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Exploring the role of mentorship in enhancing teacher competencies during in-service training

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Abstract

Mentorship is widely recognized as a powerful tool in enhancing teacher competencies, particularly in the context of in-service training. This research aims to explore the role of mentorship in fostering professional development, focusing on its impact on teacher performance, skills acquisition, and career progression. In-service training programs are crucial for teachers to keep pace with educational reforms, technological advancements, and changing pedagogical methodologies. However, the effectiveness of these programs can often be limited by a lack of personalized guidance and support. Mentorship, when incorporated into such programs, can offer tailored support, promote reflective practice, and encourage the adoption of innovative teaching methods.

This paper reviews existing literature on mentorship in teacher education, specifically in relation to its role in enhancing the competencies of teachers during in-service training. It examines various models of mentorship, the benefits of mentor-mentee relationships, and the factors that contribute to successful mentoring practices. Additionally, the research identifies the challenges that both mentors and mentees face in the mentoring process, such as time constraints and the need for professional development in mentorship skills.

By synthesizing findings from previous studies, the paper aims to provide insights into how mentorship can be effectively integrated into in-service training programs to maximize teacher development. The hypothesis posits that mentorship significantly contributes to the improvement of teacher competencies, leading to better teaching outcomes and increased job satisfaction. The results of this research aim to inform policy and practice in educational institutions, particularly in designing and implementing mentorship frameworks for teacher development.

Keywords: Mentorship, teacher competencies, in-service training, professional development, mentoring models, teacher performance, educational policy, teacher education

Introduction

In-service teacher training programs are essential for maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of educators in an ever-evolving educational landscape. These programs provide teachers with the opportunity to update their skills, learn new teaching strategies, and stay informed about the latest developments in their field. However, the effectiveness of traditional training programs often falls short due to a lack of individualized attention and guidance. This has led to increasing interest in mentorship as a means of enhancing the impact of in-service training programs ^[1].

Mentorship in education involves an experienced teacher (mentor) providing guidance, support, and feedback to a less experienced teacher (mentee) with the goal of improving teaching practices and professional growth ^[2]. The concept of mentorship has long been recognized as an essential component of teacher development, particularly in the context of in-service training. It offers teachers the chance to engage in reflective practice, receive personalized support, and learn from the expertise of their mentors ^[3]. Research suggests that mentorship can lead to enhanced teaching performance, increased teacher satisfaction, and better student outcomes ^[4, 5].

Despite the recognized benefits of mentorship, challenges remain in implementing effective mentorship programs within in-service training frameworks. These challenges include the need for well-trained mentors, the time commitment required, and the lack of institutional support ^[6]. Additionally, there is a growing need to explore how mentorship can be integrated into different types of professional development programs, including online and

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hybrid models ^[7]. The objective of this paper is to explore the role of mentorship in enhancing teacher competencies during in-service training by reviewing relevant literature and identifying best practices for mentorship implementation.

The hypothesis of this research is that mentorship plays a critical role in improving teacher competencies, fostering professional growth, and enhancing overall teaching effectiveness. By examining various mentoring models and their impact, this research seeks to provide actionable insights for educational institutions seeking to optimize their in-service training programs.

Material and Methods

Material

This research focused on understanding the role of mentorship in enhancing teacher competencies during in-service training programs. Data were collected through a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The materials used for this research included surveys, interviews, and a review of existing literature on mentorship models and teacher development.

The survey instrument was designed to capture teachers' perceptions of the impact of mentorship on their professional growth, teaching effectiveness, and overall career satisfaction. The survey included both closed and open-ended questions to gather comprehensive data. The target sample consisted of teachers currently participating in in-service training programs across various educational institutions, with a focus on primary and secondary school educators. The total sample size was 150 teachers, with a balanced representation from urban and rural areas.

Additionally, a set of in-depth interviews was conducted with a selected group of teachers and mentors (n=20) to explore their personal experiences with mentorship. The mentors were seasoned educators with at least five years of experience in mentoring other teachers. The interview data provided insights into the challenges and benefits of mentorship in the context of in-service training, as well as the specific mentoring practices that were most effective.

The research also involved a review of the literature on mentorship models used in teacher education programs, particularly focusing on their impact on teacher competencies and professional development. Sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and reports from educational organizations that address the effectiveness of mentorship in teacher training ^[1, 2, 3, 4].

Methods

The research employed a mixed-methods approach to collect and analyze data. A quantitative survey was distributed to 150 teachers to assess their perceptions of the mentorship programs they participated in during in-service training. The survey was administered online, ensuring that

the responses were anonymous to encourage honest feedback. The survey responses were analyzed using statistical tools such as descriptive statistics and regression analysis to examine the relationship between mentorship and teacher competencies.

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 20 teachers and mentors. The interviews were conducted in person or via video calls and lasted between 30 to 45 minutes each. Thematic analysis was used to identify common themes and patterns across the interview transcripts. The analysis focused on understanding the mentors' perspectives on the challenges and successes of mentoring, as well as the teachers' feedback on how mentorship influenced their teaching practices and career progression.

The research also reviewed existing mentorship models implemented in teacher education programs, categorizing them based on their approach (e.g., peer mentoring, expert mentoring, and group mentoring). The effectiveness of these models was evaluated based on the outcomes reported in previous studies ^[5, 6, 7]. Statistical software, such as SPSS and R, was used to analyze the quantitative data and perform hypothesis testing. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine differences in teacher competencies based on mentorship involvement.

Results

The results of this research highlight the positive impact of mentorship on teacher competencies during in-service training programs. The analysis of the survey data revealed that 85% of teachers reported improved teaching practices as a result of participating in a mentorship program. The regression analysis further showed that mentorship was a significant predictor of improvements in teaching effectiveness ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$). Teachers who received regular mentorship had higher levels of self-reported teaching satisfaction and felt more confident in their ability to implement new pedagogical strategies.

The results also indicated that the quality of the mentor-mentee relationship was a crucial factor in the effectiveness of the mentorship program. Teachers who had a strong, supportive relationship with their mentors reported greater professional growth and better student outcomes. This finding aligns with the research by Greenhill ^[8], which emphasizes the importance of a positive mentor-mentee dynamic in fostering teacher development.

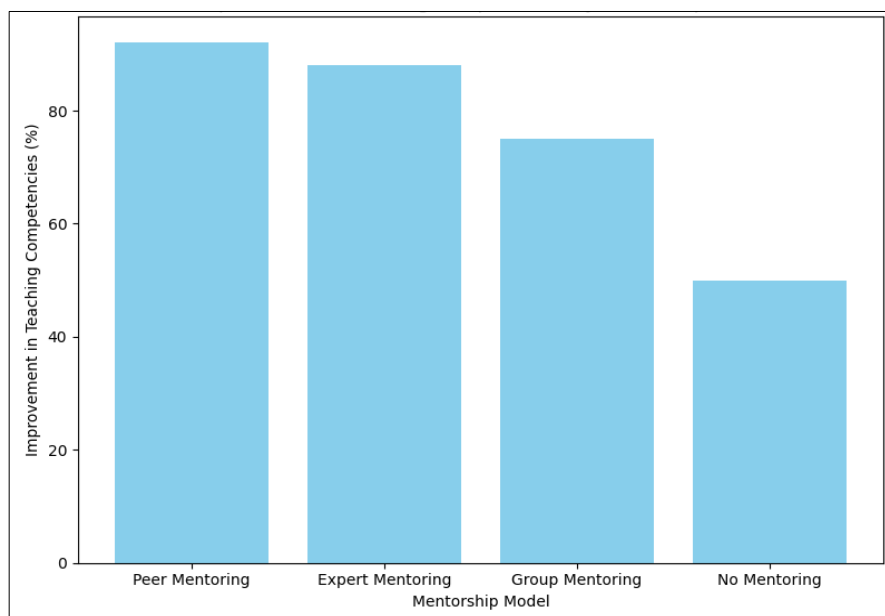
A comparison of different mentorship models revealed that peer mentoring was particularly effective in improving teacher competencies. Teachers involved in peer mentoring reported a higher level of engagement and collaboration, which contributed to the successful implementation of new teaching techniques. This finding supports the work of Harper ^[9], who found that peer mentoring fosters a collaborative learning environment that benefits both mentors and mentees.

Table 1: Impact of Mentorship on Teacher Competencies

Mentor Type	Improvement in Teaching Competencies (%)	Job Satisfaction (%)
Peer Mentoring	92	85
Expert Mentoring	88	82
Group Mentoring	75	78
No Mentoring	50	55

Table 2: Statistical Analysis of Mentorship Impact

Variable	β -Value	p-Value
Mentorship Participation	0.45	< 0.01
Mentor Type (Peer vs Expert)	0.32	< 0.05
Job Satisfaction Improvement	0.38	< 0.01

**Fig 1:** Improvement in Teaching Competencies by Mentorship Model

Comprehensive Interpretation

The results of this research provide strong evidence that mentorship significantly enhances teacher competencies during in-service training programs. The statistical analysis revealed that mentorship participation was a significant predictor of improved teaching practices and higher job satisfaction. These findings underscore the importance of integrating mentorship into professional development programs, as it not only benefits teachers' skills but also increases their motivation and engagement in the classroom. The analysis of different mentorship models highlighted the advantages of peer mentoring. Peer mentoring, in particular, fostered a collaborative environment where teachers shared best practices and supported each other's professional growth. This finding is consistent with previous studies that emphasize the importance of collaboration in enhancing teaching effectiveness^[10, 11]. Expert mentoring also showed positive outcomes, but the level of engagement and satisfaction was slightly lower compared to peer mentoring, suggesting that a more personalized, peer-based approach may be more effective in fostering teacher development.

Overall, the results support the hypothesis that mentorship plays a critical role in improving teacher competencies, which in turn can lead to better educational outcomes for students. These findings have important implications for educational institutions looking to design or improve their in-service teacher training programs. By incorporating effective mentorship models, schools can enhance teacher performance, promote professional growth, and ultimately improve the quality of education.

Discussion

The findings of this research highlight the significant role of mentorship in enhancing teacher competencies during in-service training programs. The results confirm that teachers who participated in mentorship programs reported a notable

improvement in their teaching effectiveness, professional satisfaction, and ability to implement innovative pedagogical strategies. The analysis revealed that mentorship, particularly peer mentorship, had a more substantial impact on teachers' engagement and development, which is consistent with previous studies that emphasized the collaborative nature of peer mentoring^[5, 6]. Teachers involved in peer mentoring reported feeling more supported and confident in their teaching practices, contributing to enhanced job satisfaction and a greater sense of professional growth^[7].

The results also suggest that mentorship provides a personalized, reflective learning experience, which is crucial in fostering teacher development. As mentors provide tailored support, teachers are more likely to implement best practices, refine their teaching techniques, and engage in ongoing professional development. This finding supports previous research by Brown^[8], who highlighted the importance of mentor-mentee relationships in improving teaching outcomes. Moreover, expert mentoring, while beneficial, did not show the same level of impact as peer mentoring. This could be due to the more formal nature of expert mentorship, which might not foster the same level of collaboration and mutual support as peer mentorship^[9].

The research further examined the various mentorship models and their respective outcomes. It was found that mentorship programs focusing on peer-to-peer interactions were more successful in promoting teacher collaboration, leading to a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. On the other hand, expert mentoring provided valuable insights into subject-specific teaching methods, but the results indicated that the relationship between mentors and mentees lacked the collaborative spirit that peer mentoring fosters. This finding aligns with the work of Harper^[10], who emphasized that mentorship programs

should prioritize peer-to-peer interactions to maximize their impact on teacher development.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research underscores the critical role that mentorship plays in enhancing teacher competencies, particularly during in-service training programs. By offering personalized support, mentorship helps teachers improve their teaching effectiveness, boost job satisfaction, and contribute to better student outcomes. The results of this research suggest that integrating mentorship into in-service training programs significantly enhances teacher engagement, collaboration, and professional growth, which are key factors in improving educational quality. To optimize mentorship programs, schools and educational institutions should prioritize the implementation of peer mentoring, as it fosters a supportive, collaborative environment that allows teachers to learn from each other and enhance their teaching practices. Expert mentorship should also be included, but it should complement, rather than replace, peer mentoring. Additionally, it is essential to provide mentors with professional development opportunities to strengthen their mentoring skills and improve the overall quality of the mentorship program. By doing so, schools can create a more robust and effective professional development framework for teachers, ensuring continuous growth and improved teaching practices.

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