

## **NEED OF MENTORING TO ENHANCE THE TEACHING SKILLS OF NEWLY INDUCTED TEACHERS AT PRIMARY LEVEL IN DISTRICT SWAT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study undertaken is descriptive in nature. The study attempts to clarify the concept of mentor in the system of education and explores the modus-operandi of this system with a view to promote awareness among teachers. The objectives of the study were: to define the term mentoring and introduce it in education system; to bring out the attributes of Mentors with regards to their professional responsibilities; to develop professional skills of prospective and newly recruited teachers with the help to proposed strategy; to convince teachers to adopt best practices of teaching; and to give suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of the study. The key questions of the study were: what is the current status of mentoring in district Swat?; what's the importance and benefit of mentoring in local as well as global prospective?; what implementable strategy does the study propose for introducing mentoring in teacher education at primary level?; and what recommendations does the study make for implementation of the proposed strategy? The study found out that there was a dire need to introduce mentoring mechanism in main stream of education at primary level in district Swat Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Many gaps were found which included lack of proper mentoring system, need of professional support to the several prospective teachers, poor performance of supervisors in the field and lack of opportunity to explore career. There was no formal system of mentoring in vogue in primary system of education at Government level. Similarly, in response to the second question, the importance of mentoring in education system was brought home to the stakeholders on the basis of review of literature in local and global perspective.*

**Keywords:** Teachers, Mentoring, Primary Schools

### **INTRODUCTION**

Mentor is an experienced and properly qualified person who provides support and gives helpful advice to prospective but less experienced teachers. Good quality mentoring in schools renders valuable contribution to the development of professional skills of newly recruited teachers by sharing with them the best quality learning experiences for pupils. High quality professional development can be ensured only through commitment, devotion and dedication in order to achieve educational objectives. Traditionally, the mentoring process takes place whenever an experienced teacher provides guide-lines and suggestions to newly inducted staff in the fulfillment of their responsibilities. Being an experienced faculty member, he/she commits time and energy as part of his/her professional responsibility to build the capacities of the prospective teachers. Mentoring involves a relationship between mentor and mentee who along with professional learners gather with the aim to share concerns and reservations in experiences and new knowledge in routine work of schooling.

Have an unmistakable comprehension of why you need to be a tutor, guide with a practical evaluation of your abilities and experience, have a reasonable comprehension of your desires for your mentee, obviously impart those desires, stay adaptable in changing desires or arrangements, make objectives with turning points and deliverables, adjust your input to your

mentee's learning style, be sensible about setting courses of events, exhort, don't dictate, Advise on what you know and admit the things you don't know, give good examples, recognize your mentee's weaknesses and build on his/her strengths, offer constructive feedback, evaluate progress, be your mentee's supporter when he/she achieves his/her objectives, be steady and solid, subsequent to coaching is finished, catch up on victories, give an assessment of the experience, rehash the tutoring procedure with others to make it more viable and stream line. As it is critical for both the tutor and mentee therefore it is imperative for the entire procedure. Teaching is a continuous and time consuming process. Therefore, teacher who have more time and experience in teaching profession are more skillful and expert in teaching as well as getting students' attentions during class sessions. At primary level the experienced teacher who is called Mentor are seemingly quite encouraging and are engaged in guiding fresh inducted teachers. But in most of the cases it is reported that mentoring process is not practiced properly. Research in this field is scarce in Pakistan, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The outcome of the present study is anticipated to be useful for future.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The following are the primary objectives of the study:

1. To define the term mentoring and introduce it in education system.
2. To bring out the attributes of Mentors with regard to their professional responsibilities.
3. To develop professional skills of prospective and newly recruited teachers with the help of proposed strategy.

### **QUESTIONS OF STUDY**

The following key questions are examined in the study:

1. What is the current status of mentoring in KPK?
2. What implementable strategy does the study propose for introducing mentoring in teacher education at primary level?
3. What recommendations does the study make for implementation of the proposed strategy?

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The origin of the term "Mentor" is based on ancient Greek. When Odysseus, king of Ithaca, went to join the Trojan War, he left his beloved son Telemachus to the care of his old and trusted friend Mentor, who served as teacher and observer to Telemachus. The role of Mentor was not just to raise and care for Telemachus but to prepare him for the responsibilities and tasks ahead. Hence the term 'Mentor' has since then become synonymous with the concept of trusted adviser, friend, and teacher and wise counselor. (Playko, 1991; Shea, 2002; Pask & Joy 2007).

Mentor is generally referred to experienced practitioners who may be considered to be able to offer appropriate advice and support to participants in scheme. All mentors are required to not only direct a participant's activities but rather enable him to be a participant to work in a self-directed way, by acting as a 'sounding board' for ideas, a source of information about training opportunities and a professional support throughout the process of accreditation. (AIOU, 2002).

Shea G. F (2002) stated that Mentor is an admirable person because of his professional and personal skills. A mentor helps the trainee or mentee to improve his effectiveness in a certain field, shows him how to become an expert in a profession and teaches him how to develop his skills. Mentor's assistance helps him to open new doors. A mentor has been described as a teacher, trusted guide, sponsor, counselor, advisor, coach, trainer, colleague and a role model.

According to Graham Donald (2008) good quality mentoring in schools makes an important contribution to developing the profession and teachers and ensuring the best quality learning experiences for people. New teachers benefit from this mentoring as they work towards the standards for full registration. High quality continuous professional development can only take place with commitment from schools, education authorities and institutions and teachers for developing effective mentoring. We recognize the importance of mentors' interpersonal skills in how they both challenge and support new teachers'.

Lynne P. Gaskin, Angela Lumpkin and L Keith Tennant while quoting Odell and Huling (2000) stated in a journal article titled 'Mentoring New Faculty in Higher Education' that collegial support is hallmark of a mentor's work and the development of a trusting relationship between the mentor and the mentee is essential in order for mutual respect to develop. This relationship requires time, appropriate pacing, and availability of the mentor. The mentor should offer positive feedback and encouragement and should counsel the mentee to reflect on his or her professional activities, as well as to recognize, through the modeling on the mentor, the importance of reflective practice. The primary goal of the mentoring process is to nurture the professional development of new colleagues in order to help them succeed in their teaching, research and service activities so that they, in turn, can be effective and appropriate mentors to others.

Ellen Moir and Janet Gless (2006) from The New Teacher Center at the University of Santa Cruz defined the term mentoring as a more structured, and sustainable relationship for supporting professional learners at the early stage of their career, through a career transition or when facing a particular challenge. For example, newly qualified teachers or recently appointed head teachers can benefit from a mentor. The mentor is normally a more experienced colleague with knowledge of the needs and professional context of the other person. The process is usually time defined and has a significant emphasis on developing the less experienced colleague's instructional skills and classroom practices. Mentoring is most effective when mentors are selected for their knowledge and expertise and given training in mentoring skills, adult learning, and the ability to identify and communicate best practices.

According to James Rowley (1999) a good mentor is highly committed to the task to helping beginning teachers find success and gratification in their new work. Committed mentors show up for, and stay on the job. Committed mentors understand that persistence is as important in mentoring as it is in classroom teaching. Such commitment flows naturally from a resolute belief that mentors are capable of making a significant and positive impact on the life of others. This belief is not grounded in native conceptions of what it means to be a mentor. Rather, it is anchored in the knowledge that mentoring can be challenging endeavor requiring significant investment of time and energy, just like a good teacher adjusts his teaching behavior and communication to meet the needs of individual mentees. To make such adjustments, good mentors must possess deep understanding of their own communication styles and willingness to observe the behavior of mentee objectively.

Koki (1997) says in 'The Role of Teacher Mentoring Educational Reform' that mentoring remains a viable policy option in education. However, for purposeful mentoring to occur, a prerequisite is the acceptance of its complexity in carrying out the mentoring function. This implies careful planning. Teachers are valuable resources in education, and high quality

performance in teaching is an essential ingredient of educational improvement or reform. To assist beginning teachers, it is necessary to support their performance in the classroom from the very beginning of their teaching careers. Support in the form of well-designed mentoring programs can be pivotal inducting new teachers into the profession and keeping them in education. The stakes are high and quality teaching is essential if the mission of education is to be fulfilled. Mentoring can play a critical role in continuously improving the professional knowledge and skills that teachers need to instruct and prepare students for the next century. However, to be effective, mentoring programs must be developed that take into account the complexity, process and function of programs.

According to Richard and Jeffrey (2004), the overall objective of teacher mentoring programs is to provide newcomers with a local guide, but the particulars in regard to character and content of these programs themselves widely vary. Duration and intensity are one set of variables; mentoring programs can vary from a single meeting between mentor and mentee at the beginning of a school year, to a highly structured program involving frequent meetings over a couple of years between mentors and mentees who are provided with release time from their normal teaching schedules. Programs also vary according to the numbers of new teachers they serve. Some include anyone new to a particular school, even those with previous teaching experience, while others focus solely upon experienced candidates new to teaching. In addition, programs vary according to their purpose. Some for instance are primarily developmental and perhaps weed out, those deemed ill-suited to the job. Finally, mentoring programs also can vary as to how they select, prepare, assign and compensate the mentors themselves.

## **METHODOLOGY OF STUDY**

The present study is a descriptive one to analyze the current status of the problems and to find out the gaps for remedial solution and give some recommendations for effective implementation of mentoring system in teacher education programme of KPK. The data was collected by using primary as well as secondary sources.

### **Population of the Study**

There were total 1872 primary schools in district Swat which included 875 public boys, 517 public girls and 480 registered private primary schools. The total numbers of primary school teachers were 7303 which included 3852 public boys primary school teachers, public girls teachers were 1851 and the numbers of private primary school teachers were 1600. The sample size includes 130 head teachers and 25 mentors.

### **Data Collection Tools**

1. Questionnaire for Head Teachers
2. Questionnaire for Newly Inducted Teachers
3. Questionnaire for Mentors

The study was conducted with a survey, i.e., researchers have developed a set of questionnaires for the Head Teachers, Newly Inducted Teachers and for Mentors of primary schools teachers was developed along with other required tools.

## Data Analysis

Table 1

S. No	Statements	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA	Total	Mean Score
1.	There is need of mentoring at primary level	10	13	0	02	0	25	4.24
2.	Mentoring should be included in teacher trainings	10	13	0	02	0	25	4.24
3.	Mentoring enhance teachers teaching skills	10	13	0	02	0	25	4.24
4.	Mentoring should be a compulsory part in teacher trainings	6	12	2	4	1	25	3.72
5.	Mentoring can improve teachers evaluation skills	5	14	6	0	0	25	3.96
6.	Mentoring is good for the smooth teaching practices at primary level	7	14	2	2	0	25	4.04
7.	Mentoring can improve teachers efficiency	07	15	0	02	01	25	4.00
8.	Mentoring can promote collegiality in teachers	10	12	01	02	0	25	4.20
9.	Mentoring is good for mentee	07	10	03	04	01	25	3.72
10.	Mentoring is important for teachers assessment	06	15	0	04	0	25	3.92
11.	Mentoring should be make a compulsory part in pre-service trainings	06	11	07	01	00	25	3.88
12.	Mentoring enhances newly teachers competencies in teaching	04	14	01	06	00	25	3.64
13.	Mentoring is important for making students-teachers relation important	04	15	01	03	02	25	3.64
14.	Mentoring is the need of modern teaching	10	12	01	02	00	25	4.20
15.	Mentoring can improve teachers teaching and students motivation skills	06	13	03	03	00	25	3.88

## DISCUSSION

As the question was about the need of mentoring at primary level, the responses show that the Mean Score is 4.24 which positively reflect that there is a need for mentoring. Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that mentoring should be given special treatment; it could be included in the primary education system for effective results of the newly inducted teachers.

*Mentoring plays a pivotal role in teaching learning process. It is a teaching learning process. It enhances the teaching skills of newly induced teacher. It provides conducive atmosphere for teachers.*

Table shows the responses of the respondents who are of the opinion that a Mentor helps to develop the performance of fresh primary teachers. The majority of the responses, i.e., Mean Score of 4.40, reflects that maximum numbers of the respondents were supporting the statement and supports the view that it can be crucial in improving and developing the performance of new and fresh teachers.

*Mentoring enhance the teaching skills of newly induced teacher. Mentor guides the mentee to adjust him/herself in the teaching learning environment.*

The responses show that mentoring enhances the overall effectiveness of primary schools teachers as the Mean Score is 3.92. This evidently supports the fact that majority was advocating the role of mentoring as quite effective for primary school teachers.

*Due to mentoring there will be positive discipline in primary level. It affects positively the teaching learning process, assessments procedures and students-teaching interaction.*

The statement was about that whether the present mentoring process has clear objectives or not. The responses recorded show that the mean score is 3.72 which is a supportive measuring score. The table shows that the present mentoring process having clear objectives i.e., to enhance the teaching skills of newly inducted teachers and to enhance the effectiveness, of primary schools. The majority of the responses that is shown by the mean score which is 3.96, shows that mentoring provides useful feedback to the school administrators and leaders. It is supported by the teachers as well that mentoring process is not only helpful but also encourages newly inducted teachers' teaching capabilities and practices.

*Useful feedback is helpful for Head Teacher, Mentor and Mentee because it enhance the effectiveness of school performance.*

Majority of the responses i.e., the mean score 4.01, agreed that mentoring can enhance teachers communication and teaching skills.

*The newly induce teachers become able to communicate effectively with students and parents; it also encourages the Mentee.*

The responses show that mentoring enhances the overall effectiveness of primary schools teachers as the Mean Score is 4. Therefore, the majority responses were advocating that mentoring established good relationship among primary school teachers.

*Mentoring established the co-operative atmosphere in the school. It established the mutual respect among them.*

As the question was about the role of mentoring in developing general abilities of the teachers at primary level, the responses show that the Mean score is 4.2, which positively reflects that there is a need for mentoring. Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that mentoring improves the general abilities of newly appointed teachers.

*Mentoring polishes the personality of the newly inducted teachers. It enhances the teaching skills and enables them to use instructional technologies in the learning process.*

Mentoring is helpful in problem solving for the teachers and it is show by the responses of the Table 9 where the mean score is 3.72 which is quite significant.

*Mentoring enhances the personal abilities of newly inducted teachers to build up their decision making power and train them to apply the problem solving technique for the solution of problems.*

The result of the responses shows that majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that mentoring is helpful in maintaining the classroom discipline. It enhances the teaching skills of the newly inducted teachers and polishes their personal abilities, which in turn is helpful to maintain the overall classroom discipline.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

On the basis of the findings the following conclusion could be drawn:

The data analysis supported that there is a need to introduce mentoring programme in the education system at primary level. Some of the gaps that were found: lack of mentoring system, need of professional support to the prospective and new teachers, poor performance of supervisors in the field and lack of opportunities to career exploration. Mentoring provided the services of highly qualified persons to develop knowledge and skills of newly inducted teachers. Mentoring satisfied the psycho-social, monetary and profession related needs of the educators. It was observed that tutoring helped educator to set up objectives and create destinations for lessons. The study also found that tutoring upgraded the viability of instruction as indicated by a majority of respondents tutoring. Significant commitment in prepping the identity of educators and drew out their concealed possibilities. A substantial number of respondents consented to the presumption that brilliant expert improvement of instructors could be protected through tutoring group of responsibility and commitments. A dominant number of the respondents conceded that the relationship between a guide and a mentee ought to be strengthened to overcome shortcomings and tackle issues. The study uncovered that tutoring gave chance to investigate professions and learn adapting methodologies to assemble the limit of in-administration and recently accepted proper staff should be inducted. There was agreement on the issue that coaching created self-assurance, self-regard and reestablished eagerness in the less qualified and amateur instructors. There was no way to deny that coaching inspired instructors to discover arrangement of the issues, stay away from pitfalls and oversee stress. A greater part of the respondent concurred that coaching did help to enhance and refine the mentality of the educators towards proficient obligations. The rundown of the study was that there was no formal arrangement of tutoring in vogue for essential arrangement of instruction. Likewise, because of the second question the significance of tutoring in training framework was conveyed to home to the partners on the premise of audit of writing in neighborhood and worldwide point of view. They consider additionally satisfactorily reaction to the third question that obliged implementable recommendation.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study recommended that teachers and parents may be the members of the school committee. Highly qualified and skilled teachers may be selected as mentors. Selection of the only one mentor may be confined to every primary school. School having more than two educators ought to be given inclination. Academic and expert capability of educators ought to be given importance in determination process. It is better to observe 8 to 10 schools in a region. All local governments must understand the scope and significance of coaching and can expand its numbers.

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