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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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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.....	Viii
List of Tables.....	Viii
List of Appendices.....	Ix
Chapter 1	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the study.....	1
1.2.1 The context of the practicum at the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah.....	4
1.2.2 Challenges faced by the School of Education and Social Development, University Malaysia Sabah.....	5
1.2.3 The context of the mentoring program.....	8
1.3 Purpose of research.....	10
1.4 Significance of the study.....	11
1.5 Methodology.....	12
1.6 Theoretical Framework.....	12
1.7 The Conceptual Framework.....	12
1.8 Limitations of the study.....	14
1.9 Definitions of Key Terms.....	14
1. 10 Outline of the chapters.....	15
Chapter 2	
Review of Literature	17
2.1 Introduction.....	17
2.2 Definition of mentoring.....	17
2.3 The context of mentoring practices in teacher education.....	19
2.4 Theoretical approaches to mentoring in teacher education.....	21
2.4.1 Mentoring models.....	21
2.4.1.1 Apprenticeship Model.....	21
2.4.1.2 Competency-Based Model.....	22
2.4.1.3 Reflective Model	23

2.4.1.4 Knowledge-Building Community Model.....	24
2.4.1.5 Anderson and Shannon’s Model	25
2.4.1.6 Furlong and Maynard’s Staged Mentoring Model	26
2.4.1.7 The Clinical Supervision Model	28
2.4.1.8 Summary of mentoring models	29
2.5 Mentoring programs.....	32
2.5.1 Approaches to Mentoring Program.....	32
2.5.2 Elements in mentoring program.....	34
2.6. Mentoring practices in teacher education.....	39
2.6.1 Mentoring support.....	39
2.6.1.1 Professional learning support.....	40
2.6.1.1.1 Observing mentors and peer teaching.....	42
2.6.1.1.2 Collaborative teaching (team teaching).....	44
2.6.1.1.3 Peer mentoring.....	45
2.6.1.2 Personal support.....	45
2.6.1.2.1 Personal qualities and attitudes.....	47
2.6.1.2.2 Selection criteria and matching.....	49
2.7 Mentoring relationship and communication.....	50
2.7.1 Developing mentoring relationship and communication.....	51
2.7.2 Interpersonal communication skills	53
2.7.3 Phases of mentoring relationships.....	54
2.8 Mentoring roles.....	56
2.9 Reflective practice.....	57
2.9.1 Reflective journal.....	59
2.10 Teaching observations and assessment by mentors	60
2.11 Culturally appropriateness.....	61
2.12 Conceptual Framework of the study.....	62
2.13 Summary.....	68
Chapter 3	70
Methodology	70
3.1 Introduction.....	70
3.2 The mentoring program context.....	70
3.3 Research questions.....	70

3.4 Research design.....	71
3.4.1 Case study	71
3.4.2 Qualitative research.....	72
3.5 Participants and site of the study.....	74
3.6 The sequence and design of the study.....	76
3.7 Methods of data collection.....	80
3.7.1 Interviews.....	80
3.7.2 Focus groups.....	83
3.7.3 Document reviews.....	84
3.8 Data analysis process.....	85
3.9 Triangulation.....	87
3.10 Member checking.....	88
3.11 Ethical considerations.....	89
3.12 Summary.....	90
Chapter 4	
Research Question 1: Results & Discussion	91
4.1 Introduction.....	91
4.2 Professional learning support.....	91
4.2.1 Tips on effective teaching and familiarity with school culture and policies.....	92
Discussion.....	100
4.2.2 Provision of teaching resources.....	103
Discussion.....	106
4.2.3 Classroom management skills.....	107
Discussion.....	109
4.2.4 Observing mentors teaching.....	109
Discussion.....	110
4.2.5 Collaborative teaching (team teaching).....	113
Discussion.....	114
4.2.6 Peer mentoring.....	115
Discussion.....	116
4.3 Mentoring relationships and communication.....	117
4.3.1 Establishing mentoring relationships and communication	117

Discussion.....	120
4.3.2 Interpersonal communication skills.....	121
Discussion.....	125
4.3.3 Availability	126
Discussion.....	128
4.4 Reflective practices.....	128
4.4.1 Self- awareness in reflective discussions.....	129
Discussion.....	135
4.4.2 Availability for reflective practices	136
Discussion.....	138
4.4.3 Interpersonal skills	138
Discussion.....	141
4.4.4 Time for reflective practices.....	141
Discussion.....	143
4.4.5 Reflective journals.....	143
Discussion.....	145
4. 5 Teaching observation and assessment	146
4.5.1 Mentor observation.....	146
4.5.2 Joint observation, assessment and discussions with university supervisor.....	149
Discussion.....	152
4.5.3 Pre and post discussion and assessment of lessons	153
Discussion.....	156
4.6. Mentoring roles.....	156
4.6.1 Guide and Advisor.....	157
4.6.2 Friend.....	159
4.6.3 Partner.....	160
4.6.4 Supervisor and Assessor	161
4.6.5 Role model.....	161
4.6.6 Emergent mentoring roles.....	162
Discussion.....	163
4.7 Chapter summary.....	164
Chapter 5	
Research Question 2: Results and Discussion.....	169

5.1 Introduction.....	169
5.2 Mentor selection criteria and matching.....	169
5.2.1 Gender.....	173
Discussion.....	174
5.2.2 Mentor credibility.....	175
Discussion.....	176
5.3 Personal qualities and attitudes of mentors and mentees.....	176
Discussion.....	183
5.4 Prior meetings during the mentoring workshops.....	185
Discussion.....	186
5.5 Mentor peer discussion group.....	187
Discussion.....	188
5.6 Incentives for mentors.....	189
Discussion.....	189
5.7 Mentoring phases.....	190
Discussion.....	194
5.8 Chapter summary.....	195
Chapter 6	
Conclusion, Implications and Recommendations.....	198
6.1 Introduction.....	198
6.2 Impact of the mentoring program.....	200
6.3 Factors influencing impact.....	200
6.3.1 Institutional Factors.....	201
6.3.2 Cultural and structural factors.....	203
6.3.3 Pedagogic, personal and interpersonal factors.....	205
6.3.4 Summary.....	207
6.4. Implications and recommendations.....	207
6.4.1 School.....	207
6.4.2 Program revision at SESD, UMS.....	209
6.5. Further research.....	210
References.....	212
Appendices.....	232

List of Figures

Figure 1.1 The Conceptual Framework.....	13
Figure 2.1 The Conceptual Framework.....	65
Figure 6.1 The Conceptual Framework.....	199

List of Tables

Table 1.1 Undergraduate Programs for Bachelor of Education, SEDS, UMS.....	5
Table 1.2 Number of mentees involved in Practicum 1999 -2005 at SEDS,UMS.....	7
Table 1.3 Areas of emphasis in the integrated, Culturally a Appropriate Mentorin Program.....	10
Table 2.1 Examples of Mentoring Programs	38
Table 2.2 A summary of the integrated, culturally appropriate mentoring program for mentors and mentees.....	66
Table 3.1 Profiles of teacher mentors.....	75
Table 3.2 Profiles of mentees.....	75
Table 3.3 Research sequence and design.....	79
Table 4.1 Shows a summary of the major findings on Research Question 1.....	167
Table 5.1 Shows a summary of the major findings on Research Question 2.....	197

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: The letter of Approval from the University of Wollongong/Illawarra Area of Health Service Human Research Ethics Committee.....	232
Appendix 2: Letter of Approval from the Ministry of Education Malaysia (Research & Development Division).....	233
Appendix 3: Letter of Approval from the State Education Department, Sabah, Malaysia.....	234
Appendix 4: Guidelines for Writing A Reflective Journal.....	234
Appendix 5: Results of the survey and feedback from previous mentors and mentees.....	236
Appendix 6: Letter to the School Principal	237
Appendix 7: Participant Information Sheet.....	238
Appendix 8: Information Form for Research – Student Participant.....	240
Appendix 9: Information Form for Research – Mentor Teacher.....	241
Appendix 10: Consent Form.....	242
Appendix 11: Consent Form of Student Teacher.....	243
Appendix 12: Consent Form of Teacher Mentor.....	244
Appendix 13: Sample Interview Questions for Teacher Mentors.....	245
Appendix 14: Sample Interview Questions for Student Teacher.....	246
Appendix 15: Sample Questions for Focus Groups for Mentors.....	247
Appendix 16: Sample Questions for Focus Groups for Mentees.....	248