the semi-structured interview as a “data-gathering technique, designed to obtain information about people’s views, opinions, ideas and experiences”. It is more manageable during the interview as the researcher asks some questions that are closed and some that are open-ended (Cresswell, 2002). In addition, it allows participants to “provide personal experiences

that may be outside or beyond those identified in the closed-ended options” and also “narrow the participants’ responses” (Cresswell, 2002, p. 205).

The main purpose of using interviews was to elicit the perceptions of the teacher mentors and mentees on their mentoring experiences in the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program during the teaching practicum. In addition, they provided the opportunity for the teacher mentors and the teacher trainees to offer suggestions to improve or enhance the mentoring process as it developed throughout the practicum. The semi-structured interviews here were developed based on the initial feedback from the preliminary survey and the evaluation of the mentoring workshops conducted during Phase 1 of the mentoring program. As explained above, the participants were interviewed twice. The researcher made the necessary arrangements to get appropriate rooms to conduct the interviews in both schools. All interviews of teacher mentors and mentees were conducted individually, along with focus group discussions.

The researcher was very sensitive to the participants by speaking to them at their pace, using clear, non-jargon words so that the participants could understand the questions. This enabled the researcher to conduct the interviews smoothly and comfortably. As Patton (1987, p. 124) suggested, researchers should ask “one thing at a time and not put several questions together and ask all of them as one”. “It is important to use words that make sense to the interviewees”. To enhance their comprehensibility for interviewees, “questions should be easy to understand, short and devoid of jargon” (Kvale, 1996, p. 130).

Some interview questions here were open-ended to allow the participants to respond in their own terms and avoid pre-determined answers (Patton, 1987). During the interviews, the researcher continually used *probing* which, as Patton (1987, p.125) explained, was to “deepen the response to a question, to increase the richness of the data being obtained, and give cues to the interviewee about the level of response that is desired” and Kvale (1996) suggested that “repeating significant words of an answer can lead to further elaboration” (p. 133). It should be noted that, as Patton (2002) indicated, “the quality of the information obtained during an interview is largely dependent on the interviewer” (p. 341).

In this study, all the interviews were audiotaped. “Audiotaping is valuable for catching the exact words used. Although getting the exact words of the respondent is usually not important, it is what they mean that is important” (Stake, 1995, p. 56). At the same time, the researcher could capture on tape the interviewee’s intonation, hesitations, self-corrections as well as maintain good eye contact “to concentrate more on what is being said rather than on copying it down, and to obtain a verbatim record of what was said that can be revisited time and again” (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004, p. 201).

As a *back up*, this researcher used two audiotapes to record all interviews. The interviews were held in a room where conversations could be conducted that allowed for such audio recording. Interviews were conducted for between 30 and 60 minutes each. The researcher conducted all interviews and focus group discussions. All interview questions were translated into Bahasa Melayu for the benefit of some of the participants who were not confident with the English language. Although participants were free to express themselves in either English or Bahasa Melayu; most were more

able to express their views in Bahasa Melayu. Consent was obtained from each participant to conduct the interviews and the researcher assured the participants that all identities would be kept confidential.

3.7.2 Focus groups

Focus group is primarily a group interview for gathering qualitative data. It is an important tool for “discovery and exploration” (Steward & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 18). It involves gathering several individuals for systematic questioning in either a formal or informal setting (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The focus group is mainly a collectivist research method that elicits the *multivocality* of participants’ attitudes, opinions, experiences, and beliefs on a selected topic (Puchta & Potter, 2004). “The object is get at what people really think about an issue or issues in a social context where the participants can hear the views of others and consider their own views accordingly” (Frankel & Wallen, 2006, p. 461).

Krueger (1988) suggested that the focus group interview is particularly effective in providing background information as to why people think or feel the way they do. At the same time, focus group interviews can also be used as an aid for triangulation purposes by putting individual responses into context (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Patton (2002, p. 385) added that focus groups are conducted to get a “variety of perspectives and increase confidence in whatever patterns emerge”.

Just as in any other forms of data collection, the focus group discussion has its advantages and disadvantages. Some of the significant advantages are that they are

relatively inexpensive to conduct and provide opportunities to produce rich data that are cumulative and elaborative with several people in a shorter period compared to individual interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Steward & Shamdasani, 1990). Focus groups allow the researcher to interact directly with the participants which can be stimulating for respondents and aid in recall through discussions and the format is flexible enough to allow the researcher to examine wider topics with participants. In addition “focus groups are advantageous when the interaction among interviewees will likely yield the best information, when interviewees are similar and cooperative with each other, and when individuals interviewed may be hesitant to provide information” (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 51).

Some of the disadvantages of focus group are that an emerging group culture may interfere with individual expressions; the group may be dominated by one person (Fontana & Frey, 2000); and the responses of the group often make summarization and interpretation of results difficult (Steward & Shamdasani, 1990). Despite these limitations, however, and giving consideration to the demographic as well as the academic and professional backgrounds of the participants in this study, the researcher decided to use focus group discussion to enable the two groups of teacher mentors and mentees to discuss and share their mentoring experiences and to highlight commonalities and differences in these experiences during the practicum.

3.7.3 Document reviews

Patton stated that: “Learning to use, study, and understand documents and files is part of the repertoire of skills needed for qualitative inquiry” (2002, p. 295). Documents prove

valuable not only because of what can be learned directly from them but also as stimulus for “paths of inquiry that can be pursued only through direct observation and interviewing” (Patton, 2002, p. 294). Similarly, Potter described documents as texts that are a “pervasive and naturally occurring feature of everyday and institutional life” (2004, p. 613).

Selection among documents for review is necessary and depends on the aims and parameters of the research (Finnegen, 1996). Documents can be used on their own or in combination with other sources of data. Documents can be categorized as either private or public (Pole & Lampard, 2002) and may be written and other materials from organizational, clinical or program records; memoranda and correspondence; official publications and reports; personal diaries, letters, artistic works, photographs, and memorabilia; and written responses to open-ended surveys (Patton, 2002).

Documents present a rich source of material for analysis. They can function both as the main source for the researcher’s conclusions, to supplement information from other sources as well as checking, corroborating and augmenting the validity of information which in turn contributes to data triangulation (Finnegen, 1996; Cresswell, 1998).

In this study, the researcher chose to analyze reflective journals and practicum guidelines to supplement interview and focus group discussion data and for data triangulation.

The mentees wrote their own reflective journals. Cresswell (1998) pointed out that journaling is a popular data collection process in case studies. The mentees were asked

to document their personal mentoring experiences in their practices throughout the mentoring process. Lankshear and Knobel (2004) asserted that the data derived are often highly personal and written from an *insider's perspective* to provide important insights such as on the impact of mentoring for the researcher in this study.

Each mentee had their own style of writing their reflective journals in this study. As pointed out by Lankshear and Knobel (2004), there is no standard format for writing reflective journals. Most of the mentees had their written journals mailed electronically to the researcher weekly. Some, however, had their journals printed and handed them as hard copies to the researcher. Hence, the difficulty of reading the handwriting of participants did not arise in this study as journals and documents were all printed (Cresswell, 1998).

3.8 Data analysis process

The purpose of data analysis in research is to give meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations of data in a systematic way (Stake, 1995; Burns, 1996). Marshall and Rosman (2006, p. 154) described data analysis as a process of “bringing order, structure, and interpretation to a mass of collected data. It is messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative and fascinating. It does not proceed in a linear fashion; it is not neat”. It is a process of searching for general statements about relationships and underlying themes. “Analyzing text and multiple forms of data presents a formidable task. Deciding how to represent the data in tables, matrices, and narrative form is challenging as well” (Cresswell, 1998, p. 139). The most fundamental operation in the analysis of qualitative data is that of “discovering significant *classes* of things, persons

and events and the *properties* which characterize them” (Marshall & Rosman, 2006, p. 156).

Marshall and Rosman (2006) highlighted seven phases in data analysis: (1) organizing the data; (2) immersion in the data; (3) generating categories and themes; (4) coding the data; (5) offering interpretations; (6) searching for alternative understandings; and (7) writing the report (p. 161). In this study, the researcher employed these procedures during the data analysis process. After collecting the data, the researcher explored them by reading the information derived from the interviews, focus groups and document reviews. This allowed the researcher to get a general sense of the information as well as to organise it and to see whether additional data were needed in this study (Cresswell, 2002). The transcript data from the interviews and focus group discussions as well as the reflective journals and document reviews were then coded for general themes related to the research questions. Burns (1997) pointed out that coding is the first stage in analyzing interview data. In support of this process, Ryan and Bernard (2000, p. 769) indicated that “coding forces the researcher to make judgments about the meanings of contiguous blocks of text”.

The constant comparison method of data analysis (Strauss, 1987) was employed by the researcher in this study.

Constant comparison is a strategy that involves taking one piece of data (one interview, one statement, one theme) and comparing it with all others that may be similar or different in order to develop conceptualizations of the possible relations between various pieces of data. The purpose is to generate knowledge

about common patterns and themes within human experience. Constant comparisons are important because they enable identification of *variations* in the patterns to be found in the data. It is not just one form of a category or pattern in which we are interested but also how that pattern varies dimensionally, which is discerned through comparison of properties and dimensions under different conditions (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 67).

In this study, constant comparison allowed the researcher to narrow down the data to make them more focused by exploring *similarities* and *differences* (Potter, 2004) and to enhance in-depth understanding.

3.9 Triangulation

Triangulation is a critical aspect of qualitative data analysis. Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) stated that triangulation is the assessment of validity through cross-checking sources of information. Data triangulation is referred to as the use of multiple methods of data collection (McMillan, 2000) and is used to establish coherence in data analysis (Kervin, et al., 2006). Stake (1995, p. 113) indicated that “data source triangulation is an effort to see if what we are observing and reporting carries the same meaning when found under different circumstances”. The process involves “corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on a theme or perspective” (Cresswell, 1998, p. 202). Lincoln and Guba (1985) added that triangulation is aimed at obtaining a judgment of accuracy of specific data items and that checking the accuracy can only be through the multiple techniques of collecting data.

Data source triangulation is “an effort to see if what we are observing and reporting carries the same meaning when found under different circumstances” (Stake, 1995, p. 113). Data source triangulation was utilized by the researcher in this study for confirmation and to increase credence in the interpretation of data and to demonstrate commonality of assertions (Stake, 1995, p. 112). This enabled the researcher to cross-check the accuracy of the data collected from multiple sources of interviews, focus group discussions, reflective journals and document reviews. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that the main criteria of triangulation are credibility, dependability, and conformability. Meeting these criteria increases the trustworthiness of data in a study.

3.10 Member checking

According to Frankel and Wallen (2006, p. 514), member checking is one of the primary strategies used “to validate the accuracy of the research’s findings”. It allows the participants to review what the researchers have written as a check for accuracy and completeness. This process typically involves corroborating evidence from difference sources to shed light on a theme or perspective (Cresswell, 1998, p. 200). Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicated that this technique is “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility of findings and interpretations” (p. 314). Member checking involves taking data, analyses, interpretations and conclusions back to the participants so that they can judge the accuracy and credibility of the account. Stake (1995) pointed out that participants should be asked to check the drafts of the researcher’s work and to provide alternative language or interpretations if necessary.

It should be noted that this researcher also used an external panel of three people fluent in both English and Bahasa Melayu to read the translated quotations. This panel of people could speak and understand the Sabah Malay (colloquial Malay) used in the sites where the study was conducted as colloquial Malay is very different from the standard Bahasa Melayu (formal language) which is the medium of instruction for schools in Malaysia. The transcripts were sent to the three members of the panel before the individual checks. Time was given for the panel to read through and translate the quotations and an informal discussion was then held at a selected place. The translations were discussed and cross-checked for meaning accuracy and agreement was reached by consensus before they were returned to the participants for verification.

The researcher then sat down with each participant to consider which parts of the transcript if any needed correction and to check words used and meanings intended. Member checking was also used to ensure that the researcher's translations from the Bahasa Melayu language to English were correct.

3.11 Ethical considerations

Prior to conducting this study, the researcher took precautions to ensure the confidentiality and protect the anonymity of individual participants.

The following measures were also taken to ensure that ethical standards were observed.

1. Permission was obtained from University of Wollongong and Illawarra Area Health Service Human Research Ethics Committee to conduct the study. (Appendix 1, p. 296)

2. Permission was obtained from the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (Research Department) to conduct the research at two secondary schools in Sabah, Malaysia and at Universiti Malaysia Sabah. (Appendix 2, p. 297)
3. Permission was obtained from the Sabah State Education Department to carry out the research in two secondary schools in the state. Permissions were granted to conduct the research by the school principals when letters of approval from the Ministry of Higher Education and the state Education Department were produced. (Appendix 3, p. 298)
4. Permission was obtained from the Dean of the School of Education and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Sabah to conduct the research at the School.
5. The teacher mentors and mentees were informed of the purpose and confidentiality of the research and the written signed consent form was obtained from each participant. (Appendix 8, p. 304)
6. The participants and participating schools were not identified by name or compared with one another.
7. The recorded interviews were kept at the University of Wollongong in a secure place.

3.12 Summary

A case study methodology using qualitative techniques was selected for this study. This methodology was chosen because it fits both the purpose and the nature of the research

questions in the study which focuses on the impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program on teacher mentors and mentees (teacher trainees) during the teaching practicum. The case study investigated the mentoring relationship dimension, professional practices dimensions and supervision and reflective practice dimension. Data were gathered from multiple sources: individual interviews, focus group discussions, and document reviews. Constant analysis was used in data analysis, and triangulation and member checking were employed as strategies to validate the data. The use of multiple data sources together with an appropriate data analysis process enabled the gathering of rich descriptive data and ensured the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings of this study.

Results and analysis are presented in the following two chapters for each of the two research questions respectively.

Chapter 4

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: RESULTS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to implement and investigate the impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for teacher mentors and mentees conducted in two secondary schools in the West Coast district of Sabah, Malaysia. To answer two research questions, data were gathered from teacher mentors and mentees through interviews, focus group discussions, reflective journals and analysis of documents. The data were analyzed using constant comparison from which categories and themes emerged. The results of the study relate to the impact on professional learning support, the mentoring relationship, reflective practices and mentoring roles. This chapter focuses on answers to Research Question 1:

What is the impact of an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program on teacher mentors and mentees at the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah?

It should be noted, however, that answers to both questions tend to overlap extensively.

4.2 Professional learning support

One of the essential components of any mentoring program is professional learning support (Fish, 1995). (See for details on Professional learning support in Chapter 2, Section 2.6.1.1, p. 52). In this study, mentoring on classroom practices (pedagogical information on syllabuses, lesson planning, teaching strategies, content) and activities (role plays) was treated for teacher mentors and mentees through the mentoring workshops. This included issues related to providing teaching resources, classroom management skills, collaborative teaching, observation of teacher mentors, and peer mentoring.

4.2.1 Tips on effective teaching and familiarity with school culture and policies

Assisting in providing teaching knowledge and skills is important for mentees in their initial training (Furlong & Maynard, 1995). As explained in Table 2.2 p. 85 and 86, tips on providing teaching strategies, content, lesson planning and familiarity with school culture and policies were discussed. This was to support mentees in planning and executing lessons during their practicum.

The mentees generally (in focus group and interviews) agreed that they received this support from their mentors during the mentoring program. However, according to the mentees the quality of this support varied. Three mentees indicated that their teacher mentors fully provided them with this support; four said this support was moderately adequate; two said that they received only minimal support.

While teacher mentors (in focus group discussions and individual interviews) confirmed that they had provided this support, they did not specify or define the degree of adequacy of this support.

Mentees who reported full and moderately adequate teaching support specified that their mentors demonstrated positive attitudes in mentoring them. They were given effective guidance and advice on teaching. The mentees commented that the mentors' commitment, dedication and seriousness in carrying out their roles and responsibilities had provided mentees assistance in their teaching. This view was supported by mentor Mr. Titus who believed that this support should be provided meticulously:

I planned and discussed together with my mentee step by step. I felt responsible that she should get all the help she needed in her teaching.

Planning, guiding, advising and time spent were also seen by mentees as some of the other important elements in this mentoring support, as reflected by Posis:

I am satisfied and motivated with the help, advice, guidance and time spent with both of my teacher mentors. I am clearer on the subject syllabuses now. They sat with me to do my weekly teaching plan throughout the practicum. This support was encouraging and I felt that my mentors really cared for me.

Osong also shared this view:

My major teacher mentor supported me by giving many suggestions to plan my lesson activities. He let me have his record book for me to refer to and also to get different ideas of how to do the lesson planning. He also introduced me to useful materials and teaching strategies, especially in the science laboratories. He is an excellent teacher and knew his subject very well. With his help, he had given me the confidence to teach my class. He welcomed my suggestions too. I am so grateful for his generous and caring attitude.

Osong's mentor, Mr. Ahmad, confirmed his proactive approach. He believed that he had fully provided this support by ensuring that his mentee had all the help she needed.

These mentees also acquired skills in developing measurable objectives in their lesson plans. This enhanced their personal confidence in teaching and in their teaching skills.

A major mentor who provided this support commented:

I just wanted to ensure that she understood her teaching objectives and what teaching strategies were suitable to be applied to get the outcomes of the lessons. She could ask me any questions. I always shared my ideas to make her lesson more interesting.

Discussion and description in planning of complex skills by mentors was also critical. By sitting with their teacher mentors to plan their lessons the majority of the mentees taught themselves how to work collaboratively with their mentors. Tati described her experience as follows:

It was not easy to work as a team at first, to sit down and plan. But after working together to plan regularly, I learned to work collaboratively with my teacher mentor.

Mina was grateful that her mentors provided teaching support throughout the mentoring program and that this support was important in her success in the practicum.

She remarked:

Without the teaching support, a lot of things may not have worked out for me. I want to teach properly and effectively because it is important for me to pass this practicum and achieve the stated competencies in the practicum assessments. Now I realize that I would have been helpless if my teacher mentors did not provide this support. They provided me the help I needed for good teaching. I also found out that you had to be brave to ask for help so that the mentors knew what you needed. This is why my friend did not get this support adequately. She had to get things done on her own. I sympathized with her.

All the mentees in this study shared a common goal of building sound teaching skills for good teaching. In the beginning it was not an easy task to work with their mentors. The importance of working collaboratively and collegially became obvious to them during their mentoring experience. The mentors also emphasized the need for mentees to be proactive and enthusiastic. Mr. Ahmad said:

I discussed with her the lesson plans and teaching strategies. The moment I gave her something to work on, she did it right away. She asked a lot of questions if she was not sure. That was the kind of spirit I wanted to see in a mentee.

In the focus group discussions, the majority of mentees agreed that mentor support was most valuable in the first few weeks of the practicum. Gradually, as the mentees were more settled, and gained in confidence, the degree of this support decreased. For example, Osong pointed out:

During the last few weeks of the practicum, I was more confident to carry out my teaching. However, I still refer to my teacher mentors to get assurance and encouragement and to sustain my motivation.

Mentors' positive attitudes had a positive impact on the mentees' classroom support. The majority of the teacher mentors (11 of 12) showed a great level of commitment, dedication, seriousness in their mentoring responsibilities, generosity in sharing knowledge, providing guidance and suggestions, and spending time in discussing, lesson planning focusing on objectives, and teaching strategies. These attributes resulted in increased mentee confidence and improvement in their teaching. It also increased their motivation, and feeling of security in the classroom.

Teacher mentors generally agreed with mentees (in focus group discussions) that ongoing classroom teaching support was important for the effectiveness of mentees' teaching practice and to ensure that the goals of their teaching and learning to teach were achieved.

At times there were disagreements on ideas about teaching strategies to be implemented. However, the mentees realized that such disagreement was a healthy part of being a professional. Ondu commented:

When I referred my weekly teaching plan to my teacher mentor, he went against some of my suggestions. I sensed that he wanted me to follow what he suggested. I wanted to use another strategy. Sometimes, it was difficult to explore further.

Zizah reported that her teacher mentor wanted her to just use textbooks to teach the class and Zizah argued that this approach contradicted the new approaches to teaching English:

I did not use the textbook because it was exam-orientated. I did not think that the pupils really learned from the text book but since this was what my teacher mentor wanted me to do, I followed the advice.

Zizah felt her mentor was also unpredictable:

I did not know what was in his mind. I really did not know. It was stressful. Sometimes he came to me and told me, “If you need anything you just come to me,” but so far I have not gone to see him.

However, Zizah admitted her own indifferent attitude may have prevented her from making an effort to initiate contact with her teacher mentor or to consult her teacher mentor more regularly. As she expressed:

Maybe I am partly to be blamed too. I did not make the first move to go and see him. Sometimes, I felt it was okay. I understand he was busy; that was the reason I did not want to disturb him. I did not want to be an additional burden. But in this school, they are always busy with school activities.

Mr. Pitor indicated a similar reason why this support was minimal, why he was not able to apply all the mentoring components as advocated in the mentoring program:

The problem was who was going to start. Who was going to approach who. In my opinion, the mentee has to approach the mentor, because she is the one who wants to learn, isn't she?

Ondu was also frustrated in the initial phase of the mentoring program at what her teacher mentor wanted her to do in her lessons:

I was left with no choice on this matter but just to follow the pace of my teacher mentor. I actually learned humility by learning to accept things like this. I did not want to offend my mentor. I just followed.

However, she learned something about herself and the need to be proactive and how to deal with such situations by deciding herself to change the teaching strategies during

some of her lessons. She also discovered that her pupils responded better and learned more effectively through these changes.

However, Mr. Sipin her teacher mentor, was also unhappy with Ondu's attitude:

She actually listened to what I was saying. Sometimes she did say other things during our discussions but afterwards she still did different things. Maybe she thought I was not suitable for the work. When we talked about teaching strategies, she became very defensive and kept on justifying why such approaches and teaching strategies were used. I became very frustrated and angry at the same time. What was the point of discussing, giving feedback, and planning?

Pian was worried and upset about having to include extra teaching content. Her minor teacher mentor wanted her to finish three topics within six weeks in her minor subject. She felt that as a novice she was not confident enough to do this within the time frame given to her. However, she could not bring herself to voice her opinion as a novice teacher, as she admitted in her reflective journal:

I am upset, unhappy and not satisfied with my minor teacher mentor, as he wanted me to teach three topics in one in six weeks. But I dare not give my opinion because of the implications for my teaching grade and also I did not want to disappoint my minor teacher mentor. So I have to push myself to teach very fast to finish the topics. Sometimes I have to use other times when the pupils are free.

Fortunately, this matter was amicably resolved for this mentee through negotiation and proper planning.

Mr. Asim tended to adopt a different approach when providing this support. He wanted his mentee to be independent and be bold enough to make decisions instead of referring to him all the time. At the same time, the mentor was aware that his mentee was a novice teacher with no experience in teaching. He advised:

I told her if she wants to have extra classes for the pupils, just do it, no need to ask permission.

Some mentees (4 of 9) faced difficulties in getting mentors to sit with them and discuss their lesson planning, teaching strategies and related teaching issues. Sometimes the discussions were brief because the mentors were busy with school activities and had to rush always. Itah complained that her teacher mentor just skimmed through her lesson plans briefly and told her that everything looked fine without any other comments. This caused her a lot of anxiety and did not help in her teaching practice.

Zizah, who had a similar experience, was also disappointed with her teacher mentor's *laissez-faire* attitude:

I showed my lesson plan to my teacher mentor and asked him "So how? How do I go about doing this one?" My teacher mentor said, "you just follow the text book or maybe you just follow the workbook".

Zizah's teacher mentor repeatedly showed little willingness to assist her. She said:

When I showed my teacher mentor my teaching objectives, I asked him, "How about this objective?" He always answered, "This objective is okay." To him, everything was okay. He told me always, "The one thing you have to do is to impress your lecturer". I told him, "No, I am not doing this to impress my lecturer. I want to improve myself". I was so fed up. He did not care about me. I was so stressed and felt like giving up. What was the point of having the teaching knowledge if you cannot even share or apply it with the mentee? It was pointless.

This attitude of her mentor led Zizah to seek help from other mentors and her peers. Her distress was heightened when she observed the other mentees in her group receiving adequate classroom teaching support from their mentors.

However, Zizah's mentor had a different view on providing this support. Mr. Pitor believed that his mentee did not really need this support, that she did not need assistance. He said:

My mentee had no problem in teaching because she had been teaching before. So that was why most of the time she did not come to see me for guidance or advice. Whenever I saw her, I asked her "Do you need anything and she answered?" "No".

Mentors were also concerned with the way the mentees perceived the practicum. Mr. Titus and Mr. Farish were both concerned about Tati's approach to teaching practice. They both acknowledged her initiative and persistence in enquiring about her teaching and seeking assurance but were bothered by her apparent anxiousness about getting good grades. Mr. Farish said:

My mentee planned her lessons mostly for the sake of being observed by me and the university supervisor. So I told her it was not the right thing to do, that she had to be well prepared and ready at all times throughout the practicum. She worried so much about the grades that she overlooked the real meaning of teaching. So for her, it was merely doing it just for the observation and the grades.

Familiarization with school culture and policies was also an important issue to be addressed in creating an environment that is conducive to the mentees' teaching. All mentors stressed that they were able to provide this support to their mentees, that they briefed their mentees about the school culture and rules and policies which were important for the mentees to follow during the practicum. Most of the mentors (8 of 12) showed their mentees around the school, introduced them to the pupils they were teaching and familiarized them with the surroundings before they taught. For example, Mr. Ahmad ensured that his mentee felt welcomed on the first day of teaching practice. Introducing the mentee was another welcoming gesture. Mr. Kassim said:

I had informed the pupils earlier that "there is a pretty teacher from the university coming to teach you all". It was important to do these things before

the mentee comes into teaching. It was to prepare the pupils she was teaching which would be helpful for the mentee when the class was ready to have a new teacher in their class.

The mentees agreed that this support was important for them to start their first day of teaching in a new environment. As Mina said:

I was impressed by my major teacher mentor's warm welcoming treatment of me. I was not left on my own. It was good to feel comfortable and secure.

One of the factors that facilitated the implementation of the mentoring program was the preparation of the environment for mentees. There was general agreement that this support was important in facing the real teaching situation.

Discussion

The general perception of the mentees in this study was that, while all mentors attempted to provide professional learning support on classroom practices, the depth, commitment and quality of this support varied. Most of the mentees seem to have benefited from the mentors' knowledge of content and pedagogical experiences. Some mentors believed that mentees needed to be more proactive in gaining this support and some mentees were seen by their mentors as bold, courageous in initiating this support.

It is evident that positive attitudes of teacher mentors contributed to mentees' professional and pedagogical development. Mentors' commitment, dedication and

seriousness about their mentor roles impacted on mentees' teaching performance in different ways in the mentoring program. With mentor support most of the mentees gained confidence in teaching, which enabled them to teach creatively by using different and innovative teaching strategies. This is consistent with the suggestions of Odell, (1990), Darling-Hammond and Sclan (1996), and Kajs (2002).

Setting objectives in lesson planning for teaching was a major concern of most mentees and as the practicum progressed they learned skills from their mentors in setting realistic teaching goals. In the process of gaining access to mentors' pedagogical and content knowledge, most mentees learned to work collaboratively as partners with their mentors and developed mutual respect.

Disagreement with mentors on teaching content, lesson planning and strategies resulted in some mentees experiencing anxiety and stress. Negative mentor attitudes were perceived as lack of commitment, dedication, caring, consideration and interest which reduced the adequacy of mentor support. Some mentors seemed to adopt a *telling what to do* approach. Other negative mentor behaviours were unavailability for regular discussions, and lack of cooperation. At the same time mentors reported negative mentee behaviours which limited rapport inadequate provision of resources and also caused stress and anxiety in mentors. Being defensive, not willing to approach the mentor first, not accepting mentor's suggestions and varying from planned approaches were some negative mentee behaviours which affected the provision of providing mentor support.

Mentors' assumptions about mentees' previous experience apparently reduced some mentor support in this study. Some mentors reported purposely limiting support to encourage mentor autonomy. Initially this was seen as negative but later was seen as beneficial by the mentees.

The data also indicate the concern of several mentors at a mentee putting too much emphasis on grades, although such emphasis is hardly surprising given the mandatory pass needed in the cumulative grades.

Mentees were generally satisfied with their access to the pedagogical knowledge and skills of their mentors. However, there was an indication of some lack of mentor credibility in that one of the mentees decided to use her own teaching strategies because of doubt about the validity of the mentor's suggestions for her teaching and preferred to explore her own approaches.

It is also apparent that some mentees experienced difficulties in fully achieving their goals and maximizing the benefits of their practices. These mentees learned to negotiate and look for alternative help from other sources, other mentors and peers. This also reflects mentees' ability to adjust and adapt to different situations and different levels of mentor support.

Some mentees showed a great deal of dependence on their mentors, particularly at the beginning of the program, perhaps because some mentees need more assurance than others at this stage. It is apparent that the immediate support on practical issues of subject-specific teaching was needed. The data indicate that classroom practice support

was gradually reduced towards the end of the mentoring program because by then mentees were seen to be more autonomous and confident in carrying out their work.

Some mentors tended to be more pedantic on exactly what mentees should do. For some mentees this created anxiety and frustration and limited their ability to explore their potentials in teaching and to integrate theory and practice. Others, however, willingly accepted their mentors' instruction and suggestions, perhaps because they did not want problems to affect their teaching grade, or did not want to offend their teacher mentors or to show disrespect to someone older, more senior and more experienced. Some mentees continued to find it difficult to disagree or state their opinions openly to their mentors, despite the fact that they were encouraged to do so. Gallego (2001) believed such behaviours adopted by mentees may be designed to avoid conflict with mentors. Perhaps, sometimes, cultural factors may also influence the reactions of mentors and mentees (Geber, 2003). Ismail (2001) saw this kind of reaction as typical in this local cultural context and describes:

In Malaysian culture, feelings are not easily articulated by many people, especially students. It is culturally more polite to keep one's feelings to oneself. In fact the whole idea is not to hurt anybody's feelings by being outspoken and articulate. These two words, outspoken and articulate do not seem to have a dividing line in the Malaysian context (p. 120).

As an explanation of this behaviour, Sendut et al. (1989) highlighted the need to be sensitive to this cultural context and the requirement to uphold certain values. Typically in this cultural context the highest priority is to get along with others by showing

respect and to *give face*; behaviour has to be *halus* that indicates dignity. Equally important is to *preserve face*. It is to “preserve not only their own face but those of others”, that “loss of face in public inflicts the supreme ego damage” (Sendut et al., 1989, p. 21). Others also noted that “Malaysians, generally, tend to avoid airing their opinions for fear of being branded by their other colleagues as arrogant and self-opinioned” (Schmerhorn, 1994, p. 56). These beliefs and values may explain why such behaviours were apparent in this study.

The data also indicate that providing a warm welcome and explaining school culture and policies created an environment conducive to the smooth implementation of the practicum. Mentees generally were satisfied with this support. Consistent with Shannon and Anderson’s mentoring model (1988) one of the ways of providing support for mentees is to provide an environment that facilitates *a smooth entry into teaching* by providing information on school policies (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992). Corley (1998) also suggested that it is important for mentees to adapt themselves to the environment in which they are teaching.

4.2.2 Provision of teaching resources

Provision of teaching resources was stressed as an important support for the mentees in the mentoring program. Discussions with mentors on ways to provide this support to mentees were conducted during the mentoring workshops. Teaching resources to be provided included subject syllabuses, text books, teaching materials, reference books, stationery including papers, markers, rulers, transparencies, Liquid Crystal Display

(LCD), computer laptops, apparatus and materials for experiments, name lists of pupils, timetables, school calendars and school policy guidelines and rules.

The mentees in general (in focus groups and interviews) agreed that availability of such resources was most important in the first week of the practicum to enable them to plan, organize and implement their weekly lesson plans. Although the mentees agreed that resources were provided, the type and extent of the resources varied considerably.

Some mentees (4 of 9) reported that some of their mentors went out of their way to provide teaching resources needed in the mentoring program, not only those available in the school but resources personally obtained by the mentors. For example, Osong was gratified by the efforts of both of her mentors:

My major teacher mentor said, “You can have the LCD and laptop any time when you teach the class. The reference books are on the shelf if you need them”. You know, he even helped me to carry the LCD and laptop to the science lab. I didn’t know what to say when he did this. I appreciated the help but I also felt uncomfortable because he did not have to do that. I told him, “It is okay, I will carry the LCD and laptop”. This positive reaction motivated me to teach.

Her minor teacher mentor even offered to personally bring any equipment that was needed.

Some mentors went further, as Tati confirmed:

I was very lucky because my teacher mentor let me use his record book for reference when I was planning my weekly lesson plans. This assisted me a lot to get all the planning and preparation ready but he also advised me to use my own ideas.

Pian was also appreciative, gratified and satisfied with relevant teaching aids which her mentor provided her.

In addition, most of the mentees (7 of 9) here were also provided with additional resources such as stationery which, otherwise, they would have had to buy. Two mentees even had teacher mentors who helped them to print teaching notes for the pupils. Posis's major mentor even lent Posis her teaching notes which assisted her in teaching and saved her time on preparing additional notes.

Tati was very impressed with her major mentor's empathy for her financial wellbeing.

My teacher mentor asked why my teaching charts were too small. I told him I had to economize since my budget was limited. He then provided me with the materials. I am truly appreciative of his concern. I am so lucky because I do not have to buy them now.

Mr. Titus confirmed this view:

I told my mentee she could ask for anything she needed to improve her teaching. Even to the point of providing resources that she needed to buy. My main aim

was for her to teach well without worrying about how to get the resources such as materials for teaching aids and other things. If she has all the resources, then she would be able to teach well. Not only would it benefit the pupils she was teaching but I as a mentor would benefit as well. By providing all the support, she could accomplish her goals in teaching and this made me feel satisfied.

Some mentors also took the time to show mentees how to use certain resources in the school. For instance, Osong indicated in her reflective journal that she regarded herself as very lucky to have had the opportunity to work with a teacher mentor who took the time and had the patience to show her how to use the science teaching aids step by step. Where resources were well provided by mentors, mentees felt enabled to plan, organize and implement their teaching effectively and this made their teaching interesting and enjoyable.

However, some of the mentees (4 of 9) reported encountering problems in resource provision. For instance, Ondu stated that the subject syllabuses provided were not up to date, and that, on her own initiative, she finally found the updated version herself:

I approached my teacher mentor to obtain the syllabus to prepare my teaching plans. I found that the syllabus was not an updated version, a different one. I asked him for the new one and he said, "I will get it" but I waited for it a whole week and still did not get it. So I asked around and I obtained it from the head of the subject. I was surprised the teacher mentor did not even know it was there.

This caused delay in Ondu's preparation and weekly planning which caused her unnecessary anxiety and tension.

Zizah reported that her mentor only provided her the syllabuses, timetable, list of students and textbooks and that she had to look for the other teaching resources related to her topics. She stated that she realized that her teacher mentor would not assist her beyond only providing the basic teaching resources so, she decided to obtain her own resources through peers and other teacher mentors. Itah reported a similar experience:

My teacher mentor did not furnish me with information on where to get the teaching aids for my teaching. I realized after a while that there was no point in waiting. I got the help from my peers by sharing common teaching resources, and also from other mentors.

Delays in providing teaching resources were particularly disappointing and caused unnecessary anxiety and reduced some mentees' ability to teach effectively especially during the initial phase of the mentoring program. However, it also enabled these mentees to show more initiative, be less dependent on their mentors, and obtain support from other sources, especially their peers.

Discussion

Overall, the teacher mentors in this study believed that they had provided the necessary resources needed by the mentees and some mentees agreed they were happy and gained a lot from their teaching resources support with more positive outcomes for their

teaching and motivation. Mentees were impressed with mentors who empathized with mentees' resource needs and went out of their way to provide, often personally, for them.

Resource problems did occur, however, and caused short-term difficulties for mentees. However, as in the area of teaching strategies, etc, these mentees became more independent and flexible in resource acquisition and use. Peers and other mentors were important here. Mentors who were most disappointing in resource provision were perceived as less committed to the mentoring process, especially in the initial phase of the practicum.

4.2.3 Classroom management skills

Both mentees and mentors (in focus group discussions and individual interviews) generally agreed that effective teaching techniques, strategies, content and lesson planning require effective classroom management skills. Classroom management skills support was needed more by the novice teacher mentees in this study. Mentees (5 of 9) who had had no teaching experience felt (in interviews and focus group discussions) that this support enabled them to implement increasingly effective classroom management practices throughout the practicum. They realized, after early teaching experiences, that classroom management skills are as important as other aspects of classroom teaching. Mina pointed out:

Both my teacher mentors advised me to emphasize both components equally: teaching and classroom management. I found out that I could not teach well if I did not have good classroom management skills.

Those mentees whose mentors showed them how to implement step-by-step classroom management skills were greatly assisted in better managing the classroom and dealing with disciplinary problems. Osong stated:

My major teacher mentor guided me step-by-step on how and what to do in classroom management. With this help and example, I was able to anticipate and come up with solutions on how to handle the class, especially with difficult pupils in my class. I learned something too by experiencing some disciplinary problems in the classroom and how to handle them, not just teaching the content.

All the mentors were perceived to encourage mentees to use their interpersonal communicative skills in handling disciplinary issues in the classroom. The mentees all agreed that such skills were vital in management and discipline. Most (7 of 9) valued their mentors' experience in this area.

Mina said that her major teacher mentor encouraged her to use interpersonal skills to get around students with disciplinary problems in the classroom:

I found out that when I focused on using the relevant interpersonal skills, I was able to get around the pupils and gained their trust by interacting and talking to them diplomatically.

Posis shared a similar experience:

It was not easy for me at first, especially with the difficult students. Best with encouragement and motivation from my mentors, I managed to put the classroom management skills into practice. It gradually became much easier. I think time was a factor in getting to know the pupils and their individual behaviours.

Different mentors placed different degrees of emphasis on mentees' classroom management skills. Two of the mentees believed that their teacher mentors placed greater emphasis on class control and management than on teaching, which caused them some concern and confusion. Tati said:

My teacher mentor always reminded me that, "Controlling the class is more important than teaching content". Sometimes, I did not know what to do.

However, in another interview, when Tati was asked again about this, she responded that she was more confident now and that both were important aspects of teaching and learning in the classroom.

However, some mentees (3 of 9) were not satisfied with their mentors' apparent *laissez-faire* attitude in providing tips, advice and solutions in tackling discipline problems in the classroom. Tati said her minor teacher mentor told her to report any discipline problems to the discipline teachers instead of first referring them to him so that she was unable to discuss with her mentor how to handle a particular problem and so to learn how to handle and make decisions on management for herself:

I felt frustrated because the pupils in the class I was teaching had many discipline problems. When I referred this to my minor teacher mentor, he told me, "Just send them to the discipline teachers". Instead of discussing and looking for solutions to solve this problem, he opted for an easier way out. I felt that I did not have an example and opportunity to learn from him.

Tati saw that this contradicted a major objective of the mentoring program which was to create a conducive learning environment where both teacher mentors and mentees were encouraged to discuss any problems that cropped up. She felt that she could not explore and practise alternative ways to solve such problems because her teacher mentor's focus was more on content knowledge and less on classroom management skills rather than on the two complementing each other.

Discussion

Classroom management skills were perceived as critical by mentees, particularly those who were novice teachers. This is not surprising as novice teachers cannot anticipate the many behavioural patterns that will occur in their classroom, and often feel unprepared

and out of control when they take place (Jonson, 2008). Effective classroom management was seen as fundamental to effective teaching and resource allocations by mentors and mentees. Mentees did, however, experience variations in mentor support in this area and inconsistencies which caused anxiety and uncertainty. Some mentors apparently believed that management skill support was as important as instruction skill support for mentees in teaching. Many studies have shown that teachers specifically felt that classroom management skills and procedures should be given more attention in the preparation curriculum as this was found to be one of the biggest sources of teacher anxiety, especially the ongoing task of keeping control in the classroom (Jonson, 2002).

Classroom management support was generally found to be most important in the initial phase of the practicum and less so as it proceeded. Advice on step-by-step management and effective interpersonal communication were found to be most valuable in developing effective classroom management.

4.2.4 Observing mentors teaching

The main purpose of observing mentors teaching was to give mentees opportunities to see teaching in context, particularly in the big classes of 50 students typical in most of the schools in this area. This was another important means of mentees gaining knowledge and ideas on teaching during the mentoring program: it was not intended to assess or evaluate the mentor's lesson. Five mentees had the opportunity for such observations here. Osong said:

My teacher mentor and I talked about what to observe. Observing my teacher mentors gave me better insights into teaching and learning. I could really learn by seeing them teaching, just as they had advised me. They really have the experience to handle the class. I employed what they did and found out some of the techniques worked, not all. It is a learning process.

Similarly, Mina adopted the same techniques that her mentor used and was motivated by the results in her own teaching:

I used the same teaching techniques. During my lessons, I saw the pupils were very interested and amused because I used the same tactics that my major mentor used such as the way he talked and his sense of humor in the class. I did not scold the students but tried to talk to them when they were taking their time doing their tasks during my class. I was so proud that I could do it considering I am a novice.

In the same vein, Posis was more confident to put into practice some of what she observed:

I became more confident in trying out different teaching techniques and approaches after I observed my major teacher mentor teaching. In the process, I also learned to decide which method was better and got some tips on how to solve problems while teaching.

Pian was particularly interested to see how her minor teacher mentor led the class during practical work in the science laboratory:

It gave me ideas of how to control a big class doing experiments in the science lab. I learned when to catch the pupils' attention and when to use a loud voice rather than yelling most of the time. Observing him teaching helped me a lot in my own teaching.

When asked whether the mentees and mentors discussed mentor teaching, the mentees in general responded (in focus group discussions) that they did, but that the focus was more on asking for clarifications of teaching and classroom management practices.

Through observations, mentees learned to use different teaching strategies, increased their confidence in teaching, and learned how to manage the classroom especially, in the science laboratories, and how to use interpersonal skills in communicating with pupils.

An interesting outcome of these observations was reported by Mr. Gusil:

It was good for me because I needed another person to tell me about my teaching although I knew that the main purpose was not to assess my teaching that it was another way of providing additional help to my mentee.

Not all of the mentees who observed their mentors benefited from it. Two mentees reported that they did not really learn much from observing their teacher mentors teach and that this was because the mentors had not emphasized it. These mentees were not

convinced of the worth of observing their mentors and were not keen to do so. They concluded that planning and discussing pedagogical knowledge, strategies and content with their teacher mentors were more useful. As Mr. Sipin pointed out:

My mentee asked me once but she did not really make it a point to observe me. She would not observe me, anyway. I told her she could come and observe me any time.

Despite the fact that observing mentors teaching was one of the alternative strategies advocated to improve current mentoring practices in the mentoring program, not all teacher mentors were keen to be observed by their mentees. Some mentees (4 of 9), did not have the opportunity for such observations. Zizah was disappointed with her teacher mentor's response when she asked to observe him teaching:

My teacher mentor told me it was not necessary to see him teaching because it is the same thing. He said, "No need to come and see me. All teaching is the same".

This was a common reason given by mentors who did not implement the observation strategy, that mentees only needed to follow the suggestions that were discussed. Another reason given by Mr. Sipin was:

I had a different style and a different approach. It might not be helpful for the mentee to see me because it might not conform to the mentee's style.

However, several mentees were more proactive and found other ways to get this support. Two mentees, for example chose and were able to observe other teacher mentors instead.

Discussion

Tomlinson (1995) suggested that observing teacher mentors is important. Most mentees who observed mentors here believed that they learned from such observations and that observation reinforced the teaching strategies and approaches that the mentors had outlined during lesson planning and prior discussions. There were also indications that mentees learned by emulating their mentors' teaching in their own work. This corresponds strongly to the apprenticeship-mentoring model, especially when mentees are novices (Brooks & Sikes, 1997).

Some teacher mentors in this study were not keen to be observed by their mentees. They argued that the other supports provided were sufficient and that observed teaching might not conform to the mentee's teaching styles. Perhaps, however, they were merely uncomfortable at being observed by mentees. This aligned with the studies that suggest some teacher mentors resist the idea of being observed by their mentees for fear of being judged (Momany & Cullingford, 2006). Similarly, Ismail (2001) indicated that teachers in Malaysia generally were not keen to be observed during the practicum. Perhaps, such reluctance could be a matter of preference and for privacy of and independence (Jones, 2006). Nevertheless, one positive outcome in this study was that mentees took the initiative to observe other teacher mentors, to solve their own problems, independently of their assigned mentors.

4.2.5 Collaborative teaching (team teaching)

Collaborative teaching, or team teaching, in this study involved the mentees teaching part of the lesson alongside their teacher mentors. Its basic purposes were to allow mentees to become gradually familiar with teaching in a real situation, to create an environment that was non-threatening, and to boost the confidence of the mentees. This also involved planning the lesson together with the mentor and it occurred only in the first two weeks of the mentoring program.

Some mentees (3 of 9) perceived that collaborative teaching experiences increased their confidence in teaching and managing pupils, especially in conducting experiments in science laboratories, and gave them moral support while they were teaching part of the lesson. Osong was especially grateful that her teacher mentor took the initiative to assist her during her first few lessons:

Teaching together with my teacher mentor gave me moral support. At first, I felt that the pupils would not respect me but it was not so. The moral support in teaching together gave me the confidence to face the pupils. It's not easy to control the class in the science lab. I am grateful to my teacher mentor for helping me initially in this way.

Mina was not comfortable in teaching collaboratively with her major mentor initially but discovered the benefits of the opportunity for such first-hand experience:

At first, it bothered me to be teaching together but I learned more when I watched as my teacher mentor did the experiments with the pupils. My teacher mentor's input was beneficial. It was good for me especially as I do not have teaching experience. I learned a lot from this experience.

Other mentees (6 of 9) stated that their mentors did not think that collaborative teaching was necessary and preferred the mentees to teach alone right away. Three of them perceived that they were not keen as it made them feel uncomfortable to teach together and also caused unnecessary anxiety. However, the mentees agreed (in focus group discussions and interviews) that while some mentors accompanied them to their classes and sat in the classes to give them encouragement they were disappointed that collaborative teaching did not occur.

Only three mentors used collaborative teaching with their mentees. Mentors argued (in focus group discussion) that they could not fulfil this component as suggested by the mentoring program because of time constraints, commitment to other scheduled or sometimes ad hoc school activities, or because mentees had previous teaching experience. In addition, they also agreed and stated specifically that they preferred the mentees to start teaching immediately as they were there constantly to provide other support both professionally and psychologically.

Discussion

The findings indicate that not all of the mentees benefited from collaborative team teaching support, despite this approach being advocated in the mentoring program as

one of the ways that mentees could gain access to the approaches of experienced teachers' in classroom practices (McIntyre & Hagger, 1996). It was obvious that mentors were not keen to implement this component because of such factors as in time constraints, other school activities and mentees' previous teaching experience. At the same time, there were some mentees who were not keen to teach collaboratively. Perhaps such reluctance could be due to lack of trust and fear of loss of self-esteem which prevented both mentors and mentees engaging in collaborative teaching (Jones, 2006). In order for collaboration outcomes to be successful, such teaching must be approached with a positive attitude (Moore & Wells, 1999).

Preference for the mentees to start teaching immediately was strong for some mentors who assumed that other supports were adequate from the beginning and some mentees agreed. They may have overlooked the value of the approach of *jump starting* the novice teacher in their initial practicum phase, especially in teaching science subjects. However, there was also some disappointment among other mentees who wished but were unable to teach collaboratively.

4.2.6 Peer mentoring

Additional help and support from peer mentoring was a significant feature of this study and was added to the mentoring program to assist mentees in their professional development. However, mentees had mixed perceptions on peer mentoring. All the mentees (in focus group discussion) found peer mentoring helpful in assisting them daily in their lesson plans, teaching techniques, strategies, content, teaching aids, and classroom management skills. In general, they agreed that peer mentoring was

particularly needed during the initial phase of the mentoring program. To them, this phase was a period of adjusting to a new environment and peer mentoring played a vital part here in addition to the major roles played by teacher mentors.

Ondu reflected extensively in her journal on peer mentoring in the initial phase of the mentoring program, describing how peer mentoring created opportunities for the mentees to share their experiences and support each other.

Pian observed me teaching. She commented I used a wide range of activities compared to the subject she teaches. We had some discussions concerning the content of our teaching. I suggested to her that those strategies we used were more or less the same and the only difference was the content. I also suggested to her to use all the generic skills. Both of us agreed that it was difficult to have an open communication with our teacher mentors at this stage. So basically, it is also self-knowledge, learning from peers, you know.

Pian also spoke about how peer mentoring had helped her through:

I did observe Ondu during her class and I learned how she managed her class and how she does her teaching. Ondu and I always have discussions concerning our pupils' abilities and how to encourage them to generate ideas. We found out from our discussions that the pupils we are teaching in general are so used to being spoon-fed.

Tati said that what she gained most from peer mentoring was sharing and learning to write specific learning objectives and that with the additional help and verification from her peers she felt more confident in her own teaching.

Itah added that peer mentoring helped to strengthen her motivation, to take care of one another and to solve common problems in the teaching practice but “the most important thing is we motivated each other always, and especially after we observed each other teaching. This is how we took care of each other”.

It should be noted that two mentees did not find peer mentoring helpful at all. One of them said she preferred to solve her problems for herself throughout the mentoring program. Although she sat with her peers, listened to their discussions and exchanges of views on their teaching experiences, she found that there was not much it could do to help her.

Discussion

Peer mentoring appears to have played an important role in supporting most mentees, especially those who lacked some mentor supports during the mentoring program. The mentees learned to look to their peers as a source of ideas and advice, to get personal support and reassurance in an environment that was intentionally created where mentees could cooperate, interact and communicate with one another. This corresponds, with the findings of Holbeche (1996) and Britton (2006).

In this environment they developed positive relationships and shared knowledge. Such interactions among mentees is considered an important way to begin and continue professional development (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1993). According to Anderson et al. (2005), observation of peers would be even effective when student teachers observe peers at the same level of training and can also help develop mutually supportive bonds as the peers progress in their professional development. These findings support those on peer interactions among mentees in this study. However, there were some mentees who did not find peer mentoring valuable and who preferred to solve problems on their own.

4.3 Mentoring relationships and communication

Mentoring relationships and communication are important factors in the quality and effectiveness of the mentoring process program (See for details on mentoring relationships and communication in Chapter 2, Section 2.7, p. 65). The themes discussed in this section are: forming mentoring relationships and communications; interpersonal communicative skills; and availability.

In order to emphasize these, and to heighten mentors' and mentees' awareness of their importance, discussions and activities (role plays) on effective communication and relationship-building were conducted during the mentoring workshops.

4.3.1 Establishing mentoring relationships and communication

The importance of relationship building was emphasized in workshops for both mentors and mentees. Positive outcomes of mentoring relationships were listed to give both mentees and mentors insights into successful mentoring.

There were mixed responses when mentees were asked about mentoring relationships during the mentoring program. The majority of the mentees (7 of 9) stated that they had managed to build positive rapport with their teacher mentors during the program.

However, they reported a range in the quality and development of these relationships for their personal and professional development. Two mentees stated that they did not manage to develop effective relationships with their major teacher mentors during the mentoring program.

Mentees defined the formation of mentoring relationships and communications either by defining them as formal, informal or both. Informal to the mentees meant natural and *fatherly* creating a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere in which they felt motivated and which assisted them in their teaching.

Two mentees perceived their communications and relationships with their mentors as very good because they communicated easily with either their major or minor teacher mentors and thus shared more close personal as well as professional relationships. They also referred to the informality of these relationships because of the natural communications involved, and of the emotional support provided by their mentors. For

example, one of the mentees, Mina described her mentoring relationship as a fatherly one:

My major teacher mentor was really good. He guided and helped me throughout the practicum. He always encouraged and motivated me so that I was able to teach well. Our relationship is like a father-daughter relationship. Very informal.

Five mentees described their relationships with mentors as good, as a blend of formal and informal, depending on the situations they were in. For example, interactions outside the classrooms, staff rooms or school were considered as informal in nature because they were sometimes spontaneous and not structured or planned. Posis stated:

My relationships actually happened informally such as sometimes meeting at the school canteen, outside the classrooms such as the corridors, or during the extra-curricular activities.

Pius described the informal interactions with his mentor:

Our interactions seem to be better in informal places such as in the school canteen. Then we talked as we walked back to the staff room or classroom; along the corridor, we talked and discussed. Very informal. I preferred informality because I felt at ease with my teacher mentors, like they were colleagues.

Two mentees, however, perceived formal relationships in mentoring to be better because they were serious, especially in discussions. One of them said, “I think it is best in formal relationships when we have serious discussions such as in the staff room and face-to-face in a formal setting”. Nevertheless, the majority of mentees (in focus group discussions) preferred the informal relationships because they wanted to be comfortable with their teacher mentors and to have a friendly, collaborative, collegial working environment.

Two mentees reported that their only interactions with their major teacher mentors were strictly professional and that their only communications and interactions occurred in planning or sometimes in reflective discussions. They were not satisfied with the exclusively formal nature of these interactions. Zizah pointed out:

My relationship with my major teacher mentor was very formal. We interacted only when we had discussions. My teacher mentor did not come and have a chat with me. This was disappointing and caused me a lot of anxiety.

Overall, the mentees in this study believed that an informal, friendly environment of collaboration and collegiality created positive mentoring relationships. Formal interactions which lacked these qualities were viewed as unsatisfactory.

The mentors perceived their mentoring relationships differently from their mentees. The majority of the mentors (11 of 12) believed that they had generally managed to build and develop positive mentoring relationships with their mentees.

Mentors (in focus group discussions) generally did not define specifically the nature of their mentoring relationships but empathized the importance of being able to establish effective relationships with their mentees. Most also believed that they were able to create an environment conducive to relationship building, one which enabled them to establish effective interactions and form positive relationships with their mentees. They believed that these relationships made the mentoring process much and more effective. For example, Mr. Farish stated:

I did not have any problem with my mentee. I am a very easy person to work with. My relationship was close which made it easier to interact with my mentee. It was important to have an effective relationship otherwise I do not think I would have been able to encourage and motivate her in her teaching and provide her with the support she needed every day.

Mr. Ahmad also confirmed that “everything worked if there were fruitful interactions with the mentee” while Mr. Gusil stressed the importance of having effective communication in relationship-building.

In the process of achieving these positive relationships, the mentors reported that they faced some constraints. For example, Mr. Linus lamented that “it is difficult to build a mentoring relationship if the other person is reluctant”.

Mr. Pitor also stated that his mentee did not approach him. He expressed concern about this and added that it was not easy for him because his mentee was too *quiet* which made it even more difficult to communicate and form an effective mentoring

relationship and that this was one of the reasons why he did not manage to develop such a relationship.

Mr.Sipin ranked communications in mentoring relationships as one of the most important components in mentoring. He described difficulties in his initial relationship with this mentee as:

I was not sure. Maybe there was a block there. Maybe it was me or maybe it was her. Honestly, I did not have a problem with this mentee. But I talked to her very openly and casually. Maybe it was the age difference. This was something which I am still trying to find out why.

Towards the middle phase, his relationships with his mentee improved. He said his mentee did what was suggested and gradually they began to know each other better.

Discussion

The relationship between the mentor and mentee is central to the quality of mentoring (Ferro, 1993; Lick, 1999). Most of the mentees and mentors in this study were able to establish effective communications and mentoring relationships. The most successful relationships for the mentees were either informal or a combination of informal and formal in nature. The mentees who did not manage to fully achieve successful relationships described them as exclusively formal and all expressed a clear preference for informal mentoring interactions and relationships. One of the reasons given for this

was that informality was more conducive to maintaining a pleasant work environment with less tension, particularly for novice teachers.

Mentors also emphasized that the mentoring environment must be conducive to relationship-building, as is also suggested by the Anderson and Shannon mentoring model (1988). The mentors' main concern here was to build an effective professional mentoring relationship. They did not, however, have any preference for or specification of an informal or formal relationship.

The data show that where neither mentor nor mentee were prepared to initiate effective communication, the mentoring relationship was constrained. Perhaps, such occurrence could have been prevented if both mentor and mentee had adopted a positive approach to working cooperatively to make the mentoring process work. As indicated by Britton (2006, p. 180), the "responsibility for the success of the mentoring relationship does not rest solely with the mentor. Both mentor and mentee must accept responsibility for ensuring a beneficial and effective relationship, and be committed to making it work".

Other constraints on relationship-building identified by mentors were possibly age differences, lack of communication, mentees not making an effort to approach or communicate with mentors, and negative attitudes of both mentees and mentors.

The venues of mentor-mentee interactions seem to have been important in the effectiveness of communications and mentoring relationships in this study and informal interactions beyond the classroom were apparently more conducive to effective communication and emotional and professional support for mentees.

4.3.2 *Interpersonal communication skills*

In the mentoring workshops, advice was given on interpersonal communications and examples of positive personality characteristics, and effective listening using positive reinforcement to encourage effective communications and relationship-building in mentoring were discussed.

The data here show that effective interpersonal communication skills are essential to positive relationships and communications between teacher mentors and mentees . More than half of the mentees (6 of 9) reported that their mentors used interpersonal communicative skills effectively to promote communications with them. In the focus group discussions, mentees noted such mentor skills as the ability, willingness and patience to listen and to use positive reinforcement.

The majority of mentors (11 of 12) agreed with the mentees that they tried to use their interpersonal skills to communicate with their mentees. For example, Mr. Gusil made it a point to use his interpersonal communicative skills during the practicum:

For me, I considered everything possible to make sure that my mentee was comfortable in this practicum. I did not scold her. I used positive reinforcement when I talked to her to encourage and sustain her motivation. I made sure to make time to listen to her. I would just not talk to her in front of other people if I disagreed on something. I had to consider her feelings because I did not want to upset her.

The mentees (5 of 9) reported use of positive reinforcement by their teacher mentors. The mentees said that some mentors used it regularly but others only when mentees really needed it. Nevertheless, they perceived that positive reinforcement, whether verbal or non-verbal, had impacted positively on their mentoring relationships. Mina said her mentor always used encouraging words to reassure her on her teaching, which motivated her and greatly improved both her communications with her mentor and her performance. Posis said her major teacher used praise and encouragement such as *Just try your best*, or *Good, you can do it* all the time.

Some mentees (4 of 9) indicated there were mentors who did not use or seldom used encouraging words. Pian, who believed that verbal praise should always be given to mentees to motivate them and make them feel good, confident, and happy with their work, said that her mentor was rather selfish in giving praise and was not that expressive. She felt that she should have been acknowledged more for her good performances. She said:

It bothers me sometimes and it decreases my motivation to work harder. I wish my minor teacher mentor was more expressive.

In addition to giving verbal praise, listening to and acknowledging the mentee were seen as equally important in mentoring relationships. Osong said that the mentoring relationship with her teacher mentor was improved and enhanced when she realized that her teacher mentor paid attention and listened to her ideas whenever they discussed her work. She said:

I felt honoured that my teacher mentor trusted me and acknowledged my ideas. He always encouraged me to try out whatever ideas I had. My confidence also improved.

More than half of the mentees (6 of 9) described how their teacher mentors made them feel relaxed and at ease by telling them stories about the school and sharing their experiences. They said that such conversations brought them closer to their mentors.

The mentees generally agreed (in focus group discussions) that utilizing their own interpersonal skills in communications benefited them in mentoring relationships. Pius said he made the first move by talking to his teacher mentors. He pointed out that this was polite and, most importantly, that it showed respect:

It is a normal thing to do to talk to your teacher mentors first. I talked to my teacher mentor by having conversations; we sat down, we laughed, and our conversations were so informal. My teacher mentors reciprocate in the same manner and I feel good that I had the ability to create such an atmosphere. Doing this, there would not be any gap in building rapport and communicating with the teacher mentors.

Posis said that she tapped into a teacher mentor's interest:

My teacher mentor always talked about cars so when I talked to him, I would ask about things that he was interested in, in his case, about cars. That was how I got to know him better and closer.

Mina talked about the mentor's family. She pointed out that her teacher mentor was always excited and interested in talking about her family and that she cheered up whenever she asked about them. In her reflective journal she expressed her determination to get around her teacher mentor. She said, "I tried my best to talk to her and to get her to like me", and that she was happy to use her own interpersonal skills and be persistent.

Ondu said she managed to relate to her mentor by making suggestions and lending a hand in school activities. She said:

I tried to create a win-win rapport with my mentor. I made myself go to him and gave him a suggestion on producing a *class newspaper* for his class. He was happy with the suggestion and in fact discussed with me the English Society's never coming up with a reality activity – the production of a newsletter. I told him that I was quite happy to help out on this production and I promised to bring some samples. Our discussion had at least *broken through* a barrier in developing our communication and relationship.

The mentors also described their mentees' ways of using interpersonal communicative skills of communicating with them. For example, Mr. Farish stated:

Tati smiled all the time when she came to see me. She made it a point to come and see me all the time. She was willing to listen to my suggestions. So this

response from the mentee enabled us to interact productively and we developed a good working relationship.

Mr. Kassim stated that although his mentee was a trainee, he treated her as one of the teaching staff who needed additional help. Adopting this attitude and giving the mentee a sense of belonging made it so was much easier to communicate and built a relationship with the mentee.

Mr.Sipin changed his way of talking to his mentee by showing greater interest in and concern for her progress:

Our communication was not good and this was difficult in the mentoring relationship. Then I started to analyze the situation and thought to myself, it could probably be the way I talked to her such as, “By right you should do this”. So I adopted another approach of talking to her. Instead of telling her I suggested to her such things as, “Maybe you could use this approach, it is only a suggestion, so it is up to you”. I think she thought more about it and I noticed that after I did this she changed her attitude and the situation improved.

The non-verbal language or body language was as important as words for four mentees who perceived that the body language of their mentors conveyed negative messages. For example, Zizah reported her mentor’s negative facial expressions made her feel uncomfortable and reluctant to interact with him:

I felt like I have to force myself, you know, when I see him sometimes the way he looks, like he is not looking at me, like it shows that he does not want me to ask anything.

Similarly, Pian reported that the aloofness and facial expression of her minor teacher mentor made her feel that there was a '*stumbling block*' between them which hindered her relationship-building in the initial phase of the mentoring program:

He did not look friendly and I noticed he distanced himself, like there was a barrier between him and me. He only talked when I asked him.

Discussion

Interpersonal relationships and strong interpersonal skills are perceived as crucial components in effective mentoring (Jones, 2006; Cornu, 2005). It is apparent from the data that interpersonal communication skills go hand in hand with personality characteristics in influencing communications and relationships in mentoring. Where both mentor and mentee utilized such skills effectively, their relationship was fostered and enhanced. Some mentees found that they needed to apply such skills more fully to compensate for apparent weaknesses in those of their mentor and this was not always easy to do. To the extent that such skills were inadequate in either party their communication and relationship suffered.

Other interpersonal skills of both mentees and mentors were shown to be important. Mentees' ability to show respect for their mentors was one of these and this is

consistent with the work of Jonson (2002). Perhaps this is more important in this cultural context where respect for elders or one who is more experienced is the norm.

Some mentees were also able to capitalize on their mentors' interests such as their families and hobbies and by assisting in organizing school activities. Effective mentors were viewed by the mentees as having the ability to listen, to use positive reinforcement such as praise and positive non-verbal language in acknowledging, motivating and providing emotional support.

Non-verbal behaviours of mentors such as facial expressions conveyed both positive and negative messages which were important in facilitating or hindering mentoring relationships. Facial expressions represent non-verbal messages which are thought to deliver meaning quite independently of words (Brockbank & McGill, 2006). The non-verbal signals can carry a bigger proportion of meaning than verbal communication of approval. The data also indicate that some mentors made special effort to implement their interpersonal skills to influence their mentees and to make the mentoring relationships a success.

4.3.3 Availability

Mentors' availability was an important component stressed during the mentoring program. To provide optimum mentoring support, mentors need to be readily accessible for their mentees throughout the program.

The findings show that the degree of availability of the teacher mentors here had an impact on the development of mentoring relationships. During focus group discussions, the mentees indicated that meeting face-to-face with their teacher mentors frequently was an important factor in establishing the mentoring relationship. One mentor agreed and Mr. Titus said that it was one of his “...utmost priorities to be always there for my mentee”.

In practice, however, mentees (5 of 9) reported that infrequent interactions with their teacher mentors caused a lack of communication, thus hindering and straining the development of mentoring relationships especially in the initial phase of the mentoring program. They said that they faced difficulties in trying to find their mentors and thus had not been able to have regular meetings for discussions when they sometimes needed help. Zizah expressed this in her reflective journal:

Like he is there but he is not there. Very difficult. I think this too affected me trying to build the mentoring relationship with my teacher mentor.

The mentors confirmed that they were not able to be fully available in the mentoring program for various reasons. More than half of the mentors (8 of 12) said that there were times they were not available for their mentees but this was only occasional and unintentional because they had to attend urgent meetings, ad hoc school activities, or for personal reasons (sick leave). One mentor, Mr. Pitor, attributed infrequency of meetings to his mentee's attitude, that his mentee did not seek to see him frequently and for this reason he responded in the same way. He said:

“...no, actually I did not know whether I should approach her...” .

He presumed that his mentee did not need help from him:

Of course we were not able to communicate effectively. As I said she was an experienced teacher, so I guessed she knew what to do.

He also said that other factors were involved:

I think there was a lack of communication. That was the result. Probably I was busy, and then there were clashes of classes and so on. So that was the reason I was seldom available to discuss things, you know. This was my first time being a teacher mentor. I probably did not understand and I didn't have any previous experience in this kind of thing.

Nevertheless, the mentors generally made it clear that they tried to be available for their mentees during the mentoring program. Some mentees (3 of 9) reported that the teacher mentors even used text messaging through mobile telephones to inform them if they were not available. These mentees said they were appreciative of such gestures by their mentors because they knew what to do in their absence.

Discussion

Availability of mentors is crucial both in relationship building and in the overall mentoring program. Mentors being there for their mentees, providing the mentoring

support needed by the mentees, their availability and the frequency of face-to-face communications with mentees are major factors in mentoring and mentor-mentee relationships. This finding supports the study by Yip Heung-Ling (2003) that indicated ongoing availability was essential to a successful mentoring relationship.

Lack of interaction and limited access to mentors were constraints on effective mentoring here and caused some emotional distress for the mentees concerned. The reasons given by mentors for not being available for their mentees indicate that limited availability was not necessarily intentional on their part and there is some indication that mentees' attitudes were also a factor in limiting contacts.

The study also indicates that some teacher mentors did not provide feedback immediately after the mentees taught their lessons. As this feedback was largely incorporated in reflective practices, there were times that it could not be done immediately.

4.4 Reflective practices

Reflective practices were incorporated as one of the crucially important aspects of the mentoring program (See for details on reflective practice in Chapter 2, Section 2.9, p. 74). Two forms of reflective practices were conducted in the program: face-to-face reflective practices with mentors, and reflective journal writing.

The mentors and mentees were provided with information on reflective practices and some reflective practice skills activities were conducted focusing on one-to-one discussions, guidelines on questions that would steer both mentee's and mentor's

thinking, interpersonal communicative skills and problem-solving skills in teaching practice.

Reflective practices in this study involved reflecting on their teaching practice together with teacher mentors face-to-face and this was typically intended to occur after each mentee's lesson and to include mentees' writing self-reflections on their experiences in their reflective journal throughout the mentoring program. In this mentoring program, elements of supervision including teaching observations, pre-and-post discussion were incorporated together with reflective practices.

Most mentees (7 of 9) were satisfied with the reflective practices with their mentors even though they faced some difficulties, especially in the initial practice phase. Two mentees, however, reported that they were not satisfied because of the way reflection was conducted because the findings also show that the mentees generally believed that the quality of reflective practices varied.

4.4.1 Self-awareness in reflective discussions

The mentees (in focus groups and interviews) generally agreed that one of the most important things they gained through reflective practices was self-awareness of weaknesses, strengths, and their surroundings. Osong realized the importance of reflective practices in the mentoring program:

Reflective practice is essential. It is important because I realized that without it we would not know our faults, why things went wrong in our teaching and what

we did exceptionally well. We discovered that we actually have the potentials to be good teachers.

Osong also said that reflective practices helped her to see her weaknesses more than her strengths in her teaching practice. She welcomed the suggestions and recommendations on how to improve herself as a teacher and said they gave her new ideas on to teach well as how to manage the classroom and students while teaching. She said:

I thought that I already knew a lot of things but I discovered that I still have a lot of things to learn. This made me realize a lot of things about myself.

Mina, who was initially hesitant to carry out the reflective practices with her teacher mentor said:

I was not keen to do the reflective practices initially. I felt that there were just too many things to do during the practicum. But I realized that there were benefits from doing reflections. I found myself better in doing things after finding out my weaknesses, what I did wrong, and finding solutions to rectify them.

Pius said:

It helps me to reflect and to look at myself deeply and learn to work cooperatively with my teacher mentors and others during the mentoring process. More importantly, I learned to think of other people and not myself all the time.

The majority of the mentees (7 of 9) agreed that doing reflective practices with teacher mentors taught them to use as well as to improve various teaching skills. It also gave them opportunities to ponder and helped them to make decisions to use different approaches in their teaching. Posis said, “Listening and sharing with my teacher mentors helped me to explore more ideas in teaching”.

Pian shared a similar view:

I felt that the suggestions provided during the reflections were valuable and useful to allow me to correct and improve my teaching and learning practices. I learned to be brave to try out new approaches. I keep on trying through trial and error.

For Osong the reflective awareness increased her ability to anticipate problems in teaching:

I could apply all the reflective practices tips, ideas, and skills I did in the mentoring workshops. I am aware that it was helpful which enabled me to anticipate, thus making it so much easier.

Mentees were generally satisfied with their teacher mentors’ abilities to conduct reflective practice by using probing questions which steered the mentees to think creatively and critically, to assess their teaching. As Osong said:

I liked the way my teacher mentor asked me to do reflections. The questions he asked me made me think critically and creatively. Doing the reflective practice together helped me to look at things from all perspectives and come up with alternatives especially in my teaching. It improved my problem-solving skill. It was really an effective way to assess oneself too.

In the same vein, Tati remarked:

I learned that by thinking critically and creatively, it gave me more options in my teaching. I also learned to not depend on one strategy but I was able to link them. As a teacher, adopting this approach made teaching more interesting and challenging too. It also depends on what the mentors want you achieve.

Some of the mentees (5 of 9) stated that after a few sessions of reflective practices they became more confident and comfortable in asking lots of questions of their mentors. Pian said that her increased self-awareness from reflection enabled her to assess herself and her approaches in previous lessons and further integrate successful ones in her teaching. She said that, after a few reflections, she was able to assess which areas she was very weak in and to work to fully optimize her strengths.

They also attributed this to the good rapport they had with their mentors. Some mentees (4 of 9) believed that the reflective practices taught them to be more organized in their preparation and teaching. Ondu said that reflective awareness helped her to record her work systematically:

The reflective practices helped me to record my work and taught me to do it systematically. Doing this, my work is much more organized. The best thing is I could track my work in case I missed out on something.

Most of the mentees (6 of 9) said that by engaging in reflective practices they learned much more by listening and accepting criticisms constructively as the mentoring process progressed. Ondu said:

It was not easy at first to listen to something negative about yourself, especially when you know you tried your best in the lessons. Sometimes, I felt that they were just telling me things they did not do themselves. However, out of respect and because I am here to learn, I did what he asked me to do.

Some mentees (5 of 6), however, wished that their mentors were even more critical of their work. They believed that they would learn more from this.

Pian described exchanging effective feedback with mentors:

To be flexible, there is no authority, right? Like in terms of using certain words, not ordering us what to do. If the idea cannot be accepted, I will justify why I cannot accept it and make the changes. I should be given the chance to give feedback too because being flexible, it facilitates the discussions, so there is no feeling of tension.

Some of the mentees (5 of 9) reported that doing reflective practices in the first phase was not easy because they said they could only do it superficially by just recalling what had happened in their lessons. Gradually, as they learned to look further, reflection with the mentor enabled them to better integrate and associate things and thus improved their lessons.

Despite encouragement, some mentees (4 of 9) were still hesitant, especially when their teacher mentors had a tendency to dominate the reflective discussions. They pointed out that they just listened most of the time. For example, Ondu said:

I sensed that in the first reflections I did with my major teacher mentor. Like telling you what to do. He did listen to my reflections but I could feel that he only wanted me to do what he suggested. I dared not ask questions too much because he might think that I am arrogant and that I am worried about my grades later.

Two mentees found engaging in reflective practices to be stressful because they believed that their mentors did not provide adequate support in the process. These mentees also indicated that apart from concerns about successful grades, showing their respect for the mentors was another reason for being hesitant to comment or question mentors during reflective practices.

The mentees (in focus group discussion) believed that the way the reflective practices were conducted was important. The most successful and productive reflective discussions were normally conducted in a secluded part of the staff room or classrooms

where there were no distractions such as noise. They were conducted in a friendly and non-threatening atmosphere. In this study, there were, however, times when reflective practices were held in other venues such as the school canteen, school corridors and sometimes in the school playing fields.

Reflective practices did not just benefit the mentees but all the mentors were appreciative of the reflective sessions with their mentees. For example, Mr. Kassim, who had been teaching for more than fifteen years, stated that he learned something new from his mentee and became more attentive to what was going on during the mentoring program. He said:

Normally for us, like we take it for granted. It brought me back to line. After teaching for so many years, to realize this, it is like learning something new. The mentee actually knows new things and I learned a lot from her.

Mr. Ahmad became more aware of his own weaknesses and potentials:

It was good to do the reflective practices together. I found out my strengths and weaknesses, and from this awareness I know better what to do. I improved a lot in mentoring especially when you make it a point to do the reflective practices. I also learned more about myself.

Mr. Gusil stated:

I learned something new from my mentee and I improved myself. I realize I now must take the initiative to improve myself. I found out that all this while, I had been too complacent with my teaching and by reflecting together I was reminded that I needed to change my teaching strategies and I looked at teaching differently now. I needed to upgrade my teaching techniques.

Mr. Titus found out through reflections that the emotional aspects of mentoring are also important:

I am aware of my responsibilities as a teacher mentor, that my duty is very important. It was not just reflecting about teaching but the psychological aspects should be reflected on too and we need to talk and about and know how the mentee felt.

The mentors generally (in focus group discussion) were aware of the importance of reflective practices with their mentees. They believed that a diplomatic approach and questions that made mentees think critically and constructively about their teaching were important elements in effective reflections. Most of the mentors (11 of 12) perceived that the mentees were open to criticism and the mentors were generally satisfied with the reflective practices.

One mentor, however, who was uncertain about his mentee's reaction, said:

She needs to come and see me if she has any problems. This means if she does not come, probably she did not do a good reflection for herself. She needs to

write down her reflection and ask herself how she is doing, what her problems are or did she manage to teach well. But she did not come.

The mentor presumed that his mentee's failure to reflect effectively on her lesson prevented her from coming to see him.

Discussion

Overall, the data show that both mentees and mentor benefited from doing the reflective practices but in different ways. It is apparent that the reflective practices assisted the mentees progressively in improving, enhancing and upgrading their teaching performance. As suggested by Ghaye and Ghaye, "reflection-on-practice takes experience and integrates it in particular ways" (1998, p. 16). The mentees were able to optimize their strengths by being proactive in integrating and using new ideas suggested by and discussed with mentors and were able to anticipate and plan more effectively to overcome difficulties. Planning and organization were enhanced by effective reflective practices with mentors. So too was the ability to accept constructive criticism after initial resistance.

Improved self-reflection was another result of effective reflective practices. Mentees were also able make better sense of their teaching and learning (Ghaye & Ghaye, 1998) by developing the ability to think critically and creatively about their teaching and problem solving, and decision-making abilities also developed through their reflections. Reflective practices can push novice teachers to look more closely at themselves through reflection and inquiry (Britton, 2006). There was some feeling, however, that

mentors asked mentees to do things that they themselves had not done before, which mentees found hard to accept but, out of respect, tried to accommodate, perhaps not wanting to appear rude. This would not be surprising within this culture.

Mentors also had positive experiences in the reflective practices, putting them back on track in their teaching approaches and strategies, discovering their strengths and weaknesses and improving themselves in their mentoring. With one exception the mentors indicated that they were able to carry out the reflective practices and they were satisfied with their performances in them. This finding corresponds with Hargreaves and Fullan's (2000) and Britton's (2006) suggestions that mentors learn from their mentees by developing new insights into their own and others' teaching, new relationships, and a renewal of enthusiasm and commitment to their craft and career. Similarly, this finding also supports a finding by Balassa, Bodoczky and Saunders (2003) that mentors gained in their ability to analyze their own teaching.

Mentees' growing awareness through reflective practices enabled them to assess their performances, assisted them to be more organized and systematic, to accept criticism and to discover their potential, their strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and their abilities to self-reflect. There appeared to be some constraints especially in initial reflections, in the effectiveness of reflective practices with some mentors.

4.4.2 Availability for reflective practices

Emphasis on both mentors and mentees being available to conduct face-to-face reflective practices was incorporated in the mentoring program because it is important that these practices have full participation of both parties to be fully effective.

Reflective practices were carried out at least two or three times a week for most of the mentees (5 of 9). Each reflective practice normally took between thirty and forty minutes. The mentees also had to arrange a schedule and inform their teacher mentors of their reflective practice meetings. Two mentees reported they were able to have frequent reflective practices as long as the mentors were free, while two mentees reported that they saw their mentors only once or sometimes not at all each week.

Mentees reported that it was not easy to arrange to meet for reflective practices on a regular basis. As explained earlier in Section 4.3.3. (p. 164) the reasons for unavailability were similar across all areas in this mentoring program. They generally agreed (in focus group discussions) that some of the setbacks to reflective practices were mentors' attendance to school activities, and other classes, time constraints and other demands on mentors.

The majority of mentors (11 of 12) agreed that they tried to be there for the reflective practice meetings during the mentoring program although they agreed with mentees that there were times that they were not available for reflective practices. Such occurrences made some of the mentors (6 of 12) feel guilty and worried about not being available for their mentees. For example, Mr. Sipin said:

I had to attend a course and I was not available for her. I was worried and it bothered me because I could not be there to provide all the support for her. I was not able to do the reflective discussions. You see, I noticed every time she came out of teaching in the good class, she was very excited and happy but when she came out of the weaker class, she looked frustrated and that was the time I should have been there to provide both emotional and professional support. I know how she feels.

Some mentors (5 of 12) were particular that they made time for reflective discussions. For example, Mr. Kassim encouraged the mentee to come at any time for reflective practice meetings as long as he was free.

Some mentees (3 of 9) indicated that the mentor's non-availability impacted negatively on their reflective practices during the mentoring program, preventing them being carried out regularly. Itah stated that because of her mentor's infrequent availability she took every chance to engage with him:

It is very difficult to meet my major mentor. He is not always around. So sometimes, if I had the chance to meet him, for example, like the other day at the school canteen, I just approached him and asked whether I could discuss my work with him on the spot. It was brief, but at least I could hear some form of feedback. Not all of it though because of the limited time and it was done in a hurry.

Similarly, two mentors also complained that their mentees were also not available for such discussions at times. Miss Andak said her mentee seldom came to see her for discussions or reflective practices as he was not always there. Mr. Pitor said that his mentee did not need to discuss her teaching because she already knew what to do in reflecting.

The availability of both mentors and mentees was crucial to the conduct of reflective practices during the mentoring program. Mentees benefited most from frequent sessions of reflection and limitations on the ability of one another participant limited the effectiveness of reflective practices generally.

Discussion

It is evident that some of the mentees were able to have regular sessions for reflective practices; perhaps these mentees shared more positive mentoring relationships: For others, non-availability of mentors was a major constraint, explained on the basis of lack of time and/or other responsibilities and demands. Where this occurred, some mentees adopted the strategy of catching the mentor whenever possible to conduct on the-spot-reflections. Arnold (2006) described this as *snatched time* where a lot of mentor-mentee's meetings were rushed and held between lessons.

The data indicate that most of the mentors tried to make it a point to be always there for their mentees, while for other mentees it was difficult to arrange appointments for reflective practice. The mentors admitted that they were not always available for reflective practices citing professional and personal factors beyond their control as

reasons. Mentors also indicated mentees' availability is important and assumed that a reason for it may be that some mentees felt no need for reflective practices.

4.4.3 Interpersonal skills

Most of the mentees (6 of 9) believed that their mentors utilized effective interpersonal skills to interact with them in reflective discussions. For example, Mina stated that her teacher mentor created a friendly atmosphere by just having an informal chat before they really started serious discussions:

My mentor always starts by asking how I am doing and whether I have problems or not. He will then tell me to take things easy and enjoy teaching. Then we will start discussing my the lessons. This made me feel very relaxed.

These mentors indicated that their mentors' ability to listen and attend to mentees was essential in these discussions. Letting the mentee begin the reflection was perceived by some mentees (5 of 9) as one of the effective interpersonal strategies used by mentors in reflective practices. Some of the comments made by the mentees were:

I really admired my major teacher mentor. He spent so much time to sit with me when we reflected together especially after the first lesson. He had everything written already with suggestions. He always asked me to do my reflections first and he listened to me and wrote some notes. (Osong)

I really appreciate my mentors. I can prove to you that they truly taught me a lot of things. I know they are busy with their own work, but each time after observing my lessons, they took time to sit with me and we would do the reflections together. Mr. Kassim always let me talk first. We had a chat first before we had serious discussions. (Mina)

The mentors agreed that such tactics were very effective and made the mentee felt assured, enthusiastic, comfortable and not intimidated in the reflective discussions. Mr. Sipin commented that the psychological aspect must also be taken into account in reflective practices. He said "... Mentees' feelings have to be taken into account...". Mr. Asim also commented when doing the reflective practices:

We must not look at the mentees as though they do not know anything. We must appreciate and acknowledge what they have shared. Assurance and motivation must be given so that they will be confident to go to the next step.

Having the capacity to listen, creating a friendly atmosphere to make mentees feel relaxed, spending time together, preparing questions and suggestions to improve teaching in practice and letting mentees do the reflections first all contributed to successful reflective practices in this study.

Tati said that her mentor made her realize that she needed to work to interact effectively with people, and that she realized she had to adjust her attitude. She learned to use her own interpersonal skills in listening with appropriate body language such as eye

contact. She said, “I really need to humble myself when I talk with mentors. Otherwise how can you discuss receptively with them”.

Some of the mentees (5 of 9) said that their mentors also talked about their own experience as beginning teachers, letting them know that they too had had feelings of frustration and had encountered problems during teaching practice. It helped mentees to feel that they were not the first person to go through such experiences, and they felt more confident and assured when their mentors did this. This was a common sharing technique by the majority of the mentors (10 of 12) to motivate the mentees and made them feel more assured.

Effective interpersonal skills in reflective practices were having the capacity to listen, creating a friendly atmosphere to make mentees feel relaxed, spending time with mentees preparing questions and suggestions to improve teaching in practice, and letting mentees initiate reflections were all noted by mentees.

Miss Andak consciously linked the successes of her reflective practices to her mentee’s ability to listen and respond:

He was receptive to all the reflective discussions and also other discussions I had with him although I lacked the teaching experience. I am truly honoured and acknowledged when he showed his willingness to listen to me and that made a difference in my outlook in mentoring someone experienced. I am grateful to be given this opportunity to be a mentor. Sometimes, it may not be what one predicted it to be.

Discussion

In this mentoring program effective interpersonal skills contributed to successful reflective discussions. By letting the mentees initiate reflections mentors appear to have empowered and given confidence to mentees. Where the mentor dominated discussion mentees found reflections less successful. Recounting their own experiences, especially in teaching practices, also strengthened mentees' confidence, motivation and assurance. The data indicate that effective mentors had the ability to listen to their mentees in reflections.

The importance of interpersonal skills is a recurring theme throughout this study. Some mentees tried to facilitate reflective practices by modifying their own behaviour towards humility, respect, politeness because of cultural influences or perhaps some mentees were more committed than some mentors to the mentoring program guidelines.

Some mentors suggested that reflective practices should focus on more than teaching practice and that it is also valuable and meaningful for mentees to reflect on psychological aspects.

4.4.4 Time for reflective practices

As indicated earlier in professional learning support (Section 4.2, p. 117), in developing the mentoring relationship and communication (Section 4.3, p. 151), and this is also evident in reflective practices.

Mentees perceived that the timing of reflective practices discussions was important. They reported in focus groups that reflective practices were normally held after they had been observed by their mentors, sometimes immediately, but there were only brief, with longer, more formal reflections arranged later. Some reflective practices were also incorporated into other daily discussions, sometimes before lessons sometimes less formally, and not always very productively. Pian said:

I did my reflective practices in other discussions too. Sometimes it was very brief. It is like an on-going process because sometimes if I missed some points then I had to find a chance to talk to him again.

Another issue that impacted on all mentees (in focus group and interviews) was the time given to reflective practices. Some (6 of 9) perceived that their mentors were prepared to spend time with them, and, where this was so, they believed the reflective discussions were most productive.

Other mentees (3 of 9) who were not satisfied with the time spent indicated that their mentors were not committed to spending a longer time because they said they had to rush to their other classes, were busy with school activities or had other things to do in the school. Thus, the reflections were carried out very quickly and only provided brief feedback. Tati said:

Whenever we did reflective practices or any discussions, my minor teacher mentor would tell me that he had something to do later. I felt that when I was doing my reflections, he was not concentrating. He kept saying, "Good," all the

time. Then he gave a brief reflection and some suggestions very quickly. I felt that, half of the time, he was not even listening to me because his body language gave me the signs, like he was in a hurry.

In focus group discussions mentees emphasized that they would like to have had more time in reflective practices because at these times they could find out and clarify most about their teaching practice from their mentors' insights.

The mentors agreed that even though they did the reflective practices, that more time should have been spent on them and they believed that reflection improved the mentees' teaching practices. Mentors gave the same reasons for their inability to conduct longer reflective practices as they did for the limits on their availability generally.

Discussion

The timing and duration of reflective discussions varied from brief immediate follow-up of lessons to longer, formally arranged meetings. Time was perceived as an important factor in the effectiveness of reflective practices. Mentees perceived longer discussions as more productive while some reflective discussions were incorporated in their daily discussions, including lesson preparation.

Insufficient commitment of time to reflective practices by mentors caused dissatisfaction amongst mentees, particularly as other activities seemed to take priority over mentoring. This finding is consistent with findings by Ehrich, Hansford and

Tennent (2004) who indicated that a lack of time seems to be a common problem faced by mentors and mentees, not just in education but also in business and medical studies.

4.4.5. Reflective journals

As explained earlier (Section 4.4, p. 167) reflective journal writing was incorporated within the reflective practices in this mentoring program as another avenue for the mentees to reflect and understand their own teaching experience daily during the mentoring program. A set of guidelines was provided to the mentees of how to write in their reflective journals (See Appendix 4, Guidelines for Writing Reflective Journal, p. 299)

Most of the mentees (7 of 9) fully participated in writing reflective journals and stated that the reflective journal writing was beneficial. Some of these (5 of 9) wrote extensive reflective journals of their teaching experiences during the practicum.

Writing their reflections provided mentees more opportunity to reflect deeply on their teaching experiences and enabled them to scrutinize their strengths and weaknesses. Unlike face-to-face reflective practices, they stated they were able to reflect more in-depth on their daily teaching experiences. It taught them to be more critical and allowed them to make practical decisions on what they were going to do next in their teaching practice. For example, Mina said:

I was able to look at my teaching more deeply while I was writing. Visualizing my thoughts, I could see my weaknesses and strengths more clearly by asking

questions myself of how I should improve my next lessons. It allowed me to evaluate my overall teaching performances.

Osong said:

I analyzed better in writing what I did every day. It improved my teaching because I always asked the same questions and this formed a direction for me of what to do next in my teaching. The university supervisor knew what happened because she read the journals and we talked about it whenever we met. Suggestions of how to improve the lessons were provided through this way.

Ondu also pointed out that, “writing down and being critical and thinking of solutions actually improved my teaching. It is not just teaching but it is a space where you can write your real thoughts. It also improved my writing ability”.

Itah preferred the reflective journaling as a good avenue for her to conduct her reflections as she did not have frequent face-to-face reflections with her teacher mentor.

Mentees (7 of 9) expressed that not only did it allow them to analyze their inner feelings but different emotions surfaced and they could express them in writing during the practice. For example, Tati said:

I felt that I am freer to say what I wanted to say in the reflective journal rather than talking. It also enhanced my interactions with the university supervisor when we had our discussions.

Pius said:

The most important thing about doing the reflective journal is I can pour out my real feelings. I could confide in it with the university supervisor. Writing my dissatisfactions allowed me to release my stress too and the university supervisor could read how I really felt. Sometimes, it was not easy to talk openly especially face-to-face. It made me feel uneasy.

Ondu felt that expressing her thoughts on paper was therapeutic for her:

You know that expressing myself actually truly consoled me. I loved it because it was the time for me to express my real inner feelings.

Two mentees, however, stated that they were not really keen to write the reflective journals. The journals sent in by these mentees were brief and only superficial. They said that time was a constraint on writing a long journal; they needed the time to finish their teaching preparation. They also believed that the reflective practices they did with the mentors adequately covered the requirement for reflection. The other mentees also indicated that it took time to write their journals and sometimes they could not do it properly.

Discussion

The data shows that most mentees benefited from keeping the reflective journals. Such benefits included the feeling of freedom to express themselves especially when they

could not talk openly to their mentors. They also saw the journal as an important means of self-analysis, a means of thinking critically and creatively about their teaching, and as having therapeutic value, personally and their professional development and classroom practice. This supports the study by Degago (2007) that indicated similar benefits.

It seems that the reflective journal was a *sounding board* for the mentees to voice their concerns as well as express their positive and negative emotions to their university supervisor in this study. Disclosing themselves openly to the mentors or with peers may create a feeling of humiliation (*malu*) or being degraded as this is common in this local cultural context (Sendut et al., 1989).

Trust was established with their university supervisor where they were able to confide their mentoring experience in the journal. The data also demonstrate that this enabled them to build rapport with the mentors during their regular discussions.

Time seemed to be a major factor for all mentees when writing their reflective journals and not all mentees were keen to do so. Several believed that face-to-face reflections with their mentors was adequate and that they wanted to spend more time on their lessons preparation.

4.5 Teaching observation and assessment

Procedures on teaching observation as stipulated by the SESD practicum guidelines were discussed in workshops with mentors and mentees. Regular discussions with

mentors and joint-supervision by university supervisor were incorporated to standardize the evaluation and also to provide on-going support to the teacher mentors program (See for details on teaching observation and assessment in Chapter 2, Section 2.10, p. 78).

4.5.1 Mentor observation

All mentees (in focus group discussions) stated that their teacher mentors had observed them teaching according to the requirements stipulated by the SEDS Practicum Guidelines (SESD, UMS, 2005). However, one mentor was not able to carry out the last teaching observation because the mentor was on medical leave. The mentee discussed this with the school management and another teacher was sent to observe her lesson.

The nature of mentor support during teaching observations was highlighted by Tati, who commented on the diplomatic approach used by her teacher mentor in not correcting her in front of the class she was teaching:

I was thankful and appreciated the approach my teacher mentor used when I taught the wrong things. She called me quietly to the back when the students were doing their work. She talked to me and told me to rectify it later.

Some mentors (4 of 9) felt that in lesson observations their mentors provided them with moral support by giving them encouragement during lessons. Mina remarked on her mentor's concern:

My teacher mentor gave me words of encouragement so that I would not be intimidated especially when the university supervisor was also observing me together with my teacher mentor.

Most of the mentees (6 of 9) were grateful that their teacher mentors insisted that they would only be observed when they were well prepared and ready to enable mentees to be observed at their best.

However, some of the mentees (2 of 9) did not have such positive experiences. Posis said:

My minor teacher mentor came in late to observe me in my second observation. I had already started the lesson. I was disappointed because I wanted him to see my introduction. But he did apologize and I felt better after that.

Another difficulty that some mentees (3 of 9) experienced was that their teacher mentors needed to be reminded before the lessons even though an observation schedule had been arranged. Zizah said that she was disappointed because she felt that she had to almost force her mentor to observe her teaching:

It gets to a point where you dread to be observed because you have to go through all these formalities, like inviting the mentor to observe you. By right, it should be something you look forward to.

Zizah's mentor had a different view about this situation. Mr. Pitor believed that he wanted his mentee to be ready for observation. As he said:

I would ask "When can I come to observe you teaching?" My mentee would say "Wait. I am not ready yet". So I told her, "Okay, please come and see me to inform me when you are ready, but she did not come and see me and never told me when it was the time". I was disappointed with this attitude.

Itah was also unhappy about her mentor's observations:

Each time I had to see my teacher mentor and call on him to observe me. He would not come and observe if I did not see him before the class, even though he had the schedule to observe me. It was the same thing all the time.

However, other mentees (4 of 9) perceived this positively, that this approach is a learning process, especially when one is under training as a novice. Tati stated:

It is not a problem for me to remind and call my teacher mentor to observe me teaching just before the class. I am undergoing training. I think my good relationship with my teacher mentor gave me motivation and encouragement. I looked forward having my teacher mentor observing me teaching all the time.

Mentee responses to mentor observations were varied as to whether such observations were positive or negative.

Teaching observation not only benefited mentees but the mentor as well. Observing the mentees made all the mentors (in focus group discussion) reflect on of their own teaching. For example, Mr. Sipin recalled that when his mentee made some mistakes in her teaching, it made him realize that he had made similar mistakes. Another mentor was inspired by his mentee's teaching:

By observing my mentee it reminded me that after teaching for so many years we had forgotten certain things. For example, using teaching aids. It reminded us not to take things for granted. We should change our ways of teaching. We should not just go inside the classroom and talk. You know the talk and chalk approach. We should think creatively, like the ways my mentee went out to make her teaching interesting. Teaching should be more student-centred.

Mr. Pitor learned from his mentee's problem:

When I observed her teaching, I asked of myself whether I could do it or not. That was the way I learned. Her classroom management skills were not there. She was just standing there and teaching. Some of the pupils were making noise in the class, not paying attention. Then I started to reflect on my own teaching and analyzed the situation. As I observed her teaching, I not only evaluated her but I also evaluated myself, looked at my weaknesses and strengths and what I could have done better if I was teaching. I learned about myself.

4.5.2 Joint observation, assessment and discussions with university supervisor

All the mentors (in focus group discussions) agreed that joint observations were beneficial because they provided a supporting environment for them, knowing that the university supervisor was there to discuss the mentees' progress, performances and the standardized teaching grades. Discussing and comparing their assessment with the university observer gave mentors confidence and, very importantly, they valued the acknowledgement by the university of their contribution in their role as a mentor. As Mr. Gusil said "... I never felt so honoured that my assessment and grades awarded to the mentee were acknowledged by the university..."

Engaging in discussions about mentees' teaching during and after observations with the university supervisor allowed mentors to share their expertise in subject content with the mentor. Mr. Asim said:

We discussed the mentee's teaching performances, her weaknesses and strengths and how to improve her teaching as well the content and why such teaching strategies and teaching aids were used by the mentee as previously suggested for implementation.

The mentors were confident in their assessments and in completing the evaluation forms, solving problems together, and analyzing the mentee's teaching performances and reaching a consensus in awarding practicum grades. As Mr. Titus said:

I think the joint supervision was a good thing for both the mentee and the teacher mentors. It was good to discuss assessments with the university supervisor. At least when this was done, there was standardization in grades. I am also more confident in filling out the evaluation forms now, not like before, simply putting what I think the mentee deserved.

Mr Linus added:

I am more confident to give the grades after a few discussions with the university supervisor. I used to doubt myself previously especially when giving grades. I was unsure whether the grades I awarded were correct or not and I questioned my own credibility.

Mr Alipin said:

I think this arrangement was beneficial for the mentee because feedback was enriching from both sides, the mentor and the university supervisor. Feedback of this nature was always holistic and very helpful to the mentee.

Mentors also benefited from the regular on-going discussions with the university supervisor throughout the mentoring program. For example, Mr. Titus said:

My motivation and self esteem increased because I felt that I was recognized as a teacher mentor which I did not feel in my previous experience of mentoring.

This was the first time that I felt my contribution was acknowledged and that I was consulted as a partner in the mentoring process.

Pian pointed out that this contributed to the gradual changes and improvements in her minor mentor's attitude to her and increased commitment to mentoring:

My minor teacher has been teaching for a long time. In the beginning I noticed he kept to himself in the staff room and did not really interact with other teachers but I noticed that after the UMS supervisor talked with him and made the first joint observations, his attitude changed. He was more concerned and gave me more attention afterwards.

Mr Ahmad was appreciative of the direct university involvement through the joint observations and discussions during the practicum. He compared his previous mentoring experience when such involvement did not occur and the difference in getting adequate support from university. He said that it "...bridged the gap and improved my role and my responsibility as a mentor...".

Most of the mentors (9 of 12) expressed similar views and Miss Andak emphasized that the opportunity to have discussions with the university supervisor was essential to mentoring program, and added:

By discussing and exchanging pedagogical knowledge with the university supervisor gave me a lot of insights about teaching and mentoring the mentees.

More than half of the mentors (7 of 12) stated that the moral support given by the university supervisor strengthened the whole mentoring process. Mr Gusil confirmed this:

Yes, this practicum was different from the previous ones because a full support from the university was provided this year. It made a lot of difference because the environment was conducive and there were a lot of interactions with the university.

Some mentors (5 of 12) were not comfortable at first with joint observation but towards the end all were pleased that such a process had been implemented. As Mr. Jumat said:

I was intimidated by having to discuss what grades I gave to the mentee initially. Sometimes, I felt like perhaps the grade I awarded was not up to the mark. I was reluctant and uneasy discussing it with the university supervisor. It was fine once I'd done it.

Mr Farish described a similar experience:

However, sometimes, I felt quite anxious because the mentee might listen to or respect the university supervisor more than me. It was just a thought but discussions and joint discussions were really helpful and I gained another perspective which was enriching and fairer for the mentee.

Discussion

The data indicated that the mentors were generally able to observe their mentees' lessons according to the requirement of the Practicum Guidelines (SESD, 2005). Moral support was seen by mentees as essential to their facing teaching confidently and mentors who provided it were perceived as showing genuine concern for mentees and having positive interpersonal and observation skills as experienced teachers. These mentors could guide and correct diplomatically and supportively during their observations.

It is also evident that a mentor who adopted a demanding attitude caused the mentee anxiety and mixed feelings towards mentors. Some mentees however perceived this positively, as a learning process. The mentor concerned also viewed this as positive, that they were demanding to make sure that the mentee was ready to teach and to be observed. It is clear that there was a miscommunication between this mentee and mentor and that better interpersonal communication between them might have resolved the problem.

Mentors also indicated that the teaching observations also benefited them. They spoke of complacency after teaching for many years and being pushed by their observations to assess and improve their own teaching. This finding supported Gordon and Maxey's findings that mentors need to *brush up* some of their teaching strategies previously used (2000). Similar findings were also highlighted by Anderson et al. (2005) that observation increased teachers' ability to reflect on their own teaching and its effectiveness.

University support, through the university practicum supervisor, was an important element of this program. Through joint observation with them, this support evidently had many positive outcomes for mentors, increasing their self-esteem as mentors during the practicum. The most important outcome was the feeling of being acknowledged for their expertise and being heard by the university. This is consistent with the study by Simpson, Hasting and Hill (2007) that mentors feel good and reassured because they were validated by the university. This also supported the study by the Office for Standard in Education (OFSTED) (1995, p.9) that provided similar results where there were “marked improvements in mentors’ lesson observation skills and it also helped to ensure comparability of assessment”.

Joint assessments were seen as more fair and standardized by both mentors and mentees and in awarding the grade mentor felt less isolated, more fully involved in the mentoring process generally. These positives for mentors were not immediate. Some, at least, were initially apprehensive and hesitant about the idea of joint observation but this was largely overcome with experience of the process.

4.5.3 Pre and post discussion and assessment of lessons

As suggested in the practicum guidelines, pre-and-post discussions and evaluations of lessons by both mentors and mentees were important components of teaching observations in this practicum. As explained earlier, these discussions could be combined with reflective practices. Overall, more than half of the mentees (5 of 9) indicated that the pre- and post- discussions were not carried out on a regular basis.

They stated that there were times when their mentors did not have pre-discussions, especially for lessons that were not observed. Often post-discussions were either not conducted immediately or would only be brief, as mentioned earlier. For example, Itah said that her teacher mentor would look at her lesson plan only at the last minute, just before going in to observe her teaching. Mentors agreed that this happened often and gave the same reasons for as for unavailability for reflective practices.

More than half of the mentors (8 of 12) however, indicated that they tried to incorporate discussion of all the mentees' lessons whether the lessons were observed or not.

Evaluations of lessons were compulsory in the SEDS teaching practicum. Mentors were required to assess the mentees, write comments and award a grade after each lesson observed. The mentors and mentees (in focus group discussions) however, agreed that grades were more standardized and fair when the university supervisor was involved with the mentor in joint observation and evaluation. Mentees (5 of 9) who did well in the practicum acknowledged the expertise of their mentors in awarding grades according to the stated competencies provided in the SEDS Guidelines. Pian said:

My mentor gave me the grades according to the stated competencies in the guidelines. He followed it strictly and gave me honest and constructive evaluations of my lessons. It helped me a lot to see which areas I needed to work on more in order to raise my standard of teaching.

Pius added:

The evaluations were standardized and fair. In terms of implementation, my teacher mentors were serious and did it properly according to the competencies in the SEDS guidelines.

Despite, however, having the stated competencies as a guideline, there were times when comments written were not clear and specific. Posis was disappointed when this happened:

I would prefer my mentor to be more detailed and specific in providing evaluation comments. He always said, “You are okay” . I told him I wanted to know what was okay. When he just said this, I felt that I was not okay. Sometimes it is frustrating because you really want to know whether you are really okay.

Just over half of the mentees (5 of 9) reported that although their mentors should have given them their evaluations forms and discussion feedback right after the lesson taught, they often received the forms only a few days later. As a result, by the time they were discussed, some parts of the lessons were either forgotten or not discussed effectively. Tati said:

Feedback should be given immediately after the lesson. There were occasions my major mentor did not give it to me immediately. I was so disappointed. At least, I wanted to know how I did to make any improvement.

Itah shared a similar view:

My mentor's evaluations were too brief. When I asked him for elaborations, he said he followed the format of the evaluation forms. Maybe he had forgotten how to give comments because this had been explained during the mentoring workshops. Maybe he was busy and had no time. Maybe he had to get his questions ready for school exams. I don't know.

Zizah said that her teacher mentor just asked her to read the comments he had written on the evaluation forms instead of discussing his observations with her:

My teacher mentor said, "No need to do reflections. Just read the comments in the evaluation forms. If there is anything that you are not satisfied with or is not clear, see me later". He always just says, "You are okay." What was okay, I did not know. It was disappointing.

Where feedback on lessons was less than immediate, mentees felt that it was less valuable, less effective in their development and personally disappointing.

Mentors (in focus group discussions), on the other hand, believed that the comments that they gave to the mentees were in accordance with the predefined competencies and requirements stated in the Practicum Guidelines (SESD, Practicum Guidelines, 2005). They specified each of the competencies were meticulously used to grade the mentees. Half (6 of 12) agreed that the comments they had written were brief but that they responded on them during the reflective discussions.

Discussion

Lesson observations should have been included in pre and post lesson discussions and evaluations of the lesson taught. Only some mentors carried out these requirements systematically according to stipulations by the SEDS, UMS and mentees who experienced such follow-up became more confident and able to use the feedback to improve and raise the standard of their teaching. It is interesting to note that mentees used the words such *honest, serious, fair, and standardized* for those mentors who fulfilled these requirements, perhaps reflecting their perceptions of mentors' commitment to the program and meeting its requirements more completely. The data indicate, however, that some mentors were less prompt and less competent in providing feedback and this may well reflect less commitment, perhaps a more negative attitude to the mentoring role.

4.6 Mentoring roles

During the mentoring workshops the different roles of effective teacher mentors were suggested and discussed and activities related to mentor roles were conducted. These suggested roles were: guide, advisor, friend, partner, coach, and co-enquirer (Bhindi, 2003; Brooks & Sikes, 1997; Rowley, 1999). Roles such as supervisor and assessor were added because mentees were to be assessed and grades awarded. The intention was to give the mentors a repertoire of mentoring roles that could be implemented to support the mentees during the mentoring program and to give insight to mentors and mentees into the expectations of the suggested mentoring roles (See for details on mentoring roles in Chapter 2, Section 2.8, p. 72).

The general responses from mentors (in focus group discussions) indicated that they were not able to carry out all roles as suggested during the mentoring workshops. They indicated that combinations of two or three roles were made according to the needs of mentees. All the mentors agreed that guide and advisor were the major mentoring roles carried out throughout the program. They stated that they felt more comfortable carrying out these roles than other mentoring roles such as partner, friend or role model.

Other roles identified were friend, partner, supervisor, and assessor. The mentors stated that they did perform the roles of a critical friend and a co-enquirer but they preferred their roles of guide and advisor and that these two roles were not discrete but overlapping. The mentees generally agreed.

4.6.1 Guide and Advisor

Most of the mentees (7 of 9) agreed that their mentors provided them with guidance and advice in their teaching during the mentoring program. A typical mentee response was:

...my teacher mentor's role is as a guide and an advisor....He/she guided and advised me in my teaching...

This response was particularly strong among the mentees who were novices. Mina said:

My teacher mentors played the role of a guide and advisor. These roles were essential in my teaching practice. I gained from the guidance and advice of my

teacher mentors who were expert in their subjects. It provided me with support. They both carried out these roles very well.

Similarly, Tati said:

Both my mentors acted as guides and advisors more than any other roles. When my mentors guided me they also advised me at the same time to be responsible for my teaching and to teach well. The guidance and advice was not just on teaching itself but they also guided and provided advice on how to develop professionally.

Pian further elaborated the importance of these two roles:

You have to cling to your teacher mentor. Anything, even small things, you know, anything about the school or whatever you need, you need your teacher mentor to guide and advise you. These roles supported me in all teaching. So the teacher mentor's roles to be a guide and also an advisor were very important to me.

However, Ondu initially felt that her teacher mentor did not carry out his mentoring role effectively. As Ondu said:

My teacher mentor did not show any interest in the beginning in guiding me. He was reluctant and I sensed that he was not carrying out his role, it was disappointing because I knew he knew what he had to do.

These situations improved for Ondu as her mentor gradually adjusted his mentoring roles and became more effective in guiding her.

Similarly, Zizah stated that her teacher mentor did not play his mentoring guide and advisor role effectively in any phase:

I thought in this practicum I could learn to be a better teacher but I don't think that my mentor teacher ever guided me. I did not get this from him. He just provided me with the basic things I needed. Maybe his mentoring role was just a provider more than a guide or advisor. Honestly, I did not know what his roles were in this mentoring program. So I had to get guidance and advice from other teachers.

It was not surprising that Zizah viewed her mentor's role in this way because the mentor himself said that he preferred to maintain his own style of mentoring.

I already had experience before, being a mentee myself. So normally, I just followed my previous experience just like what my mentor did.

Itah's mentor also believed that he did act as a guide and advisor and he claimed:

I am a guide first, then an advisor. Also I am a problem-solver too, because I helped my mentee to solve problems in her teaching. How are we going to mentor effectively if we were not able to do this?

This contradicted the perception of his mentee earlier as she perceived that he did not carry out any of the mentoring roles effectively.

4.6.2 Friend

Some mentees (4 of 9) believed that their mentors were their friends but also that they were only able to achieve this bond towards the end of the middle phase of the mentoring program. Having their mentors as friends made the interactions and communications with them much easier, especially during informal encounters in the school. For example, Pius said:

My minor teacher mentor treated me like a friend. She always made an effort to have conversations with me by asking about other things besides teaching. I liked this approach as it set the atmosphere for friendship to develop. Yes, it is true, there are times to be friends and times to be formal.

Mina said that she considered her teacher mentors as friends but at the same time she also respected them:

Both my teacher mentors were my guides and advisors and they were also my friends. My minor teacher mentor and I always shared some jokes and chatted like friends but I still respected them as my teacher mentors.

Osong explained why she considered her mentors as her friends:

I considered my teacher mentors as my friends because they made me feel like I was their friend by their friendly and caring treatment of me.

These friendships were perceived as important to mentees' teaching success because they supported more informal interactions.

When other mentees (5 of 9) were asked why they did not consider their mentor as their friend, they responded that it was not an easy task to form such a relationship due to time constraints, the formality of their relationships and non-conducive personal qualities of their mentors. Two mentees specifically indicated that it was impossible for them form friendships with their mentors because of the aloofness of the mentors generally.

Most mentors (7 of 12), however, indicated that they tried to be a friend to their mentees and that as a friend, they were effective in making their mentees feel comfortable, motivated and not intimidated by the practicum experience. They also believed that the role of friend was enacted when mentees were more familiar to them.

4.6.3 Partner

Mentees (in focus group discussions) generally were not comfortable in referring to their mentors as their partners, working side by side. Only three mentees described their teacher mentors in this way. When asked why the mentees did not consider their mentors as their partners as suggested in the mentoring program, one of the mentees gave a typical opinion:

I found that out to work as partners was quite difficult to carry out. Time was needed to know my teacher mentors well enough to work side by side.

Sometimes I thought they didn't like working in this kind of arrangement. In my case, I found other roles were more appropriate to describe my mentors' mentoring role such those of guide and advisor. (Tati)

The mentors on the other hand had a very different view. More than half of them (7 of 12) said they were also their mentee's partner. Their general responses were that they were able to work together to promote mentees' professional growth in planning discussions, reflective practices, observations and evaluations of their teaching in the mentoring program.

4.6.4 Supervisor and Assessor

Most of the mentees (7 of 9) indicated that throughout the mentoring program they continued to view their teacher mentors as their supervisor and assessor. The mentees expressed this particularly whenever they talked about mentors' observations and evaluations of their teaching practice. As indicated by Tati:

My teacher mentors were there to provide guidance to help me, but when they observed me teaching they were my supervisors, to assess my teaching, and there were feelings of anxiety when my mentors played these roles but only when I was being observed.

The two mentees who did not regard their mentors as supervisors and assessors indicated that this was because of their close rapport with their mentors and their trust and confidence in their relationships.

Mentors generally (in focus group discussion) said that they emphasized the supervisor and assessor roles as they wanted to create a more conducive, non-threatening

environment for their mentees. Despite this, however because they needed to grade the mentees, assessing them was still a major mentor role in this mentoring program. As Mr. Sipin stated:

I think being a mentor, you still need to be a supervisor and an assessor. These roles all complement each other. I think when you become an assessor your role changes.

4.6.5 Role model

Two mentees considered their teacher mentors as role models. Osong was honoured to have an excellent teacher as her teacher mentor. She described the qualities of her major teacher mentor as a role model:

My teacher mentor was always there to encourage me. He was also a role model for me. I really admired my major teacher mentor. He had the qualities of an excellent teacher and now I know why he is an excellent teacher. His guidance and expertise were excellent and I learned a lot from him.

Mina who also looked up to her major teacher mentor as her role model and attributed her self-confidence to working with such a partner:

I considered my teacher mentor as a good role model. He gave me positive insights into being a good teacher. He was a good example and a positive model of a good teacher and I was grateful and lucky to have him as my teacher mentor. I learned a lot from just working with him and from what he has taught me. I am more confident now.

4.6.6 Emergent mentoring roles

In the process of performing their various defined roles in the mentoring process, mentors also discovered that new roles emerged during the course of mentoring their mentees. Two mentors, Mr. Asim and Mr. Gusil believed that their other roles included that of a *leader*. As Mr. Asim said:

I discovered that I actually had the ability to lead effectively which I had not previously experienced. This time, it gave me the opportunity to implement my leadership role more seriously and enthusiastically. So being a leader, to lead someone, was a new experience for me.

Another role was identified by one mentee who considered her mentor a *boss*. This was attributed to the mentor's attitude in the initial phase of the mentoring program, which is not surprising in this cultural context where superior-subordinate relationships can be clearly defined and enacted, at least initially. Ondu said:

Initially, his actions were those of the boss because I was always waiting for his orders and him telling me what to do.

In her reflective journal, she also indicated that that this role was most obvious during the initial phase of the mentoring program. However, after gradually establishing a rapport with her mentor, there were changes in her mentor's behaviour and the boss role was softened considerably.

Discussion

Mentees in this study considered guide and advisor to be the two most important mentoring roles, that guiding and advising them in teaching were crucial in their teaching practices. This was more so for the mentees who were novices. These roles were apparently perceived as important both for the success of mentees' teaching practice and for their broader professional development. These roles have their common basis in the apprenticeship, in which one who is wiser and more experienced guides and supports another (Zhao & Reed, 2003).

For most of the mentees, these roles were carried out reasonably effectively; however, some faced constraints in gaining adequate and appropriate mentor guidance and advice. Time appears to have been a factor in the fulfilment of these roles by some mentors. Two mentees expressed disappointment that their mentors never really fulfilled these roles and one, at least, had to seek guidance and advice elsewhere.

Some mentees in this study already considered their teacher mentors as their friends, with good relationships generally established, by the middle and late phases of the mentoring program. The factors credited by the mentees as contributing to these friendships were the positive qualities of the mentors such as caring, and friendly attitudes as well as their interpersonal skills. Mentor-mentee friendship was seen as important in the effectiveness of more formal serious discussions or during observations. Limited time was identified as a constraint here.

Other mentoring roles such as role model, partner, and boss were also identified by mentees. Some mentees attributed the effectiveness of successful role models to mentors' positive qualities and professional skills. Perceptions of mentors as partners were rare, despite this role being emphasized in the mentoring program. One of the reasons given for this was the time taken to know their mentors well enough to work with them as partners side by side.

Some roles, such as that of partner, were apparently not or only partially fulfilled by mentors, despite the emphasis placed on them in the mentoring program. Despite the positive qualities of the mentors, only two mentees looked up at their mentors as their role models. Mentees still saw their mentors as their supervisors and assessors in this study as indicated earlier. Awarding grades is still compulsory in the practicum and it seems that the mentees still have difficulty in separation of these roles from other roles identified. The mentors tried not to focus too much on the assessment as part of the practicum but there were also indications that this was not an easy task, for the mentors as well.

Some mentees claimed that they learned from their mentees. However, Mr. Farish said he did not learn anything new from his mentee because she was a novice. However, he learned by taking mentoring seriously that he actually had the ability and potentials to lead and possessed some leadership qualities. It was something he realized he was able to develop during the mentoring process.

4.7 Chapter summary

Both mentees and mentors perceived that mentoring support was crucial in the mentoring program. Mentoring support includes all aspects of mentoring functions: classroom practice including teaching techniques, strategies, content, lesson planning and familiarity with school culture and policies; teaching resources; classroom management skills; observing mentors teaching and collaborative teaching (team teaching) and peer mentoring among mentees. This support is particularly crucial for those mentees here who were novice teachers.

Most of the mentees and mentors claim to have gained significantly from this mentoring program, both professionally and personally. In the process of this development, the mentees were able to utilize the mentors knowledge of content and pedagogical experiences and most mentees and mentors' learned to work collaboratively and collegially. Some aspects of this support such as collaborative teaching and being observed by mentees were not well received by the mentors and some of the mentees. Mentees were generally welcomed and made comfortable in the school environment.

The major constraints identified during the implementation of the mentoring program were factors such as limited time, mentor's involvement in school activities which availability of mentors and some mentees and negative personal qualities and attitudes of both mentees and mentors. In cases where the mentees were unable to get adequate support from their mentors, some sought assistance from their peers or other mentors.

Most of the mentees and mentors were able to build effective communication and relationships during this mentoring program. They believed that communicative interpersonal skills were crucial to effective relationship. Along with such skills, positive attitudes, mutual respect and trust, and acknowledgement of each other's contributions were contributors here.

Mentees generally preferred informal relationships in establishing communications and relationships. Initiative and considerable effort by both mentors and mentees were important in building and sustaining rapport. A conducive environment was also instrumental here and most mentoring relationships in the program were effective.

Peer support was a positive experience for most of the mentees in this mentoring program. Most of the mentees found that peer mentoring was effective in providing extra mentoring support and that peer mentoring allowed them to express their feelings and opinions to one another.

Availability of mentors was mentioned repeatedly across all categories of the mentoring program and was an important factor in the overall success of this mentoring program. To the extent that mentors, particularly, and mentees were unavailable because of other commitments and time constraints, the frequency and length of discussions in planning and reflection were reduced with negative consequences for the mentoring process generally.

The reflective practices in his mentoring program provided opportunities for mentees to improve their overall teaching. They encouraged mentees to be proactive, enabled them

to maximize their strengths, improve on their weaknesses, upgrade their teaching, use their intuition to anticipate and use their analytical abilities to solve problems in their teaching. Joint reflection encouraged both mentees and mentors to self-reflect. Most mentors tried to implement the reflective practices as suggested. Some mentors, however, were not able to implement them as expected and a couple did not carry them out at all. The reasons given for this were time constraints, demands of other school activities and personal reasons such as medical leave, and in a few cases negative attitudes of mentees or mentors.

The mentors were all able to observe and evaluate mentees' teaching except for one case where the mentor was unable to do so because of medical leave. Mentors were concerned to ensure that mentees were ready to teach before being observed as awarding grades was compulsory to fulfil the requirements of the degree. The joint observations and on-going discussions with the university supervisor benefited mentors in their own teaching and mentoring and in standardization of grades for mentees. Mentors were motivated by the university's acknowledgement and value of their contribution after some initial apprehension but these mentors and the university supervisor also established good rapport.

Significant mentor roles were those of guide, advisor, friend, partner, role model, supervisor and assessor. The roles of guide and advisor were perceived as most important and as effectively conducted by mentors. Mentors felt more comfortable in these roles and other roles were only partially fulfilled by most mentors. Other emergent roles were identified by some mentees as those of leader and boss.

Table 4.1 shows a summary of the major findings on Research Question 1.

Indications of mentoring impact:

+ Positive impact

– Negative impact

Mentoring dimensions	Indications of impact	
	Mentees	Mentors
4.3 Professional learning Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + Positive personal qualities and attitude towards teaching • + Lesson planning skills through discussions and demonstration • + Mentees become self-reliant. • + Level of cooperation encouraged creativity from mentees • + Familiarity with the environment • + Resources and teaching management enhanced teaching • + Peer mentoring provided additional mentoring support • – Negativity about lack of support from mentors • – Apprehension about collaborative teaching and mentor observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + – Variable level of support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + Gained through planning and discussion • + Giving space to encourage creativity • – Disappointment with mentees unwilling to cooperate
4.4 Mentoring relationships and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + Personal qualities and attitude build collegial relationship and raise mentee motivation • + Mentees more receptive to informal mentoring relationship • – Mentor negativity constrained communication and interpersonal relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + Positive interpersonal communicative skills, qualities and attitudes and availability build positive communication and mentoring relationships • + Varied approaches to initiate and sustain mentoring relationships • – Negative in interpersonal communicative skills, qualities and attitudes, availability hindered communication and mentoring relationship
4.5 Reflective practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + Increased self-awareness, self-evaluation, and increased ability to think critically and creatively in effective teaching • + Positive interpersonal and personal qualities, availability and time enhanced reflective practices • – Negativity in mentor interpersonal and personal qualities, availability and time imposed constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • +Increased self-awareness • +Positive interpersonal and personal qualities, availability and time enhanced reflective practices • +Mentors improved and gained knowledge through reflective practices • + Support and recognition from university increased confidence, motivation, commitment, acknowledged, valued and standardization of grades • – Negativity in mentor interpersonal and personal qualities, availability and time imposed constraints
4.6 Teaching observation and assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + Satisfaction on overall standardized evaluations and grades awarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • +Mentors improved and gained knowledge observing teaching and joint observation • Acknowledgement by university increased motivation and self-esteem

Mentoring dimensions	Indications of impact	
	Mentees	Mentors
4.7 Mentoring roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + Varied roles were carried out to suit mentees' needs at different phases • + Guide and advisor were highly preferred roles • + Positive personal qualities contributed positively in mentoring roles • + Supervisor/assessor still perceived as important roles • – Negative personal qualities and attitudes constrained in fulfillment of mentoring roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + Commitment in carrying out roles of guide, advisor, friend and partner. • + Discovery of other capabilities e.g. leadership

Chapter 5

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: RESULTS & DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines findings related more specifically Research Question 2: What institutional, cultural and pedagogic factors influenced the implementation of this mentoring program?

It should be noted that these findings, overlap with those of previous chapter.

In relation to the above research question as for Research Question 1, data were gathered from teacher mentors and mentees through interviews, focus group discussions, reflective journals and analysis of documents. Mentor selection and criteria, credibility, personalities and attitudes, prior meetings, mentor peer discussion group, gender, incentives for mentors, and mentoring phases were identified as actors which interacted in influencing the implementation of the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program.

5.2 Mentor selection criteria and matching

As explained in Chapter One, mentors were selected, as previously, by the schools according to the suggested criteria in the Practicum Guide Book (SESD, UMS, 2005). The university acknowledged and respected decisions made by schools in the selection of the teacher mentors.

There were mixed responses from mentors when asked about their appointment. Six of the mentors stated specifically that they were happy and honoured to be appointed as mentors. Four mentors accepted the appointment but indicated that if given a choice, they would rather not become mentors just yet as they lacked the teaching experience to mentor teacher mentees. Two mentors, however, stated they were not keen to be mentors but that because the school appointed them, they had to accept.

These varied views are reflected in the following comments. For example, Mr. Alipin said:

I am honoured that my mentee learned something from me considering that I am still a junior here in this school and an inexperienced teacher. It was tough for me but since the school appointed me and trusted me as a mentor, I tried my best to mentor the mentee.

Mr. Sipin was appreciative:

I was actually very excited initially to be appointed as a mentor but when I met my mentee for the first time during the mentoring workshops, I learned that she had been teaching before and had more than ten years of teaching experience. I

felt anxious and, at the same time, I was nervous and scared too because this was my first time being a teacher mentor.

Mr. Sipin admitted he had initial difficulties with his appointment and stressed the importance of adequate teaching experience as one of the most important criteria for selection and appointment of teacher mentors:

After what I had gone through, if possible next time, please choose a mentor who will match the mentee's background. Please insist that the mentor must have sufficient teaching experience to be a mentor.

However, other mentors were willing to accept the challenge and be more proactive in developing themselves professionally in mentoring. Mr Gusil said:

I could not say whether I was glad or not glad to be appointed as a mentor. The most important thing was that once I was given the trust and responsibility by the school, I had to try my best and do something new. This was a way to keep upgrading myself professionally and add more experience and exposure to new ideas otherwise to take the opportunity to learn and share what I could contribute as a teacher mentor.

Miss Andak did not expect to be appointed as a mentor as she had only been teaching a year and a half. She considered herself a junior teacher in the school and was apprehensive initially because her mentee had previously been a teacher for more than five years. She said:

I was shocked to be appointed as a mentor because I did not have enough teaching experience to be one. I heard my mentee had been teaching a long time. I was scared to hear this. But what could I do? The school had already appointed me to be his mentor. So I tried my best to mentor him and learn from him at the same time. I'll bet he did not really learn much from me but definitely I learned from him because he had the teaching experience.

Mr. Jumaat said:

I am too junior to be a mentor and only had 2.5 years of teaching experience. When I was told that I had to be a mentor for one of the teacher trainees, I questioned myself, my own credibility. I would try my best to help the mentee but I am also so much younger. I thought age might be an influence too. Anyway, my mentee did what I advised him to do.

Mr. Ahmad also emphasized the importance of the mentor's teaching experience:

It would be traumatic for a teacher to be a mentor if he/she has only less than five years of teaching experience. I realize that as a mentor, you really need more than five years of teaching experience to be credible to a mentee. It would give the mentee confidence and assurance. For example, the mentee might question my credibility in giving the practicum grades and they might not trust the grade I had given otherwise.

Mr. Linus stated openly that he was not keen to be a mentor. He was also frank and honest enough to admit that he did not provide adequate mentoring support for his mentee.

I have to be frank that I did not provide adequate support to my mentee in this mentoring because my focus was on my other classes. One of the reasons was that the present class that my mentee took over was only a class that I was taking over temporarily. Whatever it was, I tried to the best of my abilities to play my role as a mentor.

The mentors also suggested strongly that mentoring should be voluntary, that the teachers must be approached as to whether they would like and be ready to be mentors or rather than simply appointed.

The mentees (in focus group discussions and interviews) also generally agreed that selection criteria in choosing mentors were important in the mentoring program. They identified the personal qualities of the mentors as crucial in the mentoring process. The mentees agreed that the positive personal qualities and interpersonal communicative skills (Section 4.3.2, p. 158) of prospective mentors which were mentioned earlier should be considered in choosing teacher mentors. Mentees also identified prior teaching and mentoring experience as central criteria in selecting teacher mentors.

Mina was impressed by both her teacher mentors but emphasized that she tended to pay more attention to her more experienced major mentor:

I listened to both my teacher mentors but I tended to pay more attention to my major mentor because he has more teaching experience than my minor teacher mentor. I believe that one of the criteria for choosing teacher mentors should be the teaching experience they carry with them. I discovered that when mentors have sufficient teaching experience they are able to contribute more in the mentoring process.

The majority of mentees (8 of 9) believed that teaching experience was important in mentor selection. They indicated that teacher mentors should have more than five years experience and have adequate practical expertise and content knowledge. So Ondu said:

I think teaching experience is crucial in the mentoring process. The mentors must have at least five years of teaching experience in order to be credible enough to be a teacher mentor.

However, mentees varied opinions on the criteria for choosing mentees. Posis, who was a novice, indicated that her teacher mentors' lack of teaching experience did not prevent her getting the full support from she needed from them. Pius, whose teacher mentors were much younger than he was and who had no mentoring experience, shared this view:

Both my teacher mentors had no mentoring experience. They had only been teaching less than three years. One of my mentors only had one and a half years of teaching experience and they had no problems sharing their knowledge, content-wise. They are also younger than me. One thing, I noticed was that were

hesitant to tell me what to do. I am a teacher trainee. I still think though that the age factor and mentoring experience could influence the mentoring process.

Pian added her view on the selection criteria for teacher mentors:

One of the criteria I found was important was matching of mentors and mentees. For example, I was an introvert and my minor teacher mentor was also an introvert. So during the mentoring process, I found that it was difficult to work with that mentor. I had to change to be more extrovert to counter his personality. I know it's not easy to find the right matching.

5.2.1 Gender

Only one of the mentees in this study, highlighted the issue of gender in regard to the mentoring process. Zizah said:

I would prefer to have a teacher mentor who is of the same gender as me. At least then I would feel more at ease discussing and sharing my inner feelings, the anxiety and problems that I faced during this practicum. If I had a female mentor, she would empathize more with me because she would know how I felt as a woman especially as I had not been well lately here.

A mentor, Mr Pitor also shared a similar view:

I would prefer to have a mentee of the same gender. I think it was good to work with a same gender mentee. When we talk to the opposite sex, probably the

results will be different, you know. The tendency to be more open with the same sex and the willingness to show and discuss would be greater and more effectively professionally.

Discussion

Mentor reaction to their appointments varied widely. Most were happy to be selected or at least accepting. Only two were reluctant to accept appointment. There were widespread feelings of apprehension and concern, however, at such factors as relative inexperience in teaching and for mentoring, and age relative to the age of the mentee. Cohen (1995, p. 149) stated that the age of the mentor can be an influence on the mentoring relationship. “Although, age of mentor may not always affect the interpersonal dynamics of mentoring, there are some genuine concerns relevant to differences in age between the mentor and the mentee”.

There, and factors such as matching of personalities and interpersonal communication skills, were all seen as important by mentors and mentees as criteria in relation to selection of mentors. As suggested by Whitaker (1992) matching is difficult but it is an important aspect to consider in the mentoring process. Momany and Cullingford (2006), however, suggested that selection of mentors should be based on experienced and teaching competencies in order to fully contribute to the preservice teacher train course. Le Maistre, Boudreau, and Pare (2006) also suggested that the success of mentoring roles could be met if there is a matching of personal qualities by both mentors and mentees.

Despite constraints where these criteria were not met here, most mentors were positive in their efforts to mentor effectively and benefit professionally themselves from the

experience. Mentees however, also agreed that length of teaching and mentoring experience, personal qualities and interpersonal communicative skills are important criteria in selection of teacher mentors, with appropriate knowledge and the ability to share it being important considerations in the selection procedure.

Although the gender issue could be considered an isolated case in this study because only one mentor and one mentee expressed a preference for same-gender mentors, this may be something important to consider in the mentor selection process, particularly where health or emotional factors are involved. This finding corroborates the study conducted by Ehrich et al. (2004) that gender was also seen to impinge on the success of the mentoring relationship. The data also indicate that having same-gender mentees would be more workable for mentors because of the possibility of being more open with one another. The important point here is that gender may have caused some constraint in the mentoring process in this study and may be of particular concern in this cultural context.

5.2.2 Mentor credibility

Mentees believed that credibility of their mentors was one of the major factors in the effectiveness of the implementation of the mentoring program. More than half (7 of 9) emphasized the subject expertise of their teacher mentors. Osong realized that her mentors' credibility in subject content had simplified her teaching task by enabling her to teach only important points in the limited time available for example, in a one period class:

I realized that my teacher mentors were really credible on subject content. They could explain to me so clearly how to go about teaching the different topics. They made it sound so easy. When I was reading and planning the notes on my own, it was difficult to compress the content into one period of teaching but they showed me how to teach important things only.

Mina also pointed out how impressed she was with her major teacher mentor's knowledge of innovative mathematics teaching so that the pupils would be more interested and motivated to learn.

My major teacher mentor suggested that I use associations in our daily life to teach mathematics and not to entirely depend on textbooks; otherwise the pupils would get bored. He showed me some examples. I am so glad that he gave me so many ideas on how to approach the teaching of mathematics to make it more interesting.

One mentor did question his own credibility in providing subject content support to his mentee, although most of the mentors who were experienced teachers were confident of their credibility in this area.

Discussion

Credibility of mentors was seen as an important factor in mentoring, and essential in developing and sustaining mentees' confidence, interest and motivation in their teaching during the practicum. The data show that credibility in this study was

perceived by both mentees and mentors as related mentor's expertise subject content and teaching experience. This supports the suggestion by Koki (1997) that success of mentoring is related to the competence and expertise of the mentor. A study by Halai (2006) indicated that "subject content expertise as a significant aspect of the mentor's role and working with subject content as an important element of the mentoring interactions" (p. 708).

5.3. Personal qualities and attitudes of mentors and mentees

Personal qualities and attitudes of both mentors and mentees were identified as having a strong influence in the implementation of the mentoring program. Across all the categories in this study, these personal qualities and attitudes were repeatedly mentioned, particularly in communication and relationship-building.

All mentees confirmed (in focus group discussions and interviews) that the mentors' degree of commitment played a major role in building and sustaining effective mentoring relationships. Different mentees identified other positive personal qualities of mentors that were instrumental in building such relationships during the program. For example, mentors who were perceived as pleasant, caring, friendly, open, approachable, cooperative, warm, kind, having a sense of humour, and empathy and a good heart, were generous, concerned, interested, committed, dedicated were noted as having the most positive relationships with their mentees. The following are some of the remarks made by mentees:

I felt the warmth. Both of my mentor teachers accepted me warmly as their mentee and this made me closer to them. (Mina)

My major teacher mentor is open, cooperative and concerned that I got all the support I needed. These qualities enhanced the mentoring process. (Osong)

My minor teacher mentor gave me the impression that he was strict in the beginning but actually he has a great sense of humour. He is happy all the time, and I realized that this made mentoring communications easier and the relationship work. It made the situation much less intimidating. (Tati).

However, not all of the mentors possessed such positive qualities and those who had difficulties building mentoring relationships were perceived as lacking self-disclosure or openness as being reluctant, unfriendly, unapproachable, unconcerned, uncooperative and un-interested, anti-social and unwilling to interact, and selfish. For example, Itah said:

I felt that my teacher mentor was not interested in being a mentor. When I talked to him, he just answered briefly and he quickly told me he had something else to do. It was frustrating sometimes. When I thought about this, it affected me and this was not good for the mentoring relationship.

Another mentee described the indifferent attitude of her teacher mentor who was not willing to share her knowledge. This too affected her building a successful mentoring relationship. Zizah said:

It was pointless if teacher mentors who were experienced were not able to share the knowledge they carry with them. How can you build a relationship if you are not satisfied with your mentor?

Ondu expressed a similar view of her mentor in the early phase of the program:

My whole experience in this mentoring program taught me that the personal qualities and commitment of the teacher mentor are crucial. Even if they are experienced and expert in their field, if they lack the attitude to be close to and to know people, to build rapport with mentees, it is all useless. The mentoring process would not be able to work. My initial feelings were like this but my mentor changed gradually. It turned out to be fine after that.

However, the mentors' personal qualities and commitment were not the only ones important in developing mentoring relationships and communication. The mentees (in focus groups) generally agreed that their own personal qualities and commitment were also instrumental here. Pian said:

I had to adjust myself to suit my mentor's attitude otherwise it was difficult to build a rapport with him. I found out that we both had to adjust or change if we wanted the mentoring to work so that it becomes a win-win situation. I benefit as well as he does.

Zizah admitted that she herself had an indifferent attitude and that making assumptions about her teacher mentor led her to not making an effort to initiate contact with him. As she said in her reflective journal:

If he really had carried out his mentoring role, maybe, it would be different. Maybe I am partly to be blamed too. I did not make the first move to go and see him. Sometimes, I felt it was okay. I understand he was busy; that was the reason I did not want to disturb him. I did not want to add an additional burden to his job. But in this school, they are always busy with school activities.

Three mentees said they were not comfortable in being open with their teacher mentors, that initially they were scared and hesitant to get closer to their mentors. As noted previously (p.139) they found it difficult to express their opinions as they did not want to offend their mentors or feared being victimized in their teaching practice. They believed that such feelings hindered the mentoring relationships. Zizah stated:

It was a frustrating experience to try to build this mentoring relationship. I myself was not open. My teacher mentor was not open also.

Ondu also spoke of the importance of the mentee being open in the mentoring relationship:

I realized that I also had to be open to build closer relationships with my mentor.

One mentee said that her own openness was affected by the way her mentor talked to her. For example, she said, her minor teacher mentor used a loud voice and sounded as if he was angry in the beginning. These made her reluctant to talk to or to meet him. Gradually, however, she found that this was just one of her mentor's mannerisms and she responded more positively.

In addition to their own personal qualities and commitment, one mentee also mentioned mentee's age, maturity and past teaching experience as factors in building the mentoring relationships with mentors. Pius said:

Regarding the mentoring relationship, I had no problem. My age and my teaching experience helped me to build a good mentoring relationship with my teacher mentors, even though both my teacher mentors were so much younger than me. Maturity on my part also was important.

The mentors agreed (in focus groups and interviews) that their mentees' personal qualities contributed to forming good relationships, and that their own personal qualities and attitudes had to be adjusted according to those of the mentees. Some of the positive personal qualities and attitudes of the mentees identified by the mentors were politeness, open-mindedness, willingness to learn and to accept criticism and challenges, persistence and determination, effort, and being receptive, approachable, responsible, committed, adaptable and sociable. Negative personal qualities and attitudes identified were being not open, un-interested, not willing to learn, not approachable, anti-social and arrogant.

Mr. Kassim said:

When I talked to my mentee, I had to be honest and genuine in my approach. I could not pretend, or act out. I could not appear to be superior to my mentee otherwise she would not respect me. Our relationship was reciprocal and mutual. Her attitude was positive and it made the mentoring process easier.

Mr. Gusil said his relationship with his mentee was good. One of the reasons was because the mentee had a pleasant personality and was willing to do what he discussed with her. Several factors seen as important in mentors' positive attitudes and behaviours were related to his treatment of his mentee not as a trainee but as a trained teacher who just needed additional help to pass the teaching practice. He stated that this approach gave his mentee a sense of belonging and was therefore effective.

Mentors (7 of 12) also tried not to be strict with their mentees. They agreed that this helped them to interact with the mentees, reduced unnecessary pressure on the mentees and made it easier to build a mentoring relationship. In addition, some mentors (5 of 12) indicated that incorporating jokes and having a sense of humour assisted in building effective relationships with mentees.

Mr. Ahmad said his mentee was very observant and forthright and emphasized that the attitude of the mentees in this mentoring program was positive and that and they were proactive in their approach. He said this kept him on his toes all the time to ensure that maximum support was provided to his mentee.

Mr. Titus realized that in the process of mentoring, he found out he needed to be open-minded and communicative:

Through communication, interactions and an open mind, I discovered that I was able to work with my mentee efficiently and know myself better by listening, and not just to myself.

Mentors also agreed (in focus group discussions) that trust was an important component in the mentoring process and especially in for relationship-building and that without trusting their mentees, mentoring could not be effective. As one said: “Without trusting the mentees, it was not easy for the mentoring to work effectively”. Another said: “When we trust the mentees, we believe that the mentees will do their best”.

Mr. Sipin realized the need to trust, respect and be open to the mentee was crucial in the mentoring process. He said:

We need to trust, respect and be open in the mentoring relationship. Whatever problem we have, we need to discuss it. I did not like it when we discussed and agreed on something and after that she did another thing. So what was the point of doing the planning of lessons, spend time on reflective discussions but she did not do it. She did something else instead. Maybe she has other plans or whatever. I don't know.

Mr. Sipin was disappointed that he had not been frank and open with his mentee and this affected his communication and relationship-building with her. He said:

I need as a mentor to be open, you know, just say what I want to say, what I have in mind instead of keeping it to myself, even though I know that it might create some uncomfortable feeling or might hurt or create an uneasy relationship or whatever . I learned all this during the process, that I should say it whatever I want to say. I should have said it for her own good. I could not say it. I personally think sometimes I care too much for other people's feelings.

Similarly, Mr. Farish said:

Another personal quality was to be frank and transparent and not hide anything from the mentee. We must be frank even though it hurts the mentee's feelings.

Mr. Pitor spoke about his mentee and attributed not being able to form an effective relationship during the mentoring program to her lack of openness and her unwillingness or inability to initiate interaction:

I think that the personal qualities and attitude of the person were important. One needs to have an open mind in order to develop the social skills in communicating and mixing with people. One thing for sure, I could only talk to her about professional things and not about personal things. So if questions were not on a professional basis, I would not have to answer. We could not talk about what you did yesterday, where did you go or what did you do during the weekend. You do not ask these questions, right? I do not want to share without being asked to share my experience.

Mr. Pitor recalled his previous experience as a mentee and how differently he interacted with his mentor:

During my mentoring experience I approached my mentor all the time, especially when I needed something. Actually, I expect the same thing from my mentee. If she needs anything she should come and approach me because I will guide her and encourage her, you know? The mentee needs to know this.

However, Mr. Pitor admitted that it was partly because of his own introverted attitude that he was not open enough with his mentee. He stated that to approach his mentee would be a problem for him and presumed that she was "...probably she was also like me. I cannot blame her...".

Mr. Ahmad pointed out that it was easy to work with his mentee because of her willingness to work, no matter what, and that her perseverance in her work was inspiring and motivating for him to work with her.

As for the mentees, some mentors (4 of 12) agreed that age was also a factor in the effective implementation of the mentoring program. For example, Mr Sipin felt that his mentee was so very senior that he had a problem initially in dealing with this as a mentor. Two other mentors were also uneasy about having mentees who were so much older. One of the constraints they faced was being hesitant to tell these mentees what to do. At the same time, they both said that this arrangement made them see their own potentials and realize their own credibility in their subject areas.

Discussion

The study shows that other factors such as personal qualities and commitment of both mentees and mentors impacted significantly on the mentoring relationships. Mentors who were pleasant, caring, friendly, open, approachable, cooperative, warm, kind, who had a sense of humour, empathy, a good heart, and were generous, concerned, interested, committed, and dedicated were viewed as establishing effective communication and relationships in the mentoring program. Characteristics that hampered communication and relationships were lack of openness, reluctance, unapproachability, lack of concern and interest, social isolation with minimal interaction, and selfishness. Underpinning the finding, there was an indication of some mentees and mentors having such *personality clashes*. This supports the findings of Hobson (2002) indicating that clashes pose problems in a mentoring relationship.

Important positive mentee characteristics which emerged were degrees of motivation, ease, happiness, satisfaction; or negatively, disappointment, fear, and feelings of pressure, and victimization. The nature and validity of mentees' assumptions about their mentors were important factors in the success or otherwise of their communication and relationships. In general, mentees saw their mentors as having the major responsibility for the success or otherwise of the mentor-mentee relationship and mentor personal qualities, attitudes and commitment as critical.

Openness and self-disclosure by both teacher mentors and mentees were not widely evident in this study, because disclosing oneself openly to another person, especially one who is new to them, is not a normal practice in this cultural context (Sendut et al.,

1989). One of the mentors said that mentoring should be strictly professional, that personal matters should be not discussed.

Issue related to hierarchy and pride should be avoided to enable the mentoring process to succeed. Both mentors and mentees need to inculcate empathy values in their interactions. Carl Rogers (1958, cited in Rowley, 1999, p. 20) perceived this as “accepting another person without making judgements”. Rowley indicated that mentors should be accepting of beginning teachers as a developing person and professional (1999).

Mentees and mentors saw each other’s negative personal qualities, attitudes and commitment as factors in communication and relationship difficulties. As Brooks and Sikes (1997) pointed out, abilities, aptitudes, attitudes and skills are necessary in mentoring but while good teachers may possess these, it is not inevitable that they will be effective mentors. Rowley (1999) suggested that in order to help mentors and mentees, adjustments have to be made to meet each others needs.

Some mentees felt that they had to take the initiative in establishing the mentoring relationship and to overcome difficulties by expressing and even adjusting their own personalities. This was a positive experience for those who experienced it in the initial phase of the practicum. The data in general show that mentees viewed the development of successful mentoring relationships as not as easy task and that they perceived such development as a learning process in itself.

Other factors such as age, maturity and past teaching experience, and participation of a university supervisor, were all seen as important in influencing the mentoring relationships in this study.

5.4 Prior meetings during the mentoring workshops

More than half of the mentees (6 of 9) believed that effectiveness of communications and building of positive relationships with mentors began during the mentoring workshops and continued progressively in the implementation of the mentoring program throughout the practicum. Knowing their teacher mentors prior to starting the mentoring program enabled these mentees to communicate with their mentors much more easily and naturally. As Mina wrote in her reflective journal:

I was glad to meet both my teacher mentors earlier. That was one of the reasons that I was able communicate and easily build relationships with them.

For these mentees the time spent in discussing each other's expectations and roles with their mentors, and getting to know each other during the mentoring workshops expedited the establishment of positive relationships. As Posis related:

Definitely there was no problem in building mentoring relationships with my teacher mentor because during the mentoring workshop we got to know each other and discussed the expectations of the mentoring program earlier and we chatted a lot. It was so much easier to interact after that.

Despite having the opportunities to meet their mentors earlier, some of the mentees (3 of 9) experienced initial difficulties in building positive mentoring relationships. Zizah in particular described her mentor telling her specifically what to expect from him and indicating that he did not like to discuss his personal life. When her teacher mentor said this to her, she said, “I got a strong hunch that we could not get along well, I mean very well”. She then said:

That was the gap. The first thing he said to me was, “I do not like people to know things about me”. So I presumed that when I knew something about him, he would not like it. Nothing worked. You could know from his face that maybe he was not interested in being a teacher mentor.

As a result, she said, the statement made by the teacher mentor made her apprehensive and affected her ability to form an effective relationship during the mentoring program. Most mentees, however, believed that the pre-program workshop meetings with mentors enabled them to communicate and interact easily, and to know what to expect from mentors and their mentoring roles.

Mentors, however, felt that they gained both professionally and as personally by meeting and interacting with their mentees during the mentoring workshops. For example, Mr. Alipin stated that it was much easier to build a rapport with his mentee and that his mentee was not hesitant to approach him. Because of this early contact, the mentors generally (in focus group discussions) agreed, good work could be done during the mentees’ first day in the schools. The mentoring workshop allowed the mentors to

know their mentees earlier and by the time they started their practicum, it was easy to establish the mentoring relationship. For example, Mr. Ahmad said:

In that sense we learned from each other more because we knew each other earlier. So you know the gap between mentee and mentor was closed because the icebreaker was done earlier. So it did not take long at all to build the relationship. That itself built trust. It prevented communication break down and our mentoring relationship was closer and the rapport was better.

Mr. Kassim related his similar experience where he made an early effort to break the barrier of relationship-building by approaching the mentee first. This was done to ensure that his mentee would not to fear him.

It opened up the door for relationship-building. The mentee had no fear. It eradicated the fear of approaching the mentor. Once the mentoring relationship is established, it breaks down the barrier.

Discussion

Both mentees and mentors gained from the prior meetings. Most of the mentees benefited from the initial workshop meeting as it made communication much easier during the initial phase of the practicum and they felt more relaxed in facing the teaching practice and confident in knowing and working with their mentors. Mentors also benefited from their initial contacts in the mentoring workshops, that rapport with mentees could be built more easily, eliminating the mentee's fear of approaching the

mentor. It enabled both mentor and mentee to start productive work on the first day of practicum.

Some mentees, however, still faced challenges in communication and relationship-building, despite meeting their mentors in the workshops. In one case the mentee felt that her initial contact with her mentor had a negative effect on their relationship which continued to affect her emotionally and professionally throughout the practicum.

5.5 Mentor peer discussion group

An interesting finding from this study was that mentors themselves consulted one another and formed a discussion group during the mentoring program. They discovered that discussing their mentees' performances as well their own practices as mentors enhanced the mentoring process.

They said that they felt they were more responsible and more capable as mentors through such discussions because they clarified expectations and extended their mentoring practices during the practicum.

As Mr. Gusil stated:

I discussed with other mentors about what we did and how we helped and motivated our mentees. I mean, we wanted to give our best. We were serious to ensure our mentees got the maximum help from us. Surprisingly, we also mentored each other by discussing and updating what every one was doing and

all the time improving ourselves too. The mentoring program had created this awareness. It gave us the opportunity to interact with each other more, which we had not done previously. We also learned from each other.

Other mentors indicated that they referred to senior mentors for assistance on issues related to mentoring. Mr. Titus said:

Yes, to me mentoring was a challenge, so we discussed. We asked senior mentors like Mr. Asim who has been a mentor for a long time and was a senior teacher. We referred to him for ideas and suggestions in mentoring as well as in other things related to teaching. We discussed ways to find a solution when we faced difficulties in mentoring our mentees.

The mentors also discovered the mentor support group helped them to identify their leadership qualities in the mentoring process. Through those interactions, they believed, they had the opportunity to evaluate their own mentoring abilities and approaches, and their own potentials, as Mr. Gusil discovered:

I discovered that I actually had the ability to lead effectively which I had not previously experienced. By talking and sharing knowledge, I began to see my own potentials, especially my leadership qualities.

Mr. Linus stated that he was glad to get ideas from his discussions with other mentors, especially on the often-discussed topic of how to develop and increase the confidence of mentees in their teaching.

Discussion

The mentors (in focus group discussions) agreed that by discussing with other mentors, they found ways to solve problems, improve their mentoring strategies and most importantly to share their excitement about mentoring. These discussions also contributed to their own professional development. Senior mentors were particularly sought out in these discussions. This finding supported the study by McDougall and Beattie (1997) which indicated that peer mentoring appeared to contribute to teamwork and improved performance and increased the “richness and variety of ideas offered” (Britton, 2006, p. 116).

5.6 Incentives for mentors

Another factor that was highlighted by some mentors (in focus group discussions) was the need for recognition of their mentoring contribution. There was a general consensus among the mentors that this point sometimes did bother them, perhaps indirectly, during the program. The mentors indicated that they would welcome the university awarding a certificate or some form of document to recognize their contribution as a mentor. In previous experience as mentors for the university this aspect was neglected and no form of recognition of their service was made.

It was noted that mentors for other institutions were paid as mentors in the school. One mentor here stated that he was unhappy with the belief expressed by one of the mentees that he would be paid for being a mentor. He said, “...I became a mentor willingly not because I wanted to be paid...”.

In the focus group discussion, Mr. Gusil, who had been a mentor previously, said:

I am not saying whether it was or not to get incentives from the university for being a mentor. If we get some incentives, we will welcome it, and if we do not, it is also alright. A certificate of recognition to put in our CVs would be much appreciated. The most important thing here is we will carry out our duty and responsibilities to the best of our abilities with or without any reward whether by the school and the university.

Mentors were not given any reduction in their teaching loads to compensate for the additional responsibilities of mentoring.

Discussion

Mentors were not compensated financially or by relief from normal teaching and administrative duties and it is not anticipated that this will change as the school makes decisions in this area. However, they did identify the need for some formal recognition, a document or financial reward or both, for their mentoring contribution. This issue was raised indirectly as an indication of their dissatisfaction. The indirectness of this discussion shows the maturity, sensitivity, and tolerance of these mentors, all of which contributed to the success of the overall mentoring process in this study. This finding corresponds with a study by Ramayah, Chiun, Amri and Arokiasamy (2003) which reported that mentors seem to have hostile attitudes towards a mentoring training program (MTP) due to a lack of appropriate incentives. Mentees too need to be sensitive to and be aware of the implications of this issue, especially the readiness of teacher mentors to mentor whether or not any direct reward or appreciation is established.

5.7 Mentoring phases

More than half of the mentees (6 of 9) believed that the mentoring process went through different phases, most importantly in the building of relationships between mentees and mentors. With reference to the literature on different phases (Furlong & Maynard, 1995; Kram, 1985; Cohen, 1985; ASCD, 1999, the initial phase was defined as the first three weeks of the practicum; the middle phase combined weeks four to eight; and the last phase comprised the last four weeks of the practicum.

Mentees (7 of 9) believed that time was a factor that influenced the quality of the mentoring relationships and effectiveness of communication with their teacher mentors. They claimed that they spent considerable time and energy in the initial phase in developing the mentoring relationship. Zizah specifically wrote in her reflective journal, “It takes all my time, energy as well as patience to build rapport with my teacher mentor” while Posis realized that the mentoring relationship did not happen automatically but took time to build through the early phase particularly.

Some mentees (3 of 9) believed that their mentoring relationships started almost immediately during the first week of the mentoring program; others (4 of 9) believed that they went through the different phases building their mentoring relationships, while two mentees claimed that the phases were irrelevant because of their negative experiences with their teacher mentors throughout. However, the general perceptions of the mentees were that in the process of achieving good rapport with their mentors, they were still faced with some obstacles even in the middle phase.

Most of the mentees (6 of 9) believed that the initial phase was a critical period which involved adjustments and familiarization in mentor-mentee relations and communication. Feelings of being shy, reluctant, scared, intimidated, worried and apprehensive of mentors and the reality of facing the actual situation in teaching were generally experienced by mentees in the initial phase of the mentoring program. At the same time, mentees felt that it was important to build rapport with their teacher mentors in this phase.

Pian realized that it was not an easy task to build rapport with her mentor in the first weeks:

Yes, I feel that in the first few weeks, it was very hard to get along with them. Maybe it was because of our expectations and perceptions of them. It may also be personal. Maybe we judged them too early by looking at their facial expressions. I made it a point to talk to my teacher mentors and after interacting with both my teacher mentors, I realized that they were okay.

During the first weeks, in the struggle to survive the reality of the practicum, and the demands and requirements to be fulfilled in the process of building mentoring relationships, mixed feelings were experienced by mentees. For example, Mina assumed that her minor teacher mentor did not like her:

When I asked my minor mentor questions, she gave a straightforward answer without giving her opinions or further elaborations. I felt that she did not like me

because I thought she looked at me as an extra burden for her work. Maybe I asked too many questions early in the practicum.

She further remarked that her forming preconceived interpretations of her mentor's actions initially prevented her from building relationships with her minor teacher mentor. The extension and importance of interactions in subsequent weeks finally gave Mina the opportunity to know her minor teacher mentor better and in the final phase to communicate effectively and build strong rapport with her mentor.

Ondu reflected on the ordeal of interacting with her teacher mentor in the initial phase:

First week is a *get-to-know* week. My major teacher mentor is a bit passive when I first interact with him. He just gives me bits and pieces of information. So much so, I have to gain a lot of *silent messages* from my mentor; something like, "You do and I comment". Actually, I do not know...I am still grasping. Hope next few weeks things will be much better.

In a later interview she indicated:

The relationships were not open. For me I think my mentor was superior. I think the word is *hierarchy* was there except not in a written form.

Although positive mentoring relationships would eventually be mutual and reciprocated for most, some mentees (3 of 9) found it disappointing that, even in the middle phase, they still had difficulty in interacting with their teacher mentors. As Ondu said:

The relationships between me and my mentor are still a *bit tense*. I have to watch myself as we communicate. The atmosphere of *I am the boss* by my mentor is still felt. On my side, I need to check myself all the time in order to avoid some disagreement between me and my mentor. I have to give in most of the time. I have to restrain myself from stating my opinions! I am still hoping that situations will be much better next week! I need to work hard on this matter.

Ondu reported that that her positive relationship with her teacher mentors did not really get off the ground until well into the middle phase of the program. Pius reported a similar experience:

The initial meeting helped the development of the mentoring relationships but I can say my relationships with my teacher mentors only really improved towards the end of the middle weeks of the practicum and onwards, and it was good then.

Some mentees (3 of 9), pointed out that their relationships actually only started to blossom after the first observations in the middle phase of their teaching practice. Pian said:

That was the time I really found out who and what my teacher mentor was like. After that and through reflective practices, I began to know my major teacher mentor. I think, that was how the relationships between my mentor and me started to develop.

Four of the mentees believed that they shared a special bond with their teacher mentors in the last phase of the mentoring program. This view was more widely expressed in focus group discussions. Such bonding was seen to be based on mutual respect and was perceived as related to changes in mentoring styles of mentors in phases two and three, particularly in their greater personal concern for their mentees and seriousness in and commitment to their mentoring roles.

Nevertheless, Zizah said that despite her attempts to know her teacher mentor, she did not manage to build that kind of mentor/mentee relationship and, by the last phase, said "...I do not want to...".

Itah reported a similar problem but made the best of it and compensated in other ways:

I just make do, whatever the situations. My relationship was like that and it is the same now too. I feel I became accustomed to it after a while. Anyway, I got the support from other mentors and my peers. For me, I felt disappointed. It is not easy to have a relationship when there is a lack of all the support you expected.

The mentors confirmed (in focus group discussion) that the mentoring process went through different phases in this study. They also said this reflected the dynamics of the how the process of mentoring progresses throughout the practicum. Similarly to descriptions of the mentees, Mr. Gusil described how his mentoring relationship developed over time:

At first my mentee was reluctant to approach me. She was very shy. That made building a mentoring relationship difficult in the initial phase of the mentoring program. I noticed this and I made it a point to go to her and talk to her. By me doing this, I observed that she came out of it. Gradually, this mode became familiar to her and after a while, I noticed she became accustomed to it. That was how the communication and relationship became closer.

Mentors generally agreed that towards the end of the middle mentoring phase, mentees became less dependent on their mentors. They stated that in the last phase their mentees had gained confidence in their teaching, were familiar with their surroundings and became more autonomous. Mentors also believed that the mentoring phase determined the type of roles they performed.

Discussion

The mentees indicated that mentoring relationships developed through three fairly distinct phases of the practicum. Some mentees claimed that they were able to establish mentoring relationships immediately, attributing this to the initial workshop meeting. Not all such relationships were necessarily positive. Time, and development through the phases appeared to be most conducive to the most successful relationships.

The data show that mentoring relationships became increasingly personal. In the process of getting to know and work with each other, some mentees developed special bonds with their mentors. However, other mentees were frustrated with their mentors

and a few seem to have given up hope of building effective mentoring relationships and one decided to make do with the situation and not be dependent on her own mentor alone.

Mentees reported different emotional experiences in different phases of the practicum with negative emotions being more dominant during the initial and into the early part of the middle phases of the mentoring program. Personal support by mentors was important in all the phases but successful relationships seem to have developed most strongly in the middle phase of the mentoring program with real bonding in these relationships toward the end. Apparent changes in mentoring styles may have contributed to increasing personal support. In the few cases where effective mentoring relationships were less apparent, mentees may well have become more independent in their focus on their teaching practice.

The three phases were generally identified by mentees and mentors as distinctive in the development of the mentoring relationship, that difficulties in the initial phase tended to be overcome in the middle phase with effective and positive relationships characterizing the final weeks of the practicum. This finding supports the views of Furlong and Maynard (1995), Cohen (1995), Kram (1985), and the ASCD (1999) on the development of mentoring phases.

5.8 Chapter summary

Not all mentors were fully accepting of and committed to the mentoring program. Some were apprehensive due to several factors such as inexperience in teaching and

mentoring in particular. Both mentors and mentees emphasised that matching of personal qualities, teaching experience and interpersonal communication skills are important in the criteria for and selection of mentors. Gender was also noted as a factor to be considered in matching mentees with mentors. Credibility of mentors was also brought up by mentees, and was seen as being closely related to mentors' experience. Most of the mentors here were seen as credible by mentees although some mentors questioned their own credibility because of age and experience relative to those of their mentees.

Both mentors' and mentees' positive personal qualities and attitudes had a dramatic impact across all categories of mentoring in the program. Being committed, dedicated, serious, empathetic and concerned were some positive personal qualities that both mentors and mentees contributed to maintaining a good working atmosphere. Those who were most self-aware were best able to make adjustments and adapt to each other's needs so that the mentoring experience became a *win-win* situation for both. Most of the mentors were seen to be involved in the mentoring program because of their serious commitment and dedication. Negative personal qualities and attitudes identified across the study were lack of commitment, and being uncooperative.

Other factors perceived as influencing the implementation of the mentoring program were the prior meetings of mentors and mentees during the mentoring workshops and mentor incentives. Most of the mentees and mentors identified the initial meeting at the workshops as a catalyst in forming their mentoring relationships. The mentors talked about possible incentives for mentoring but did not directly say that documentary or financial rewards were necessary to attract committed mentors. Mentors also formed

their own peer discussion groups with similar outcomes to those of mentees as well as enabling them to compare mentees' progress and share their expertise.

The mentors and mentees identified these distinct mentoring phases as they evolved during the mentoring process across all the mentoring functions in this study. Mentoring support, relationships, communication, mentoring roles, personal qualities and attitudes, availability and reflective practices evolved through the different phases as identified by both mentors and mentees. Each phase was characterized by positive steps in the quality of mentor support and in mentor-mentee relationships and communication. Mentoring relationships took time to develop with different professional and personal supports needed at different phases, differences in mentoring roles perceived to be required by mentors, and development in teaching skills and attitudes of mentees.

Table 5.1 shows a summary of the major findings on Research Question 2.

+ Positive impact

– Negative impact

Mentoring dimensions	Indications of impact	
	Mentees	Mentors
Mentor Selection, credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Positive personal qualities and attitudes, credibility, experience, age, credibility, gender contributed to positive outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Willingness to be mentors Lack of teaching and mentoring experience, and age posed major concerns in the mentoring process.
Personal qualities and attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Positive personal qualities and attitudes and emotional support contributed to positive impact in mentoring relationship. – Negative personal qualities and attitudes limited mentoring process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Positive personal qualities and attitudes contributed to positive outcomes in mentoring practices. – Negative personal qualities and attitudes limited mentoring practices.
Prior meetings during the mentoring workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Positive outcomes in establishing mentoring relationship and communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + – Perceived evolution of phases influenced the development of mentoring process and relationships.
Mentor peer discussion group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + – Initial meetings gave the opportunity to know mentors earlier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Initiation of a mentor discussion group promote collegial relationships, knowledge sharing and commitment •
Incentives		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Mentors suggest or recommend incentives as a form of recognition and appreciation (e.g. certificates)
mentoring phases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + – Perceived evolution of phases influenced the development of mentoring process and relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + – Perceived evolution of phases influenced the development of mentoring process and relationships.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion, Implications and Recommendation

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to implement and investigate the impact of the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program and institutional, cultural and pedagogic factors that influenced its implementation during the SEDS, UMS teaching practicum. The findings indicate both positive and negative mentoring experiences for mentors and mentees and a varied range of influences on the implementation and impact of the program. The study was guided by two research questions, namely:

Question 1:

What is the impact of an integrated, and culturally appropriate mentoring program on teacher mentors and mentees at the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah?

Question 2:

What institutional, cultural and pedagogic factors influenced the implementation of this mentoring program?

This chapter provides conclusions on these questions, their implications, and recommendations for further research and mentoring practice.

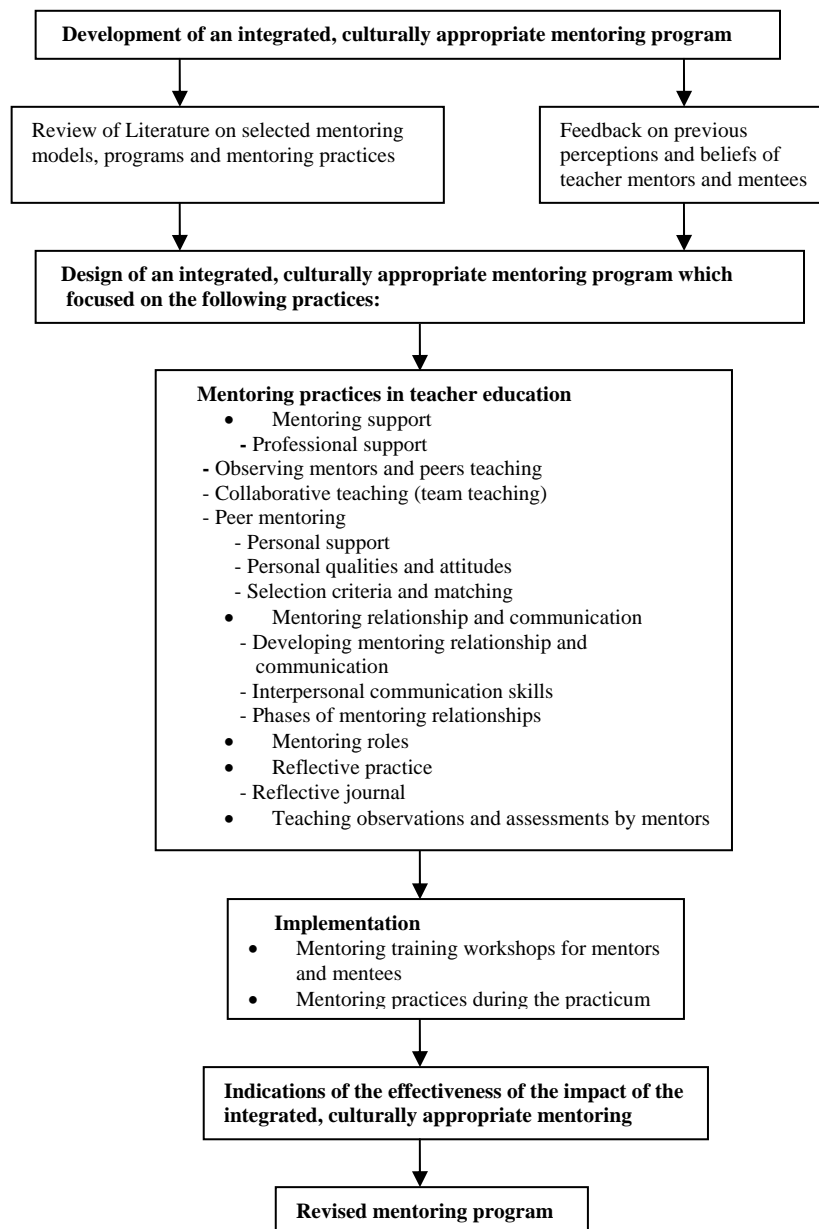


Figure 6.1 Conceptual Framework of the study

The conceptual framework of this study is centred on the focus areas adopted from the different mentoring models, programs and approaches. The impact of the integrated, culturally appropriate program was influenced by factors that were incorporated as in the model well as well those that emerged during the mentoring process. These were categorized as institutional, cultural and structural, pedagogic and interpersonal factors, but were interrelated in their influence.

6.2 Impact of the mentoring program

The overall impact of the program was varied but generally positive for both mentees and mentors. Mentees, both novice and experienced teachers, extended the range of their instructional strategies and skills, their lesson planning and their classroom management skills. Most mentees agreed that their positive development in these professional areas was due to the support and advice provided by mentors in their roles as guide and advisor and to mentors' knowledge of content and pedagogical experience. Mentees also gained in their ability to use resources as aids to instruction and in their knowledge and understanding of schools culture and policies and generally became more reflective, self-critical, and self-reliant, more autonomous particularly in later phases of the practicum.

There were, however, some negative experiences: varying degrees of frustration and anxiety, particularly in the initial phase, from perceived lack of mentor support; lack of resources; unsatisfactory relationships and communication with mentors and some of these continued to varying degrees throughout the practicum.

Professionally, the mentors also gained from the program in development of insights into their own teaching and class management ability; their ability to plan in discussion; their use of questioning and their use of resources. They also gained in self-awareness; communication skills, use of positive reinforcement; relationship building communication skills, interpersonal skills; reflective abilities, and in specific skills and techniques in approaching and working with individual mentees.

6.3 Factors influencing impact

A number of factors contributed to or constrained the effectiveness of the mentoring program and its impact on mentors and mentees. Some of these were incorporated in the initial program design (SESD, UMS); others emerged as the program proceeded. They are discussed below under three major headings, although these divisions are somewhat arbitrarily imposed as the various factors interacted throughout. The complexity of these interactions will be apparent in the following discussions.

6.3.1 Institutional factors

The availability of participants, particularly mentors, for planning discussions, teaching observations (supervision) and reflective practices was a major factor in the mentoring program. Half of the mentees spoke of limitations in this area: of inadequacy of time for such activities or the inappropriateness of combining mentoring functions; and of unsatisfactory venues for such activities, with negative consequences for the mentoring process. School activities and other demands on mentors' time were given as reasons for their limited availability in the mentoring process.

Partly for these reasons, and partly because of a perceived reluctance of mentors to engage in them, collaborative teaching (team teaching) and, to a lesser extent, observations of mentor teaching, were very limited and, for some mentees, virtually non-existent. This corresponds with the finding by Momany and Cullingford (2006) that many mentees did not observe their mentors teaching even though it was advocated during the practicum. Not all mentors believed that these activities were necessary,

given that they provided adequate support in their planning, advising, and supporting roles. Perhaps this could be due to the fact that this had not previously been a common practice or routine during the practicum and, moreover, mentors were accustomed to teaching alone. This is consistent with the study by Hall et al. (2008) that collaborative teaching (team teaching) was only viewed by a few mentors as important.

Provision of teaching resources varied, with some mentees being provided with adequate resources by mentors, others having to rely on their own initiative or the assistance of fellow mentees in this area. Most of the mentees were able to develop their teaching knowledge and skills and improved their performance through working, if not teaching, collaboratively with their mentors. Through this collaboration, mentors too seem to have gained personally and professionally. This corresponds with a study conducted by Ehrich et al. (2005) that yielded similar results.

Peer mentoring, in fact, became an important part of the program for most mentees, particularly where mentors were perceived to provide only limited support. For some, peer mentoring extended beyond mere sharing of resources to include collaboration in planning and reflection, in counselling and psychological support through mutual motivation and positive reinforcement. A study by Britton (2006, p. 115) indicated that peer mentoring support provides more “powerful comfort” to mentees than mentors themselves. However, a couple of mentees did not find peer mentoring helpful and relied only on the support of their mentors.

As indicated above, limitations on availability of participants, particularly mentors, reduced the effectiveness of reflective practices in the program, although mentors

generally believed their contributions here were adequate. Where both groups of participants reported effective reflections, they were characterized by positive rapport and constructive outcomes for both participants: mentees reported positive developments in teaching and management skills, self-awareness, critical ability, mentors spoke of increased self-awareness, a sense of renewal and revaluing (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2003) of their own teaching and management and their ability to use questions in probing and guiding mentees to think constructively about their work. This is also consistent with the suggestions of Schön (1983) and Ghaye and Ghaye (1998) that both reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action enable mentors and mentees to understand and improve their reflective practices.

Mentees' abilities to self-reflect and to think critically and creatively were heightened by their use of reflective journals. Use of these journals, where it was extensive enough, also proved therapeutic for some mentees and enhanced both their willingness and ability to write reflectively and analytically. However, some mentees were not keen to spend too much time on writing journals regarding such activity as a chore rather than educative.

Participants viewed joint observations and follow-up of mentee teaching by mentors and the university positively. Mentees were generally satisfied with the objectivity and fairness of assessment/grades according to SEDS, UMS competency guidelines (SEDS, UMS, Practicum Guidelines, 2005) through this process and with the positive results for their professional development. Mentors felt acknowledged, honoured, valued as professionals by the university through joint observation and this appears to have increased and reinforced mentor commitment to the program. They further indicated

that more formal recognition by the University of their input could take the form of a document (certificate), or remuneration or academic accreditation.

6.3.2 Cultural and structural factors

Cultural and structural factors related to existing school and community context values, the structure or organization of the mentoring program itself and structural elements of the school. The initial *structure* of the program included two distinct components: workshop and training of participants; and implementation in the practicum. Participants particularly, however, also identified these distinct phases in the implementation of the program. For some participants, the mentoring workshops provided the foundation for the development of the mentoring program. For others the initial phase during the early weeks of the practicum was vital in the foundation and subsequent development of the mentoring relationship and its effectiveness. For some, mentoring only became effective in the middle, even the final phases of the program. This supports the suggestion by Johnson (2007) that latter phases are when mentees have moved beyond being dependent and insecure; that they experience a steady increase in self-confidence and professional identity; that mentoring relationship becomes more reciprocal, characterized by mutual trust and more emotionally bonded through sharing ideas and values. The ASCD (1999) described this as the period of rejuvenation where the mentor-mentee relationship becomes stronger.

Those whose positive relationships began earlier suggested that this was the most critical phase for successful mentoring. These findings emphasize the importance for the overall success of the mentoring program, of the initial phases of the program. The

workshops, particularly the one shared by all participants, were a major factor in the effectiveness of mentoring relationships and the program as a whole.

Another important positive factor here was the gradual withdrawal of scaffolding of mentor support as the program developed through the phases. It is important to note that the mentoring phases occurred across all the mentoring functions in the mentoring process. This supports the views of Kram (1985), Cohen (1995) and the ASCD (1999) on the different mentoring functions in each phase. The adoption and emphasis on flexibility, responsiveness and collaboration to meet different mentoring needs appear to be key issues throughout every phase of the mentoring program (Ewing, Freeman, Barrie, Bell, O'Connor, Waugh & Sykes, 2008).

Mentees generally indicated that both professional learning support and personal support were more needed in the initial phase of the mentoring process and that it takes time to establish mentoring relationships and communication. Personal qualities of mentors and mentees also take time to develop in interaction as it takes time to be fully comfortable with one another. A similar outcome was indicated in a study conducted by Hardcastle (2002). All these elements were important contributing factors in creating environments that were conducive, secure and more relaxed for effective mentoring; to the extent that they were lacking here, the mentoring process was less effective.

Other structural elements relate to the school: the importance of availability of mentors, particularly, and mentees for out-of-classroom activities, and of the time and venues for and degree of formality of these activities. Little (1990) and Kilburg (2007) suggested that the greatest obstacles to successful mentoring often lie within the structure and

organization of the school especially in terms of when beginners and mentors can spend time together, in informed conversations or the working environment, and how physically accessible they are to one another.

Other cultural factors related to established practice, including criteria for and selection of mentors. In this program, as previously, mentors were simply appointed by the school, in at least two cases despite the reluctance of appointees and variations in their age and gender relative to those of mentees, and their experience in teaching and mentoring. These factors impinged on the mentoring process for some participants, often negatively. This supported Hansman's (2002) suggestion that mentors may be unwilling to help mentees when they are forced to become mentors.

An unplanned and unforeseen development was the formation of a mentor-initiated peer discussion group. Through this group, and informally, mentors shared their experiences, in mentoring practices and their own teaching, and provided mutual support. Interactions in this group also appeared, incidentally, to strengthen mentor motivation.

Ganser (2006) suggested that such practice appears to be worth being included in a mentoring program as it provides the opportunity for mentors to "engage in facilitated discussions in their mentoring experience as mentors and to seek the advice of fellow mentors when necessary" (p. 45).

It is important to note that these findings reveal that there was not a single model or approach that could be successfully utilized in this mentoring program. It was for this reason that this program was described as *integrated, culturally appropriate*: in its

amalgam of features of different mentoring models and approaches in other mentoring programs and mentoring practices. The extent of its implementation and its impact on participants varied according to a range of institutional, cultural/environmental, personal and interactional, and pedagogic factors. For example, providing classroom practice support (*Apprenticeship, Competency, Reflective mentoring Model and Situated Apprentice and Critical Constructive Approach*) along with the personal support (*Anderson and Shannon's Model, Knowledge-Building Community Model and Humanistic Approach*) to provide a more comprehensive approach to and conducive environment for mentoring. To achieve this, mentors needed to accommodate the mentees' needs by using effective strategies and interpersonal skills and adopt a positive attitude (*Humanistic Approach*) to build and foster a mentoring relationship not always evident here. A positive relationship allows collegiality and thus fosters good rapport between mentors and mentees (Jonson, 2008). Once this is established, there is a strong probability that a positive mentoring relationship will be sustained.

6.3.3 Pedagogic, personal and interpersonal factors

Specifically pedagogic factors appeared to be less independently significant in effective mentoring here than the interpersonal skills and personal qualities and brought to the program by the participants. A major factor here was the perceived degree of motivation and commitment of mentors, to the program and their mentoring roles, particularly the roles of guide, advisor and observer, to a lesser extent, friend, partner, role model, and *boss*. Mentees valued psychological and emotional support as well as professional guidance from their mentors.

Apparent lack of mentor commitment, perceived as serious in several cases, seriously constrained effective mentoring. According to Jones (2006) where personal support is available and strong, mentees will benefit both personally and professionally; when it is lacking, confidence and performances will be hampered.

It should be emphasized here, however, that positive professional development of mentees occurred throughout the practicum, though varying in degree, was clearly evident. Mentors' guidance and advice on pedagogic matters such as planning, instructional skills, knowledge and organization of content and resources and classroom management were major contributors to this development despite any negative factors in mentoring relationships and communication. Mentors' professional experience, though varied, and content knowledge were significant factors in these areas, as also indicated by Hall, et al. (2008).

Several mentors perceived a lack of commitment and a negative attitude in their mentees, resulting in an apparent unwillingness to co-operate in the mentoring process and constraining its effectiveness especially in seeking professional learning support, and constraining mentoring relationship-building and interpersonal communication. Adjustments in personal qualities and attitudes were seen as a *give and take* way to overcome such constraints in this study. Such constraints also reflect the traditional culture of practicum supervision and assessment SESD, UMS context.

The building of effective mentoring relationships also depended greatly on the interpersonal skills of both participants. Where mentors brought warmth, diplomacy, sensitivity and positive approaches and reinforcement, the relationship flourished. This

was particularly so when complemented by positive attitudes, receptiveness to advice, adaptability, and flexibility in the mentee. To the extent that these qualities and skills were lacking in the relationship, particularly in the initial phase, mentoring was less effective.

The most successful mentoring partnerships were collegial, collaborative, and democratic. They also tended to be facilitated by a degree of informality, partly, at least related to the venues of contact outside the classroom and in planning discussions and reflective practices. Mentors tended to value initiative and self-reliance in their mentees, particularly in relation to planning, reflection, and resource acquisition and utilization. However, effective mentoring relationships and communication were not necessarily immediate but developed over time. This supports the suggestions of Kram (1985), Cohen (1995) and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) (1999) that the mentoring process goes through different phases.

Some cultural factors such as the importance of *face*, *respect of the novice* for the *expert*, the *young* for the *elder*, of *hierarchy* also appeared to play a part in mentor-mentee relationship. Relative ages, mentor professional experience and gender were also factors in some mentoring relationships.

6.3.4 Summary

A variety of factors interacted in their impact on the effectiveness of the program. Among these, most important were: the *phased* development of the program itself; mentor selection; availability of time, venues and participants, particularly mentors, for

in-and-out of-class activities; resource provision; and commitment, attitudes and communication and interpersonal skills of participants. Reflection and peer mentoring, mentor modelling, and collaborative teaching and personal as well as professional mentoring in both informal and formal interactions were perceived to be important contributors to successful mentoring, though not all were practiced as comprehensively or as thoroughly as might have been here.

These results have significant implications for revision and development of the program and as pointers to future implementation and research.

6.4 Implications for practice and recommendations

The results of this study point clearly to the need to revise the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program to strengthen its positive elements and reduce constraints in the revised mentoring program.

6.4.1 School

A more effective selection of mentors should, as far as possible, be based on a range of factors: commitment to mentoring or motivation to participate, such as volunteering. One of the great strengths of most mentoring programs is the voluntary commitment of dedicated individuals (Gay, 1994); expertise and experience in teaching and mentoring (if possible); interactive skills and communication; warmth, flexibility (especially in relation to cultural factors and traditional practice); and awareness of required mentoring roles and activities. Providing for more effective *matching* in terms of age

and gender of mentors should be considered here if these are likely to affect the mentoring relationship. Selection should still be made by the school but with extensive input on the above criteria from the university. A particular factor to be considered here could be that of gender balance among mentors. Only one of the mentors appointed here was female and this imbalance should be addressed to provide a more varied range of mentor perspectives and experience.

The school should also be fully provided with information on the importance in mentoring of the provision of adequate resources, availability of mentors, providing adequate time and venues for formal and informal out-of-classroom activities (planning, reflection, etc.) and for observations of mentee and mentor teaching. The mentoring program should be seen as a joint enterprise, a partnership between school and university. As pointed out by Hall et al. (2008) “this can open the door for greater collaboration between universities and public schools as they work together to prepare better and more skilled teachers” (p. 330). Such collaboration could be facilitated by the appointment within the school, of a staff member with particular responsibility for the practicum and liaison with the university.

Partnership between school and university could be extended through increased university supervisor-mentor teacher collaboration (observations, evaluations, etc.), perhaps with more university participation in the practicum generally. Mullen (2000) and Mullen and Lick (1999) indicated that such partnership may offer and function as a form of shared purpose and commitment, joint inquiry, expanded guidance in professional development, shared power, and could generate closer ties between schools and universities. Bradbury and Koballa (2008) also indicated that university supervisors

can serve as “mediators who help facilitate discussions that promote clear articulations” of the expectations to foster mentoring relationships and communication (p. 2143) and to strengthen and expand university-school partnerships.

6.4.2 Program revision of SEDS, UMS

The first stage of the mentoring program, the training workshops for mentors and mentees, is very important and should be given priority by all participants and stakeholders, and possibly extended. Such workshops should include a wider range of activities such as demonstrations, discussions, role plays, *brainstorm* groups involving participants in the program and, possibly, other members of school and university staffs. Workshops should also be planned specifically to bring mentors and mentees together in both formal training activities and informal social situations as far as is possible.

To the extent that personal qualities become part of the selection criteria for mentors, specific emphasis on them in pre-program workshops and training will be more appropriate for mentees. All participants, however, should be made more aware of the importance of these in relation to *democratic* interaction and communication; adaptability, flexibility and openness to change; and collegial and collaborative mentoring relationships. Mini case studies (e.g. from this research) would be useful here. Carter (1988) identified the advantages of using case studies for mentor teachers and schools. This may stimulate interest, generate possibilities to bring mentor and mentee closer together, and provide opportunities for teachers to analyze and improve the quality of teaching and learning for students.

Case studies could also be invaluable for professionals who wish to use them to continue to improve their own teaching. A study by Certo (2005) related to the use of case studies indicated that it enabled prospective mentors to learn from one another and be aware about the challenges such as those of time and energy, in being a mentor.

Mentor roles must extend the emphasis on guidance and support in lesson planning, content, teaching and classroom management skills and school policies and culture, particularly in early phases of the practicum. Further emphasis for all participants must be placed on the value and practices of collaborative teaching, mentee observations of mentor teaching, and mutual planning and reflective practices, particularly in early phases. Specific training in reflective practices should be part of workshop activities. Availability for such practices, especially of mentors, of time and appropriate – including informal - venues should be made a priority by participants, especially mentors, and the school.

The importance of adequate provision of resources by mentors, and initiative in resource- acquisition and use by mentees, and the extent and nature of such resources should be emphasized in training workshops and followed up in the program implementation.

The importance of initiative-taking by mentees in relationship-building, resource-acquisition, adaptation of teaching and management strategies, and reflection should also be emphasized. Mentees' reflective journal-writing should be a major component of the training program, perhaps with some *practice* exercises included, and emphasized

throughout the practicum, even as a compulsory component of the assessment and grading process.

Peer mentoring, which tended to be a spontaneous development for the mentors here should be highlighted and encouraged, even formalized, for both groups of participants in the revised program, with specific provision made for it where possible. Initial experience in this could be provided in mentor *brainstorm* groups during training workshops.

The university should give consideration, also, to more formal recognition of mentors' contributions to the program through remuneration, a certificate or credit toward an academic qualification (e.g. SEDS, UMS might award specific credit for mentoring toward a post-graduate qualification). This might also prove a valuable way of extending mentor training and facilitate research in the area. This is supported by the finding from a review of the international research literature on mentoring by Hobson, Ashby, Malderez and Tomlinson (2008) that mentoring appeared to have more positive outcomes where any form of incentives were provided during the mentoring process.

6.5 Further research

The major recommendation here is that the revised program of selection, training and implementation is put into practice and similar research questions to the above be asked of it. As recommended by Ewing et al. (2008), "... a truly effective mentoring program, whether formal or informal, should be designed, developed and implemented in an inclusive and well-resourced manner" (p. 296). Therefore, specific research could be

conducted on mentor and mentee expectations of each other and of the mentoring process; cultural influences on mentoring relationships, particularly, perhaps, in the Malaysian context; ways of strengthening the school-university partnership; criteria for and methods of evaluating mentor and mentee performance in the practicum; infusing technology such as electronic mentoring to further enhance and diversify mentoring approaches; further understanding on issues embedded in mentoring relationships in order to provide better insights; further understanding of peer mentoring or group mentoring rather than mentoring on a one-to-one basis; a mentoring monitoring system for follow-up and for further improvement; and ways of further extending and developing the mentoring process in SESD, UMS in Malaysia, and more widely.

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Appendix 1

The letter of Approval from the University of Wollongong/Illawarra Area of Health Service Human Research Ethics Committee

University of Wollongong



FINAL APPROVAL

In reply please quote: RN:ES HE04/225

Further Enquiries: Eve Steinke (PH: 42214457)

23 August 2004

Ms.C.Ligadu
C/- Maragaret Mayo
65 Smith St
Wollongong NSW 2500

Dear Ms Ligadu

I am pleased to advise that the following Human Research Ethics application has been **approved** subject to the following condition being met. As a condition of approval, the Human Research Ethics Committee requires that researchers immediately report anything which might warrant review of ethical approval of the protocol, including: serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants, proposed changes to the protocol, unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project. You are also asked to submit a final report when the project is completed or if the project is not commenced.

- (i) The researcher must obtain permission from the relevant bodies in Malaysia: The HREC notes that the researcher has agreed in the letter of 2nd August to forward these letters of permissions to the HREC when they are available.

Ethics Number: HE 04/225
Project Title: Developing an alternative program for teacher trainee mentoring: a case study at a Malaysian university.
Name of Researchers: Christina Ligadu
Approval Date: 23 August 2004
Date for Renewal: 22 August 2004

This certificate relates to the research protocol submitted in your original application and includes all approved amendments to date.

Please note that research projects of long duration must be reviewed annually by the Committee and it will be necessary for you to apply for renewal of this application if this project is to continue beyond one year.

Yours Sincerely,

Assoc. Prof. Rod Nillsen
Chairperson
Human Research Ethics Committee
cc. Dr N Bhindi & Dr T Herrington

Research Services Office University of Wollongong NSW 2522 Australia
Telephone: +61 2 4221 3386 Facsimile: +61 2 4221 4338
research_services@uow.edu.au www.uow.edu.au/research
CRICOS Provider No: 00102E

Appendix 2

Letter of Approval from the Ministry of Education Malaysia (Research & Development Division)



KEMENTERIAN PELAJARAN MALAYSIA
BAHAGIAN PERANCANGAN DAN PENYELIDIKAN DASAR PENDIDIKAN
PARAS 2, 3 DAN 5, BLOK J
PUSAT BANDAR DAMANSARA
50604 KUALA LUMPUR
MALAYSIA

Telefon : 03-20986900
Faks : 03-20954960
Laman Web : <http://161.142.144.5>

Rujukan Kami : KP(BPPDP) 603/5 Jld.12 (71)
Tarikh : 23 Disember 2004

Pn. Christina Ligadu
Hse No. 21, Lot 382,
Taman BDC, Kolombong,
88450 Kota Kinabalu,
Sabah.

Tuan/Puan,

Kebenaran Untuk Menjalankan Kajian Di Sekolah, Maktab Perguruan, Universiti, Jabatan Pelajaran Negeri Dan Bahagian-Bahagian Di Bawah Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia

Adalah saya dengan hormatnya diarah memaklumkan bahawa permohonan tuan/puan untuk menjalankan kajian bertajuk :

" Developing An Alternative Program Of A Teacher Trainee Mentoring: A Case Study At A Malaysian University " diluluskan.

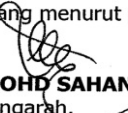
2. Kelulusan ini adalah berdasarkan kepada cadangan penyelidikan dan instrumen kajian yang tuan/puan kemukakan ke Bahagian ini. **Kebenaran bagi menggunakan sampel kajian perlu diperolehi daripada Ketua Bahagian/Pengarah Pelajaran Negeri yang berkenaan.**

3. Sila tuan/puan kemukakan ke Bahagian ini senaskah laporan akhir kajian setelah selesai kelak. Sayugia dimaklumkan, tuan/puan hendaklah **mendapat kebenaran terlebih dahulu** daripada Bahagian ini sekiranya sebahagian atau sepenuhnya dapatan kajian tersebut hendak dibentangkan di mana-mana forum atau seminar atau untuk diumumkan kepada media massa.

Sekian untuk makluman dan tindakan tuan/puan selanjutnya. Terima Kasih.

" BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA "

Saya yang menurut perintah,


(Dr. MOHD SAHANDRI GANI BIN HJ. HAMZAH)
b.p. Pengarah,
Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan,
Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia.

Appendix 3

Letter of Approval from the State Education Department, Sabah, Malaysia



**UNIT PERHUBUNGAN, PENDAFTARAN DAN PENDIDIKAN SWASTA
SEKTOR PENGURUSAN SEKOLAH
JABATAN PELAJARAN SABAH
TINGKAT 5, BLOK D, BANGUNAN KWSP,
88000 KOTA KINABALU.**

Telefon (Pej. Am) : 088-237593 Ketua Unit : 088-236558 Faks : 088-247350

Ruj: JPS/UPPPS/Kajian/165 Jld.3 (04)
Tarikh: 09 Mac 2005.

Puan Christina Ligadu,
Hse No. 21, Lot 382,
Taman BDC, Kolombong,
88450 Kota Kinabalu.

Tuan

**Permohonan Membuat Kajian Di Sekolah, Maktab Perguruan, Universiti, Jabatan Pelajaran Negeri
Dan Bahagian-Bahagian Di Bawah Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia.**

Adalah saya dengan hormatnya diarah menarik perhatian tuan mengenai perkara di atas. Sukacita dimaklumkan bahawa Jabatan Pelajaran Sabah tiada halangan bagi tuan membuat kajian bertajuk 'Develeoping An Alternative Program Of A Teacher Trainee Mentoring: A Case Study At A Malaysian University' sepertimana yang diluluskan oleh Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia ruj. KP(BPPDP)603/5 Jld. 12(71) bertarikh 23 Disember 2004.

2. Walaubagaimanapun tuan hendaklah memberikan perhatian kepada perkara-perkara berikut:
 - 2.1 Berhubung dan berbincang dengan pentadbir sekolah tentang pelaksanaan / perjalanan kajian tersebut,
 - 2.2 Penyertaan warga pendidik sebagai sample kajian adalah sukarela,
 - 2.2 Proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran atau pelaksanaan aktiviti sekolah tidak terganggu atau terjejas,
 - 2.3 Sebarang data / maklumat serta dapatan kajian hanyalah untuk memenuhi syarat-syarat kursus pengajian.

Sekian, terima kasih.

"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"

Saya yang menunt perintah,

(MADAILE BIN HAJI SASRI)
Penolong Pengarah Pelajaran Sabah,
b.p. Pengarah Pelajaran Sabah, Jabatan Pelajaran Sabah.
Kota Kinabalu.

- Salinan
1. Pengarah Pelajaran Sabah, Jabatan Pelajaran Sabah, Kota Kinabalu.
 2. Pengetua SM, All Saints, Likas, Kota Kinabalu.
 3. Pengetua SMK Kota Marudu, Kota Marudu.

MHB/MTM/PRO/2005

Appendix 4
Guidelines for Writing A Reflective Journal

Practicum, 2005. School of Education and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

Please see print copy for Appendix 4

*Note: You are free to write in your own style. The above guidelines will guide you to write your thoughts, expectations in your reflective journals weekly. 'Feel free to express your thoughts and experiences'.

Appendix 5
Results of survey, interviews and focus group discussions, 2004.

Major Finding
<p>Teacher Mentors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mentor training. Some schools no briefing. • Not sure of the mentoring roles and expectations. • Minimal interactions with student teachers. • No rapport with university (SESD, UMS). • No emphasis on building mentoring relationships with student teachers. • No discussions between school mentors and university supervisors. • No information on how to supervise student teachers, evaluate and grade lessons. • No information on how mentoring support should be provided. • No incentives. • Majority of school mentors would like SESD, UMS to have a systematic, formal mentoring program to train mentors and improve the quality of the mentoring process. <p>Mentees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties to build rapport with mentors. • School mentors lack teaching experience and skills and age. • Not credible in terms of subject content. • No mentoring experience. • No interpersonal skills for social interactions. • Minimal or none mentoring support (instructional and emotional support). Mentees have to fend for themselves. • Observations of lessons – sometimes not available or only conducted towards the last two weeks of the practicum. • Evaluation on lessons not comprehensive. • Mentees felt more of an ‘outsider’ and a ‘burden’. • Insufficient time spent with mentees and unavailability was high.

Appendix 6

Letter to the School Principal

University of Wollongong



The Principal
Sabah, Malaysia

Dear Principal,

I am a PhD student from the University of Wollongong. I would like to seek approval from you as I would like to conduct my research in your school. I will be organizing a three day mentoring training workshop and I would appreciate if you could release the teacher mentors who have chosen to participate in this research.

The topic of my research is, Developing an alternative program for teacher trainee mentoring: a case study in a Malaysian university. The purpose of this study is to develop and implement an integrated, culturally appropriate program for student teacher trainee mentoring at the School of Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah. The first part of the study involves examining existing mentoring models in order to develop an integrated, culturally appropriate teacher mentoring program for the specific cultural and educational context in Sabah, Malaysia. The second part of the study involves the implementation using this integrated, culturally appropriate program and evaluating its impact on teacher preparedness at Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

Enclosed with this letter are letters of approval from the Ministry of Education, Malaysia, Sabah State of Education and Universiti Malaysia Sabah. I am also enclosing a detailed program of the mentoring workshop. You can be assured that I would check every part of the process with you. If you require further information before considering this request, I would be happy to discuss it with you. Alternatively you might like to contact with my principal supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Narottam Bhindi on (60) 02- 4221 5477(in Australia) for more information. I would very much appreciate your approval.

Yours sincerely

Christina Peter Ligadu
PhD Student
Faculty of Education
University of Wollongong
NSW 2500, Australia

Date:

Appendix 7 Participant Information Sheet

University of Wollongong



Participant Information Sheet

1. Research Title:

Developing an alternative program for teacher trainee mentoring: a case study in a Malaysian university.

This research project is being conducted as part of a Doctor of Philosophy Degree by Christina Peter Ligadu supervised by Associate Professor Dr Narottam Bhindi and Associate Professor Dr Tony Herrington at the Faculty of Education at the University of Wollongong.

2. Aim of the research

The purpose of this study is to develop and implement an alternative mentoring program for teacher trainee which is integrated, culturally appropriate for student teacher trainee mentoring at the School of Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah. The first part of the framework involves examining existing mentoring models in order to develop a mentoring model for the specific cultural educational context of the School of Education and Social Development. The second part of the framework involves the implementation program. The third part involves examining the impact of the culturally appropriate integrated program

4. Participants: 9 student teachers and 12 school mentors

5. Period of research: From September 2004 to December 2007

6. Research Procedures: (1) Interviews for all participations

- For Mentor Teacher:- if you choose to participate, there will be 2 interviews taking about 1 hour for each interview. Interviews will tape recorded. Your name, or the name of your school will not be identified in anyway.
- For Student Teacher Trainee:- if you choose to participate, there will be 2 interviews taking about 1 hour for each interview. Interviews will tape recorded. Your name, or the name of your school will not be identified in anyway.
-

(2) Video of meetings of mentor teachers and student teacher trainees.

- Video tapes will only be used for the researcher's own data analysis and not used for any other purposes.

(3) Review teaching practicum documents.

- The researcher will review for evaluation and assessment of teaching practicum. No identifying information will be recorded.

7. Special Consideration for classroom teaching:

The investigation will be conducted without disturbing participants' studies or teachers' duties.

8. Ethical consideration about participants:

All participants are informed that their participation can be withdrawn at any phase of the research on participant.

The deidentified data collected will be used for inclusion in the PhD thesis and future journal publications.

If you would like to discuss this research further, please contact Christina Peter Ligadu on (088) 320000 ext 2519 (in Malaysia) or Associate Professor Dr. Narottam Bhindi on (60) 02- 4221 5477(in Australia). Any question concerning the Research Ethics will be answered by the University of Wollongong, Research Officer, Eve Steinke ((60) 02-4221 4457) in Australia or eves@uow.edu.au.

Christina Peter Ligadu
PhD Research Student
Faculty of Education
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TEL: (02) 4221 5259
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Date:

Appendix 8

Information Form for Research – Student Participant

Annex I

Christina Peter Ligadu
Doctor of Philosophy
Research Student
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TEL: (02) 4221 5259
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Information sheet of Research – Student Participant

I am a postgraduate student in the University of Wollongong. In my research, I would be developing and implementing an alternative program which is integrated, culturally appropriate for student teacher trainees and teacher mentors during the teaching practicum. I intend to investigate the impact of this integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program.

I wish to request your participation in this research as a student teacher trainee. You will be interviewed twice. Your interviews will be tape-recorded. In addition to the interviews, your meetings with school mentors will be video taped. In both occasions, your name or school name or any other personal information will not be collected along with the data collection. Therefore, this data collection does not affect you in any way. All efforts will be made to cause minimal disruption to your normal routine during the research.

Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw your participation from the research at any time. All the information I gather is confidential. Any information pertaining to your identity will not be accessible to any second party. The data will be used only for the purpose of research. If you have any question, please ring me on 088-320000 ext 2519

Thank you for your co-operation

Yours sincerely,
Christina Peter Ligadu

Appendix 9

Information Form for Research – Mentor Teacher

Annex III

Christina Peter Ligadu
Doctor of Philosophy
Research Student
University of Wollongong
TEL: (02) 4221 5259
E-mail: c1743@uow.edu.au

Information Form for Research – Teacher Mentor

I am a postgraduate student in the University of Wollongong. In my research, I would be developing and implementing an alternative mentoring program which is integrated, culturally appropriate for student teacher trainees and teacher mentors during the teaching practicum. I intend to investigate the impact of this culturally appropriate integrated mentoring program.

I wish to request your participation in this research as a student teacher trainee. You will be interviewed twice. Your interviews will be tape-recorded. In addition to the interviews, your meetings with school mentors will be video taped. In both occasions, your name or school name or any other personal information will not be collected along with the data collection. Therefore, this data collection does not affect you in any way. All efforts will be made to cause minimal disruption to your normal routine during the research.

Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw your participation from the research at any time. All the information I gather is confidential. Any information pertaining to your identity will not be accessible to any second party. The data will be used only for the purpose of research. If you have any question, please ring me on 088-320000 ext 2519

Thank you for your co-operation

Yours sincerely,
Christina Peter Ligadu

Appendix 10

Consent Form

Consent Form

Research Title:

Developing an alternative program for teacher trainee mentoring: a case study in a Malaysian university.

Researcher – Christina Peter Ligadu

This research project is being conducted as a part of Doctor of Philosophy degree supervised by Associate Professor Dr. Narottam Bhindi and Associate Professor Dr Tony Herrington of the Faculty of Education at the University of Wollongong.

The purpose of this study is to develop and implement an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for student teacher trainees and teacher mentors during the teaching practicum. The first part of the program involves examining existing mentoring models in order to develop an integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for the specific cultural educational context of the School of Education and Social Development. The second part of the program involves the implementation program. The third part involves evaluating the impact of the culturally appropriate integrated mentoring program.

It is expected to collect data through questionnaires, interviews and review of teaching practicum documents.

The participation in this research is voluntary. Participants are free to discontinue the participation of the research at any time. Their withdrawal of consent will not affect their relationship with the department of education or University of Wollongong.

I will request from the participations that If they would like to discuss this research further please contact Christina Ligadu on (088) 320000 ext 2519 or Dr. Narottam Bhindi on (60) 02-4221 5477 or If you have any enquiries regarding the conduct of the research please contact the Secretary of the University of Wollongong Human Research Ethics Committee on (042)21 4457.

Appendix 11
Consent Form of Student

Consent Form of Student

Research Title:

Developing an alternative program for teacher trainee mentoring: a case study in a Malaysian university.

I, -----

(Participant's name) consent to participate in the research conducted by Christina Ligadu as it has been described to me in the information sheet. I understand that the data collected will be used for study purposes only and I consent for the data to be used in that manner.

Signed

Date -----

Appendix 12
Consent Form of Teacher Mentors

Consent Form of Teacher Mentors

Research Title:

Developing an alternative program for teacher trainee mentoring: a case study in a Malaysian university.

I, -----

(Participant's name) consent to participate in the research conducted by Christina Ligadu as it has been described to me in the information sheet. I understand that the data collected will be used for study purposes only and I consent for the data to be used in that manner.

Signed

Date -----

Appendix 13

Sample Interview Questions for Teacher Mentors

1st Interview Questions for Mentor Teachers

1. Could you tell me how long you have been teaching?
2. What is your area of specialization?
3. How long have you been a teacher mentor?
4. How do you feel now as a teacher mentor to the student teacher?
5. How do you perceive your roles as a teacher mentor? Please explain which role is important?
6. What kind of support have you provided?
7. Is the mentoring training workshop helpful to help you in the mentoring process? Please explain and give examples.
8. Were you able to apply all the components suggested during the mentoring workshops?
(Possible answers: Relationships and interpersonal communication, emotional support, attitudes, interpersonal skills, mentoring roles, classroom practice support (help in lesson planning, teaching strategies, resources, availability of facilities), and reflective practices)
9. Do you think these components are important in the mentoring process? Could you explain what happens during the mentoring process?
(Possible answers: Relationships and interpersonal communication, emotional support, attitudes, interpersonal skills, mentoring roles, classroom practice support (help in lesson planning, teaching strategies, resources, availability of facilities), and reflective practices)
10. What factors do you think affect your mentoring performance at this stage?
11. What are problems you encountered during the mentoring process?
12. What are the things that need to be improved at this stage? For your mentee and yourself as a mentor.
13. Did you gained anything from this mentoring program so far?

2nd Interview Questions for Mentor Teachers

1. Reflecting back on the whole mentoring process, what do you think of:
 - mentoring roles
 - what specific role do you think is effective?
 - mentoring relationships and communications
 - classroom practice support
 - emotional/psychological support
 - reflective practices
2. Do you feel that your mentee was helpful in the mentoring process?
3. What have you done to overcome the problems you face in this mentoring process?
4. Do you feel your mentee benefit from this current mentoring program?
5. What have you gain in terms of professionally and personally?
6. What suggestions would you give to UMS to improve this mentoring program?

Appendix 14

Sample Interview Questions for Mentees

1st Interview Questions for Mentees

1. Could you tell me whether you have taught before (Yes) (No)
2. Did you teach in a primary or secondary school?
3. Could you tell me how many years have been teaching?
4. Do you feel your mentor was helpful during this practicum?
5. How do you feel as a mentee? Do you feel comfortable?
6. What kind of support was provided? Please explain and give examples.
7. Could you tell me what happens during the mentoring process?
8. Is the training (workshop) sufficient to help you in the mentoring process?
9. Why do you think of the components in this mentoring program. Do you think they are important in the mentoring process? Could you explain what happens during the mentoring process?
(Possible answers: Relationships and interpersonal communication, emotional support, attitudes, interpersonal skills, mentoring roles, classroom practice support (help in lesson planning, teaching strategies, resources, availability of facilities), reflective practices, and peer mentoring).
10. What do you think the mentoring roles that your mentor should play?
11. What are problems you encountered during the mentoring process?

2nd Interview Questions for Mentees

1. Reflecting back on the whole mentoring process, what do you think of:
 - mentoring roles
 - what specific role do you think is effective?
 - mentoring relationships and communications
 - classroom practice support
 - emotional/psychological support
 - reflective practices
 - Peer mentoring
7. Do you feel that your mentor was helpful in the mentoring process?
8. What have you done to overcome the problems you face in this mentoring process? Please explain and give examples.
9. What have you gain in terms of professionally and personally?
10. What suggestions would you give to UMS to improve this mentoring program?

Appendix 15

Sample Questions for Focus Groups For Mentors

1. How would you describe the mentoring process?
 - (a) Is it any different compared to the current practice? Please explain.
 - (b) Were you able to implement the strategies and activities of the mentoring workshop? Please explain.
 - (c) Were the student teachers cooperative in the mentoring process? Please explain.
2. Do you feel that enough of support has been given to the student teachers?
 - (a) Could you tell me more about the different support being given to the student teachers during the teaching practicum?
 - (b) Did the student teachers maximize this support? Please explain.
 - (c) What do you think is the most important support for the student teachers during the teaching practicum? Please provide some examples.
3. What about establishing relationships with the student teachers?
 - (a) Could you tell me how did you established a good relationship with the student teachers? Please explain.
 - (b) Do you feel that it involved stages or phases? Please explain.
4. What do you think are the characteristics of a good mentor teacher?
 - (a) How would these criteria help the student teacher in the mentoring process?
5. How can the School of Education and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Sabah improve teacher mentoring during the teaching practicum? Please give some suggestions.

Appendix 16
Sample Questions for Focus Groups For Mentees

1. How would you described the implementation of these components in the mentoring program:
 - a. mentoring roles
 - b. mentoring relationships and communications
 - c. professional learning support
 - d. personal/emotional/psychological support
 - e. reflective practices
 - f. peer mentoring
2. What are the problems you face to achieve the above components during the mentoring program?
3. Were you able to implement all the components effectively? Please explain.
4. Which components do you think are the most important and why?
5. How can the School of Education and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Sabah improve this current mentoring program? Please give some suggestions.