

Mentoring as Component of Continuous Professional Development Program: A Case Study of Multan District

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Abstract:

Becoming a primary school teacher is a challenging assignment that required skills and knowledge that are necessary to impact student performance. One tactic used to support primary school teachers is to assign experienced members of their profession as their mentors. Mentor plays a significant role in improving teachers' professional development in their teaching profession. Intend outcomes of this paper were to investigate the effectiveness of the procedures for the mentoring which are directed and organized by the regional teacher educators and to see its influence on the performance and duties of Teachers of primary school levels (PSTs) in Punjab. The extensive research study was descriptive. This study adopted the quantitative research method and utilized two research tools questionnaire and mentoring visit form. Outcomes of the study exposed that the majority of the participants have a positive approach towards an existing mentoring program. This study also provides evidence that due to the mentoring activities professional development of participants is enhanced. Major suggestions for the study were that mentors should be well trained and change their perspective towards contestants.

Keywords: mentoring and continuous professional development program.

Introduction and review of related literature:

Mentoring is a way to give support and guidance to a person in an appropriate way. A mentor is an experienced person who provides the services of support and guidance to the inexperienced person. The person who gets help and guidelines from the mentor is known as the mentee. Mentor works to increase the educational as well as professional development of the person (Gray, 2005). Roehrig, Catherine, Turner, and Pressley (2008) discussed mentoring as the mentor who provides guidance in the personal life of the mentee and also helps a mentee to settle his/her own life in a better way. The positive understanding and warm rapport among the guiding training expert and the person who is getting that training experiences are necessary for the successful fulfillment in the process of mentoring.

In the educational field, a mentor plays his role as a facilitator and helps to assist in the production of a new successful teacher. Interaction between the helper and the help seeker which are the mentor and the mentee respectively must be face to face to move forward the

process of mentoring. A mentor must have the appropriate knowledge and command on the teaching strategies and the theories of learning while guiding the teachers to make changes in their teaching styles. He must be familiar with the innovative and advanced teaching strategies and methods of teaching. It will help the mentee to get advanced in their professional and educational scenario (Ganser,2000).

Vazir&Meher(2010) discussed the situation of mentoring in Pakistan.In Pakistan, mentoring programs are started to mentor in-service teachers. It helps them to know about the role of teaching strategies and varying methods of teaching in the beneficial development of the students. The understanding between the mentor and the mentee is an essential part of this process. It is a gradual and systematic process.Halai (2006) proposed that the communication process and the interaction between the mentor and the mentee must be effective enough to deliver knowledge and information appropriately and effectively. Respect is an essential element in the process of mentoring. Respect must be given by both mentor and the mentee. There must be a sense of respect for ideas and concepts of each other. Negative criticism must be avoided from both sides to make a mentoring process successful. Reliability and the consistency between the knowledge of both mentor and mentee must be guaranteed.

Nowadays, the beliefs and the rituals of the teacher for their teaching professions are now to be changed due to the implementation and induction of the Continuous professional development programs.In these programs, the teachers must have to actively participate in the given activities to learn the new demands of the society towards their profession and duties. To provide effective Continuous professional development to the teachers of primary school levels DSD has produced the expert training processes as the main component of their training program. The current study explored the effectiveness of the expert training processes organized by region teacher educators for teachers of primary school levels. The main emphasis of the study was to analyze the change in teachers' performance and student learning due to mentoring activity(Akhlaq& Saeed,2015).

Various studies that were conducted mainly werebased on mentoring and continuous professional development which helps to bring changes in the expert abilities of the teachers and also help them to bring advancements in their teaching styles by adopting various teaching strategies and teaching methods. The present study mainly focuses on the mentoring of the teachers to help them to develop a professional attitude among teachers.

Literature review:

According to Pask and Joy (2007), the term mentoring is originated from Greek literature. This term means the experienced guide and the well-known experienced teacher who guides inexperienced persons. The mentor plays a role to groom the personality of the mentee. A mentor provides training and develops a sense of responsibility in the mentee.

Cantu & Rogers, (2007) explains the term in a way that the mentor assists the mentee to reach at the top of his/her career professionally or academically. A mentor helps the mentee to move forward successfully.

Forms of mentoring

There are two common forms of mentoring as:

- Formal mentoring
- Informal mentoring

Formal mentoring

The formal mentoring process is a much more effective and reliable process as compared to the informal mentoring settings. Goals and objectives are appropriately and completely defined and set at the time of starting the mentoring process. There is easy access to the mentor by the mentee whenever he/she needs help from the mentor. In the formal mentoring setup the process has some time limits and the frequency is predefined by the mentor. Measurement of the results and the outcomes are possible (Wanberg, Welsh, and Hezlett, 2003).

Informal mentoring

The informal mentoring process sometimes lasts throughout life. The outcomes and results are not clearly defined and not measurable. Goals and objectives are not defined. The allocation of the mentor is difficult in this process. The selection of a mentor is based on the personal interest of the mentee. Mentee feels difficulty accessing the mentor. The time duration in the informal mentoring process is not well defined and majorly depends on the mentor. There are no specified rules and regulations and the time boundaries to complete the process in a given period or a given set of rules (Filstad, 2004).

Principles of the mentoring program

Purdon (2003) explains the principles of the mentoring program are as under:

Confidentiality

The main and the primary duty of the experts is to keep the confidentiality of the process of mentoring. The relationship of respect and trust must have remained between the mentor and mentee during the whole process. The confidentiality of the data transferred to each other is necessary for a way that helps to develop a sense of enthusiasm and trust from both sides.

Two-way process

Mentoring is a two-way process that encircles and regulates between the mentor and the mentee. Transfer of knowledge, ideas, and guidance are regulated between both sides.

Professional Values

The process of mentoring has its professional values and professional ethics which guides the mentor and the mentee to respect the self-esteem of each other to give respect to the ideas and knowledge of each other. The point of view may be different from both parties but the sense of respect must be present during the whole process.

Sense of independence

The process of mentoring develops a sense of confidence and independence among the mentor and the mentee to share their views and problems independently.

Relationship between mentor and mentee

The mentoring process develops a healthy and fruitful relationship among mentors and the mentee. Stability in this relationship is always present. Job satisfaction is developed and the mentor also re-creates and refreshes his/her career during the process of mentoring according to the needs and demands of time and situation.

Benefits of the mentoring

Hargraves&Fullan,(2000) discussed the benefits of mentoring as it provides mental relaxation and satisfaction in the life of the mentee. Mentoring helps the mentee to achieve his/her goals successfully. Interpersonal communication skills are developed and polished by mentoring. It provides help to others in a way that improves the efficiency and potentials of the mentee and also improves the performance and professional skills of the mentee. Shadio(1996)explains that the process of mentoring motivates and encourages the mentee to take risks for the betterment of education systems and their professional development. It helps them to try new strategies and methods to improve their teachings.

The current study has the following objectives as

- To estimate the procedures and the ways of mentoring as they are steered by district teacher educators.
- To evaluate the usefulness of various areas of mentoring as they are steered by district teacher educators.

Research questions of the study were given below

- Is district teacher educators conducted the mentoring process effectively?
- Do Subject mastery of the teachers at the primary school level is necessary for the minds of the mentors?
- Do after mentoring processes the behavior of the teachers in the classroom change significantly?
- Is the mentor adopted an authoritative attitude towards primary school teachers?

Methodology

The descriptive nature of the study, the data analysis technique was quantitative. During the current study, the target population was the whole primary school teachers of government schools of Punjab. Structured Questionnaire developed on 5 point scale developed by researcher and expert training call letters which were arranged by DSD, Punjab used as a data-gathering tool for the current investigation. Based on nine indicators mentoring observation form evaluate teachers' performance. These indicators were records of the teachers including their memories, journals, and diaries, giving and glancing written activities, SLO(student learning outcome) (Taleemi Calendar), teaching and learning through

activities and first-hand experiences, AV aid (support material), evaluation records of the students (oral/written), lesson plan devotion, student-teacher cooperation, and managing the classroom. These factors were scaled on 4 standards. The lower standard is (0) and the peakstandard is (3). standard (0) stands for most bad actions, standard (1) fair actions, standard (2) good actions, and standard 3 excellent actions of the teachers at primary school levels.

Data collection:

For the structured questionnaire data of 323 participants were obtained through a simple random sampling technique and the weightage was 126 male and 197 females were participants from the Multan district. The sample of 323 primary school teachers and the weightage for this sample was 123 males and 200 females participantsfor the mentoring visit form.

Data analysis:

SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software was used for the analysis of data received from the respondentsin terms of descriptive statistics.

Table 1: Analysisbased on a percentage of an observational sheet (mentoring visit form)

sr no	Indicators	Level (0) Poor	Level(1)fair	Level(2)good	Level(3)excellent
1	Teachers diary	3%	20%	47%	30%
2	evaluation and inspection of thehand-written activities,	1%	28%	46%	25%
3	SLO(student learning outcome)	5%	25%	51%	19%
4	Activity based Teaching and Learning,	4%	28%	56%	12%
5	Visual Aid (support	2%	24%	58%	16%

	material),				
6	Students Assessment (oral/written),	1%	22%	41%	36%
7	Adherence to Lesson plan,	1%	25%	40%	34%
8	Interaction with the students	1%	10%	37%	52%
9	Classroom Management	1%	11%	30%	60%

Table 1 Depict the participants' performance on the mentoring call letters utilized by regional teacher educators. The outcome of the descriptive statistics exposed that most of the indicators rated on a good level such as records of the teachers including their memories(47%), giving and glancing written activities (46%), SLO(51%), teaching and learning through activities and first-hand experiences, (56%), AV aid (58%), evaluation records of the students (41%), and lesson plan devotion (40%). While the other two indicators are highly rated as excellent i.e. Interaction with the students(52%) and Classroom Management(60%).

Table 2: Analysis based on descriptive statistics for questionnaire

Statement	S A		A		N		DA		SDA		mean
	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	
Expertness in my subject is gaining by me through the	135	42	136	42	20	6	19	6	13	4	4.28

mentoring programs.												
Mentoring enables me to teach effectively.	74	23	73	22	10	3	13	4	153	47	2.70	
Through mentoring, I use different ways to solve my classroom problems and issues.	108	33%	155	48%	25	7	18	5	17	5	4.01	
I am getting prepared for my professional development and improvement through mentoring.	104	32	162	50	28	9	14	4	15	5	4.01	
The use of different teaching tactics and materials according to the situation is learned by me through mentoring.	118	36	158	49	2	7	14	4	12	4	4.10	
A suitable and feasible environment is conducted by the mentoring programs for me.	64	20	75	23	34	11	39	12	111	34	2.82	

Reflective and critical thinking skills are encouraged and promoted in me by mentoring.	91	28	162	50	28	9	26	8	16	5	3.89
Mentors possess authoritative behavior toward me.	34	11	90	28	32	10	98	30	69	21	2.76
With the help of mentoring programs, my teaching abilities and the skills are improved.	96	30	137	43	32	10	32	10	26	8	3.76
Through mentoring programs, my confidence is increased day by day.	125	39	129	40	20	6	30	10	19	5	3.75
Beneficial feedback responses are always gained by me from my mentor on time.	48	15	75	23	39	12	84	26	77	24	2.79
Pedagogical training skills are	86	26	151	47	22	7	43	13	21	7	3.74

learned by the regional education teachers through mentoring programs												
Regional teacher educator is performing as the role model	49	15	85	26	35	11	76	24	78	24	2.85	
I make the professional growth program time beneficial for me	74	23	166	51	35	11	31s	10	17	5	3.77	
Through mentoring programs, I learned the use of AV aids at a minimum cost.	89	28	156	49	20	6	35	11	23	7	3.78	

Table 2 Depict the participants' responses to the structured questionnaire collected by the investigator. We can see that most of the participants have a positive attitude towards the mentoring process but they disagreed that A suitable and feasible environment is conducted by the mentoring programs for me and beneficial feedback responses are always gained by me from my mentor on time. The majority of the participants agreed that the mentoring process is effective for enhancing their professional development.

Conclusions:

Conclusions were drawn from the analysis of the problem and presented in the following form.

- Mentor performs his duty very well in helping the teachers at the primary school level to make their classroom problems solvable for them and he was highly efficient in his field especially in pedagogy.
- The activity of mentoring developed reflective thinking among teachers and upgraded their teaching efficiency in their classrooms.
- Confidence among teachers enhanced due to the process of mentoring.
- An attitude of the mentor showed that he was not concerned about the teachers and failed to provide them a feasible and suitable environment.
- Teachers do not possess regional teacher educators as their role models because they do not play any role in providing a supportive environment for their professional growth and development.
- Mentoring visit form outcomes also exposed that participants' performance enhanced due to the mentoring process.

Discussion:

The focus of my research is on the contemporary issue of the teacher training program conducted by the directorate of staff development. Mentoring is a significant part of a teacher training program nowadays. Vital conclusions display that mentors have command in his area of subject and teaching skills. Primary school teachers did not receive in time feedback from their mentor. The study exhibited that primary school teachers' performance enhanced due to the mentoring program and they grow professionally in a better way. The outcome of the study was supported by Vazir & Mehar (2010), that the mentoring program expands primary school teachers' pedagogical and andrological skills in their classrooms and established better interaction between mentor and mentee. Roeshrig, Catherine, Turner, and Pressley (2008) conclude that the mentoring program improves if better interaction between mentor and mentee has settled. This study showed that the attitude of the mentor was authoritative towards Primary school teachers who were not considered by previous studies. Different roles adopted by mentors are not considered in this study which was an important factor in previous studies. There is a lack of financial resource availability for mentors. Free visual aids and supporting material should be provided by directorates of staff development to primary school teachers according to their needs. Another study supported the conclusion of this study Cornell (2003) exposed that process of mentoring enhanced the communication skills of the mentee and helped them in their classroom for effective communication with their

students. Gardiner (2008) represented that the mentoring program is more beneficial for junior teachers rather than for senior teachers and they stressed online and informal mentoring, however, the current study focused on the job mentoring process.

Recommendations:

Recommendations associated with the problem of the study for future researchers were,

- Mentors should be role models for mentees and give valuable and timely feedback to them.
- A mentor attitude should adopt a positive attitude towards primary school teachers and become their friend, guider, and support system.
- For making the mentoring process more effective appropriate training concerning behavior management should be conducted for District teacher educators.
- The process of Mentoring should enrich the teaching skills of teachers with free visual aids and additional resources and supporting material should be provided to them so that they can efficiently utilize their teaching skills in the classroom.

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