Pakistan Social Sciences Review
www.pssr.org.pk

RESEARCH PAPER

Role of Mentoring in Secondary School Education: Mentees' Experiences and Challenges

Sehrish Liaqat [1] Dr. Anjum Naz [2] Dr. Abida Nasreen [3]

1. Department of Education, University of Sargodha, Sargodha, Punjab, Pakistan
2. IER, University of the Punjab, Lahore, , Punjab, Pakistan
3. Associate Professor & Chairperson, Department of Secondary Education, Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
	Mentoring is a process for the informal transmission of skills, aptitude, proficiency, shared interaction, and the fair provision in education, livelihood, or professional maturity. Mentoring plays a very vibrant role in the academic development of students. This study explored why mentoring is considered vital for 9th and 10th grade students and how mentees are associated with their mentors. In what way mentoring flourishes in the secondary schools and by what means mentors are supporting the mentees to cope with the challenges they are facing in schools. Moreover, in what manners mentoring is going to establish a new epoch of optimistic thinking as well as positive attitudes. A qualitative method was used and data were collected by conducting interviews with mentees. Analysis of data elaborated with identification and categorization of themes. The study established the fact that mentoring was helpful for mentees to cope with challenges in their social, academic, and personal life.

Introduction

Currently, at the international level, mentoring is acknowledged in numerous organizations as an approved process and as an undividable part of professionalization in many fields i.e. medical sciences, social science, education, law, and architecture. Mentoring helps as a function of assisting mentors in the field of guidance and counseling by embracing values, attitudes, practices, approaches, experiences, and standards. In this era of materialism, inflation, and electronic media, teenaged students are negatively affected. Mentoring is essential to decrease seclusion, fear, psychological ambiguities, and uncertainties in students. Mentoring plays a central role in educational institutions for the academic and social advancement of young students especially when they are going through different physical and emotional variations. All students cannot remove their academic weaknesses and deficiencies, without the mentoring or guidance of experts. The official counselors, therapists, psychologists,

teachers, family members, parents, or friends can be supportive in converting their theoretical knowledge into everyday practice.

Literature Review

The good mentoring relationship often has traditional and unofficial features. Mentees have adoration, honor, and respect for the coach, as a talented skillful person and as a man of erudition, consideration, and wisdom. Just like a supporter who always takes enough care about counseling and managing time for proper instructions and illustrations. Mentor propagates the unique idea, that organizes an efficient mentoring relationship creates a positive and excellent impact on the mentees (Butler, 2001).Mentoring is basically concerned with facilitating mentees. It is used to enhance the accomplishments of mentees especially in Education (Iqbal, 2007).

Mentoring is a very comprehensive conception. It, therefore, perceived in different conducts, for example, guiding, supervising, directing, advising, educating, training, counseling, nurturing professional development, and coaching. Mentoring can be looked upon as a specific form which is unambiguously focused on performance (Schechter 2014). The components of mentoring that are normally called the process of mentoring are encompassed three basic components in which included professional development, role modeling, and psychosocial support, (Schwiebert, 2000). Mentoring is considered as additional guidance and psychotherapy. Mentoring is required in the treatment of complex and complicated situations. Mentoring fundamentally concerned with individuals' psychosomatic adjustments. The mentor gives attention to the persistent association, specific expansion, worth focus arousing, and emotional prop up. A mentor is commonly a capable personality, a coach, an advisor, or a supporter. In the other case, the recipient recognized as a mentee, who has a smaller amount of experience in that particular field. The process of mentoring is necessary and critical during the times of individual or collective apprehension and it provides guidelines for continuous development, training, supporting, teaching, and coaching (Chestermans, 2003). Mentoring is a means of directing learners' education by empowering, supporting, and motivating (Butler, 2001).

The mentoring progression, techniques, and methods are considered very confuse and perplexing for beginners. It gives many advantages as well as compensations for the learners and trainers. The mentoring process is consisted of facilitating learning and it makes available synchronization and collaboration. The mentoring procedure augments the mentee's personal authority by providing them sustenance, in the form of information (Applebaum, 2000). Mentoring is used to improve awareness in mentees to manage conscientiousness and obligations for their education by availing the chance of ongoing in the development of mentoring, which could be helpful for mentees (McIntyre & Haggar, 1996). The Mentoring process includes joint discussion in the performance of supplementary learners to notice complicated issues from several view points (Senge, 1994).

The Mentor should be competently sound and meticulous. A mentor can be any wise and competent teacher or advisor who can guide tasks assigned to mentees with

planned responsibilities for academic work(Butler, 2001). Mentees give so much importance to those mentors who are good listeners, provide feedback, ask attentive questions, and affluent support throughout the year. The manatees also treasured those mentors who are passionate to bring them into the informal organizational networks and introduce them to people to consult for support (Alsbury and Hackmann, 2006). Mentees show aversion to the mentors who are strict, extremely critical, suspicious have an unpleasant effect on the mentoring process. This characteristic of a respectable association is also vibrated by the mentors (Sherman and Crum 2008; Skinner 2010).

Over a persistent period of time, mentoring is a concentrated process involving both formal and informal communication in which information, advice, and developmental opportunities are provided by an experienced mentor (Bozeman and Feeney 2008). The relationship of mentors and mentees considered important in identifying professional goals, interpersonal styles, and learning needs according to different communicational and occupational duties, experiences, and the commitment with mentors (Clayton, Crum, &Myran 2010).

Material and Methods

The basis of this study is the same as the philosophical foundations of constructivism. Constructivism holds that the knowledge of meaningful reality is fabricated through interactions among students; their family, friends, counselors, coaches, mentors, school life, class-fellows, teachers, domains, and social contexts. The participants of the study were interviewed. In-depth interviews were taken from the research participants. In the interview session, they shared their experiences with mentoring process and mentoring relationships. This technique was employed to identify themes that were most significant to participants' relationships with mentors. To explore the participants' perspectives about the influence of mentors on their academic life was the prime focus of the study. The study also explored the role of mentors to solve the issues and challenges faced by the teenage manatees.

The researchers conducted in-depth interviews in the natural setting and collected diverse experiences of the interviewees. Following themes emerged out of the interview data:

1. Facilitator
2. Leader
3. Emotional Frustration
4. Problem Solver
5. Relationship of trust

Data were arranged according to themes by using open coding and axial coding to recap the words taken straight from the data. Similar data were grouped and given labels. This was followed by attempts to interpret the themes.

The method of sampling was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used and the students of 9th and 10th grades from semi-government educational institutions participated in the study. The sample of the study was taken from two districts of the Sargodha division; district Khushab and district Sargodha. There were 03 boys and 06 girls voluntarily participated from District Public School & Inter College Khushab, 06 boys and 12 girls voluntarily participated from Fouji Foundation Model School & Inter collage Khushab, 02 boys and 03 girls voluntarily participated from Army Public School& collage Sargodha. Overall, the sample size was 31 of which 10 were boys and 21 were girls.

The questions were consisted of mentoring experiences of mentees and exploring their relationship with mentors. Moreover, the challenges they were facing in their mentoring experiences were also explored. The volunteer participants were requested to reply in English or in their own native language so that interviewees could explain a complex aspect of their experiences comfortably. Questions were asked from every participant but the interviewer probed for additional information as it was believed essential to develop a more detailed understanding of the participants' perceptions and experiences regarding mentoring relationships.

Results and Discussion

According to the research investigation; mentoring exists unofficially and without the endorsement of certain areas that were under examination. There was no formal procedure of mentoring in schools but there were some informal techniques of mentoring used to help the students to improve their academic career and social life although the informal mentoring system was developing communication, friendly attitude, and encouragement for mentees. Mostly the mentors were their family members. It is not the replacement of proper formal and authorized mentoring procedures. Mentees have a positive perception of informal mentors and mentoring relationships. The role of mentoring in facing challenges, describing experiences, and handling issues of secondary school students was the focus of the study. The study revealed that mentoring was helpful in dealing with multiple challenges faced by students including social, ethical, financial, psychological, and emotional matters. In the challenging situation mentoring was useful for students to cope with such problems. Every individual teenager student has its own self-induced academic and societal issues that lead him/her towards the need of an expert mentor.

It was revealed that 9.67% of students considered their father as their academic mentor, 3.22% considered others as their Academic mentor, 16.12% said brother is their academic mentor, for 12.90% of students sister is their mentor, 29.03% of students considered teacher as their academic mentor, for 9.67% students their uncle is an academic mentor, for 3.22% aunt is an academic mentor and 16.12% students considered their friends as their academic mentors. The data collected from 9th and 10th grade students was coded and analyzed qualitatively. Open and axial coding schemes were used to code the interview data. Five themes emerged out of the data i.e. facilitator, leader, emotional frustration, problem solver, relationship of trust.

Table 1
Frequency table of themes emerged from interview data

Sr. No	Themes	Participants
1	Facilitator	09
2	Leader	02
3	Emotional Frustration	08
4	Problem Solver	07
5	Relationship of trust	05
	Total	31

A mentor is a "facilitator" because mentees get help to complete tasks specially written work e.g. homework, assignments, surveys, etc. Mentor encourages mentees to dig deep and recognize their own strong points and assist to recognize their own potential to handle the assignments and academic projects.

The reflection of mentees showed that a mentor is a "leader" who guide them in learning new things and give them unique and innovative knowledge. A mentor inspires through knowledge, passion, integrity, confidence, open-mindedness, and insightfulness. A mentor let the mentees stuck with their goals and told them that the end result is always good because hard-work never goes astray so a mentor always pushes the mentees toward goals.

It is revealed that mentors are a source an "emotional frustration" and manatees were bound with them. The attachment was based on obedience, whether the mentor is right or wrong in behavior. Mentees described that mentors never appreciate any task, assignment, or responsibility. Mentors were untrustworthy so there was a feeling of hesitation to communicate with them. Therefore, mentees did not like to share their secrets because mentors have no positive vibes with them.

Participants exposed that mentor seems like a "problem solver". A mentee consults a mentor when feeling distressed with some problems. In the fact the young manatees instead of examining their situation do the first thing that comes to mind or what everyone else is doing. The mentors help them to be thoughtful in their choices and also inform them about the attached significance of those choices. As teenagers, participants were facing many obstacles in learning like time management, emotional threats, financial stress, unhealthy activities, no exposure to new opportunities, and personal grooming. The mentors enhance their critical, logical, rational thinking and decision-making skills to overcome their fears and threats.

Some participants reflected that they have a "relationship of trust" with their mentors. They used to share academics as well as personal problems with mentors. A mentoring relationship is a source of comfort and well-being. Mentors enhance the positive conduct and qualities of mentees. Mentees relationship with their mentors is based on openness, friendliness, mutual reliance, respect as well as the willingness to be exposed in some way. When there is no trust in a relationship, it becomes stressful and mentees become self-protective.

After the in-depth individual discussions with the students of 9th and 10th grade, it was revealed that there was no formal procedure of mentoring in schools but some informal techniques of mentoring were used to help the students to improve their academic career and social life. The findings of Kiani and Jumani (2010) were also supportive regarding informal mentoring procedures in Pakistan their research shows that mentoring exist but unceremoniously and unofficially. It requires to be formalized and transform it to be authorized. Similar results were reported by Butler (2001) that a mentoring relationship is often based on traditional and unofficial features. Clutterbuck, (2005); Kram, (1983); Mathews, (2003) claimed that it is a dire need to apply formal mentoring in various professions and livelihoods.

The findings of the research revealed that mentees have a trustful relationship with mentors due to their pleasant attitude, openness, and mutual understanding so they used to share academics as well as personal problems with mentors. Alsbury and Hackmann (2006) presented similar research results in which it was revealed that those mentors who are available to listen, provided different standpoints, asked thoughtful questions, and ready to provide diverse support were always remain important for mentees. The mentees also treasured those mentors who are enthusiastic to introduce them into the informal organizational networks and attach them with others to access for sustenance. Clutterbuck & Sweeney (2005) also claimed that Homo-social connections of mentors and mentees produced a comfortable and hassle-free mentoring relationship. Mentors encourage mentees to dig-deep for recognition of their own strong points as well as assist to recognize their own potential to handle the assignments, academic projects, and learning tasks. Similarly, Applebaum (2000) concluded that the mentoring process provides support and sustenance in learning as well as it makes co-ordination and co-operation accessible. The process of mentoring upsurges the mentee's individual supremacy by providing them support, which can be ethical, logistic, and in the form of knowledge.

As the focus of the study was the role of mentoring in challenges and issues which secondary school students were facing including social, ethical, financial, psychological, and emotional matters. In the following traumatic situation mentoring was helpful for students to cope with such situations. The results of Chesterman (2003) also claimed to mentor as manufacture, supplementary guidance, and psychoanalysis. Mentoring is used to handle complex and complicated conditions. It is mentoring which primarily ensures treatment with psychosomatic modification at the same time.

Fortunately, the informal mentors (mostly family members) were developing rapport with a friendly attitude and loads of encouragement for mentees. The family members usually understand well the issues most annoying for the mentees in school life as well as personal glitches. Burlew, Banks, McAdoo, & Azibo(1992) concluded similar results that it is obvious, family members have influence in the mentoring connections and this factor has been identified to some extent as a characteristic in all the cultures. Similarly, Greene (1994) found out the significance of family and social relationships in mentoring are obvious in every culture. Comas-Diaz (1992)and Padilla(1995)were also of the same opinion and they highlighted the Family and

interpersonal relationships like friendships played role of a mentor for young adults, consistent with several students' explaining a strong emphasis on family members assuming mentor roles in their life.

Young participants of the study were facing many obstacles in learning like time management, emotional extortions, financial issues, unhealthy activities, no exposure and personal grooming training. Mentors enhance their critical, logical, and rational thinking and decision making skills to remove these obstacles. Similar results were reported by Clayton, Sanzo, and Myran (2013), they described significant improvements of mentees from the mentoring process. The benefits of mentoring have been identified through research. Mentor inspires through knowledge, passion, integrity, confidence, open-mindedness, and insightfulness. Mitgang (2007) emphasized that mentors provide a chance to grow up by pin-pointing conditions and also proceedings that add to mentees' information, knowledge, awareness, experience, and skills leading to the development of an exclusive managerial temperament.

Conclusion

Guiding, advising, educating, nurturing, supporting, academic growth, and coaching are considered as a type of mentoring. The synthesis of the findings of the research revealed a fact that there was no formal mentoring procedure or program working at the secondary school level. Only informal techniques of mentoring were used to support the students in academics and social life. Mentoring relationship is a source of comfort and well-being for mentees. The reflections of mentees showed that the mentor was an inspiring, passionate, insightful, and friendly person who enhanced confidence, analytical thinking, knowledge, and a positive attitude. Mentoring relationship is based on mutual understanding, openness, respect, trust, and friendliness.

Recommendations

On the basis of findings of the study it is recommended that

1. The secondary school teachers should provide formal mentoring services to students and try to solve their problems in the schools by creating good environment of cooperative learning with formal and informal interaction.

2. Teachers should establish a friendly attitude and give good advice to students to cope with challenges in their social, academic, and personal life

References

Applebaum, L. (2000). *Mentoring: A Strategy to Recruit and Retain Top PR Professionals, Public Relations Strategies*. New York: Routledge.

Alsbury, T. L., & Hackmann,D. G. (2006). Learning from Experience: Initial Findings of a Mentoring/Induction Program for Novice Principals and Superintendents. *Journal of Planning and Changing,* 37 (3/4), 169–189.

Butler, S. (2001). *The Effects of Mentoring on the Students*. California: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Bozeman, B., &Feeney, M. K.(2008). Mentor matching: A 'Goodness of Fit' Model. *Journal of Administration and Society* 40 (5), 465–482.

Burlew, A. K. H., Banks, W. C., McAdoo, H. P., & Azibo, D. A. (Eds.), (1992). *AfricaAmerican psychology*: *Theory, research, and practice.* Newbury Park: Sage.

Chesterman, C. (2003). A Module on Mentoring in Higher Education: *regional workshop on Women in Higher Education, 17th-21st Nov.2003, organized by Fatima Jinnah Women University& British Council& Association of Commonwealth universities, Rawalpindi.*

Clayton, J., Crum, K. S., & Myran, S.(2010). Transformative Impact of the Mentor/Mentee Relationship on District Leaders and Aspiring Leaders. *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Denver, CO, April.*

Clayton, J., Sanzo, K.,&Myran, S. (2013). Understanding Mentoring in Leadership Development Perspectives of District Administrators and Aspiring Leaders. *Journal of Research onLeadership Education 8 (1): 77–96.*

Clutterbuck, D. (2005). *How Formal Should Your Mentoring Programme Be?* Burnham UK: Clutterbuck Associates.

Clutterbuck, D., & Sweeney, J. (2005). *Coaching and Mentoring.* Burnham UK:Clutterbuck Association.

Comas-Diaz, L. (1992). *Counseling Hispanics. In D. R. Atkinson, G. Morten, & D. W. Sue (Eds.), Counseling American minorities: A cross cultural perspective (4th ed.)* (pp. 241–296). Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown.

Greene, B. (1994). *African American women. In L. Comas-Diaz, & B. Greene (Eds.), Woman of color: Integrating ethnic and gender identities in psychotherapy (pp. 10–29).*New York: Guildford.

Iqbal, M. (2007). *Learn Mentoring.* Karachi: My Open University.

Kiani, A., & Jumani, N.B. (2010). Mentoring model for research in highereducation in Pakistan. *International Journal of Academic Research, 2(5), 414-430.*

Kram, K. E. (1983). Phases of the mentor relationship. *Journal of Academy of Management, 26*(4), 608- 625.

Mathews, P. (2003). Academic mentoring: Enhancing the use of scarce resources. *Journal of Educational Management & Administration, 31*(3), 313- 334.

McIntyre, D., & Haggar, H. (1996). *Introduction in Mentoring In Schools: Developing theProfession of Teaching.*London: David Fulton Publishers.

Mitgang, L. D. (2007). *Getting Principals' Mentoring Right: Lessons from the Field Perspective.* New York: The Wallace Foundation Report.

Padilla, A. M. (1995). *Hispanic psychology: Critical issues in theory and research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Skinner, T. (2010). *Exploration of Barriers and Solutions for Women in the Pathway to the High School Principal ship*. Unpublished doctoral diss., Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA.

Schwiebert, V. (2000). *Mentoring: Creating connected, empowered relationships.* Alexandria: VA: American Counseling Association.

Sherman, W. H., & K. Crum. (2008). Navigating the Waters of School Administration: Women Leaders in Conversation about Mentoring and Support. *In Women as School Executives: Celebrating Diversity, edited by. D. Beaty, W. H. Sherman, A. Munoz, and A. Pankake.Stephenville, TX: Texas Council of Women School Executive, Tarleton State University Press.*

Senge, P. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization. Australia:* Random House.

Schechter, C. (2014). Mentoring Prospective Principals: Determinants of Productive Mentor- Mentee Relationship. *International Journal of Educational Reform* 23 (1): 52– 65.