THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT IN MENTORING NEW EDUCATORS

By

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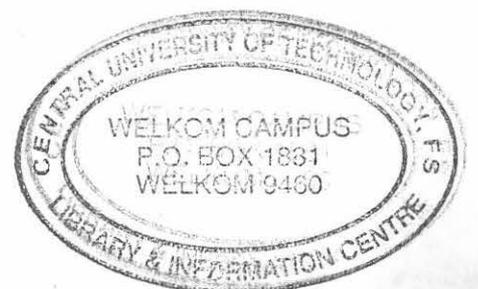
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to assess the role played by heads of department in mentoring the new educators in their respective subject departments. There were two major objectives in this study. Firstly, the study sought to examine the existence of mentoring programmes executed by heads of department to the new educators in schools. Secondly, the study sought to contribute to the notion that a mentoring programme enables these educators to become effective in their teaching.

Data were collected from educators in different schools in Welkom, Odendaalrus and Wesselsbron, in the Lejweleputswa district, Free State province.

The results have revealed that in schools, there is little or no existence of mentoring. However, the heads of department do in fact want to mentor new educators. These educators also want to be mentored in their subject departments. The problem lies with the lack of official introduction and execution of mentoring programmes at schools. It is therefore recommended from this study that new educators must not only be introduced to the school environment, but a continuous mentoring programme must be implemented by heads of department.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedication to the Almighty God, heavenly Lord and the creator of all. The Lord who has given me a life to live and the power to become committed and dedicated to my studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to extend my sincere thanks to all people who made it possible for me to complete this study, I owe special thanks to :

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that :

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is my own research work, that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that dissertation was not previously submitted by me for a degree at any other university.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION OF STUDY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Each school as an educational institution, has a management team. This team will normally comprise the principal, deputy principal(s) and the heads of department (HODs). School management consist of certain actions (management tasks) carried out by HODs. These tasks make it possible for each class or learning group to function effectively (Kruger & Van Schalkwyk, 1993:1). The HOD as a school manager has a responsibility of executing management tasks such as planning, organising, guiding, controlling and assisting. In this research, the focus will be based on the role played by the HODs regarding the mentoring of the newly appointed educators. Mentoring in this regard implies assisting by firstly conducting induction programme to the new educators. Secondly, it involves continuous guidance and supervision by the HODs to the new educators.

The HOD is a person holding a promotion post immediately below the deputy principal. There may be several HODs in a school, in which case each HOD is in charge of a group of educators in a particular learning area, for example, the Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) or Human and Social Sciences (HSS). It is important to note that the purpose of HODs' management tasks at schools is to realise effective teaching and learning (Van der Westhuizen, 1999:235). It is the responsibility of the HOD to ensure the effective functioning of his/her department (Botha & Lamprecht, 1997:2).

The question that can be posed with regard to this study, is what the role of HODs with regard to mentoring of new educators is. The rationale to pose this question,

is that the HOD is usually the person who is expected to carry out the responsibility of mentoring new educators in a particular department at school. According to Shaw (1995:73), a mentor in teaching supports a colleague who is professionally less experienced than him/herself. A mentor has to understand not only how new educators may learn to teach particular subject knowledge and skills, so as to assist them effectively, but this also requires an understanding of what the new educators do, that is, effective teaching (Tomlinson, 1995:21). HODs most frequently act as subject mentors (Brooks & Sikes, 1997:45). The subject mentor in this regard refers to HODs with the responsibility of assisting educators in their subject department. In fact, it can be argued that all teaching and non-teaching staff would benefit from an effective system of mentoring which provides work-related guidance and support, therefore, mentoring should be seen as a whole - school management concept (Smith & West-Burnham, 1993:2). Schools have their own traditions and ways of making their own decisions. New members watch and listen and the existing staff show and tell the newcomers what to do (Biott & Eason, 1994:93).

It is against this backdrop therefore that the purpose of this research project is to establish what role is played by HODs in mentoring the new educators in the school.

1.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

New educators are challenged with performing various duties related to teaching and other education related issues. When appointed, these educators are not acquainted with academic and other expectations from the school.

HODs, as part of the school management team, are the most likely source of mentoring. The problem to be investigated is vested in the actual mentoring (or lack thereof) of new educators that exist.

It is thus important to ask the following questions in this regard:

- What role does HODs play in monitoring new educators?

- What assistance do new educators need from HODs in terms of mentoring?

- What problems do HODs and new educators encounter regarding mentoring?

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings from this project would be useful for making educators and educational managers such as HODs aware of the importance of mentoring the newly appointed educators. According to Mullen and Lick (1999:13), the term "mentoring" is used to suggest a process of expanding and deepening liberatory practices and habits with and alongside others, in the academy and other settings. It would also be useful in regulating and supervising the mentoring duties of HODs in schools.

1.4 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aims of this study are to:

- investigate the mentoring role of the HODs in schools;
- investigate the need of mentoring for newly appointed educators in schools; and
- determine possible problem areas surrounding mentoring in schools.

1.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

When people and other living things are being studied in research, they are often referred to as subjects. Subjects are frequently members of samples, groups of individuals selected from a larger population (Charles, 1995:28). In this research subjects are referred to as respondents. The choice of the sample in this study is educators from Odendaalsrus, Welkom and Wesselsbron in the Lejweleputswa district, Free State province of South Africa. The population for this study includes all HODs and newly appointed educators in the Lejwelputswa district in the Free State province. In this instance, it is important to note that the effort involved in sampling does not permit a researcher to study all members of a population. The main purpose of drawing a sample from a population is to obtain information concerning the population (Verma & Mallick, 1999:160).

The sample method used in this research is purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is defined by McMillan and Schumacher (1997:397) as information-rich cases for in-depth study, when one wants to understand something about those cases without needing or desiring to generalise to all such cases. Purposeful sampling requires that information be obtained about variations among the subunits before the sample is chosen. The sample in this research is sixteen educators from primary and secondary schools, which is made up of eight new educators and eight HODs.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The educational research method used in this study is qualitative in nature. The researcher has used qualitative research in order to understand the social phenomenon from participants' perspective. In this research the perceptions of new educators and the HODs regarding mentoring at school are considered. The

researcher also studies participants' perspectives with regards to interactive strategies (ethnographic interview) and non-interactive strategies (use of documents). He become deeply involved in the situation and the phenomenon studies (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:392).

The interview is deemed necessary for this study because it can be used effectively to collect information from respondents in this research situation. According to Koul (1996:173), interviews may be classified according to the purpose for which they are used and according to their design or structure. For this study semi-structured interviews will be used to capture data from respondents on an individual basis. Semi-structured interviews are deemed necessary for this study as responses can be probed for further information if needed.

Further elaboration on the research methodology is provided in chapter 3.

1.7 DELIMITATION

This research study will be conducted in the field of Management in Education.

1.8 PROGRAM OF THE STUDY

Chapter one. Introduction of the study.

Chapter two. Mentoring as part of Human Resource Management (HRM)

Chapter three. Research methodology.

Chapter four. Data presentation, analyses and findings.

Chapter five. Conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

MENTORING AS PART OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

2.1   INTRODUCTION

It is important to consider that the newly-appointed educators need assistance in schools. These educators encounter new systems and approaches concerning teaching and other activities in that particular school. As with any institution, schools have systems and approaches of performing duties, established rituals and practices and expectations of their personnel in terms of dress, behaviour and levels of formality and informality (Tubbs, 1996:4). While s/he encounters these new ways at school, the new educator must receive assistance and advice from the HOD who is regarded as a mentor. In these instances the HOD or a mentor should be a trusted advisor (Hornby, 1995:731).

In this chapter there will be a discussion on the mentoring role played by the HODs. Firstly the concept mentoring will be defined and explained. This will include stages to be followed when running a mentoring programme. Secondly, there will be a discussion on duties and responsibilities of the HODs as mentors. Thirdly, common characteristics and roles of the mentor will be mentioned and explained. Fourthly, there will be a discussion on mentoring and the newly appointed educators. Fifthly, some models and coaching tactics of mentoring will be discussed. This will be followed by the basic functions of mentoring. Lastly, problems with regard to complete execution of mentoring programmes in schools will be mentioned.
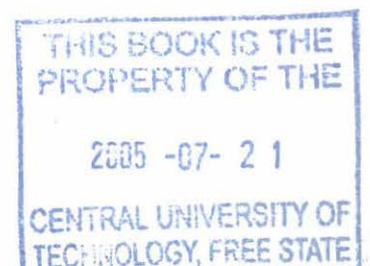
2.2   MENTORING

2.2.1   Definition

The concept of mentoring using a phenomelogical approach refers to a formalised process whereby a more knowledgeable and experienced person actuates a supportive role of overseeing and encouraging reflection and learning within a less experienced and knowledgeable person, so as to facilitate that person's career and personal development (Miller, 2002:29).   For the purpose of this study an experienced person (HOD) is seen as a mentor and a less experienced person (new educator) as a mentee.

According to Fisher (1994:5), the purpose of a mentor is to provide a bridge between the aims and objectives of the specific academic department and its newest employee. Yeomans and Sampson (1994:159) mention that there is a view that mentors can make a valuable contribution to new educators' development in the sense that a mentor assists a new educator since s/he may not be acquainted with the school routines.

Rollnick and Hasson (2003:1) further define mentoring as a process where a mentor helps a junior person to develop professionally in an intensive manner over and extended period of time by:

- advising on project;
- skills development;
- creation of opportunities; and
- personal growth.

In an educational context, mentoring is a system which is necessary to ensure

effective teaching and learning in a school and more specifically within the specific academic department of the school. In the process of mentoring there are two major issues worth mentioning, induction and supervision.

2.2.2 Induction

Induction is defined as the process by which newly qualified educators receive developmental support in order to demonstrate competence during their first year of teaching (Bridges & Kerry, 1993:93).

When appointed, the new educator may not be familiar with teaching activities and the accompanying administrative work. With regard to teaching activities, the new educator may again not be familiar with lesson preparation procedures, the best activities to use or the manner in which tests, assignments and examinations are set (Arends, 1994:39; Tickle, 1994:1). The normal administration duties of educators may at first seem very unfamiliar to new educators.

Threthowan (1991:52) further explains that a planned induction process for new educators to become more effective within the culture of the school is necessary. The induction must cover more than a description of the basic task of the people and procedures which facilitate the smooth running of the school. It must assist the new educator to develop or recall the skills learnt, when necessary.

2.2.3 Supervision

Supervision is the process of matching or checking what has been done to make sure that work is done properly (Hornby, 1995:1199). The HOD in this regard checks whether the educational work of the newly appointed educators is properly done. The purpose of supervision in an educational context is to help educators

to improve. This can be done by a mentoring programme of which the stages are mentioned in the next sub-section.

2.2.4 Stages of a mentoring programme

Miller (2002:168) mentions that when running a mentoring programme, there are principal stages which are as follows:

- preplanning : involves setting up a mentoring group, recruiting staff to manage the programme and establishing the basic parameters of the scheme. For example, HODs will be recruited to mentor new educators;

- mentor and mentee recruitment and selection : involves referral criteria for mentees, marketing the programme for mentors, thorough checking and selection procedures. For example, the principal or School Management Developers will select HODs to be mentors for new educators;

- preparation of mentees and mentors : includes briefings, induction and training;

- mentoring meetings : also involves ongoing support for mentors, monitoring of meetings and mentee achievements and mentor supervision;

- endings : includes preparation for closure, celebrity events and possible future involvement of mentors and mentees;

- evaluation and quality review : includes gathering data on the outcomes of the project against its objectives, assessing the quality of the programme and how it can be improved. The quality of the mentoring programme is the

HODs main responsibility in this regard.

2.3   MENTORING AND THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

The aim of the HODs job is to engage in class teaching, be responsible for the effective functioning of the department and organise relevant/related extra-curricular activities so as to ensure that the subject, learning area or phase and the education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003:66).

It is clear that the HOD has a responsibility in management tasks and educational programmes. According to Dunham (1992:83), it is explained that HODs are responsible as school managers and as leaders of subject departments at school. The HOD as a mentor has certain duties and responsibilities which will now be discussed.

2.4   CORE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

In terms of Education Labour Relations Council (2003:66) the following are core duties and responsibilities of the HOD on teaching, extra and co-curricular activities and personnel.

2.4.1 Teaching

- To engage in class teaching as per workload of the relevant post level and the needs of the school. According to Education Labour Relations Council (2003:263), the educator should be at school during formal school days which should not be less than 7 hours per day, except for special reasons. In the 7 hours the teaching time for educators in secondary school is

between 85 % and 95 % and for HODs 85%.

- To assess and to record the attainment of learners taught. For example, Continuous Assessment (CASS) is widely used to evaluate learners. With CASS, marks are obtained by the learner from activities throughout the year which are recorded as CASS work and combined with the examination mark. The role of the HOD in this regard is to control the activities given to the learners. S/He should oversee whether these activities are sufficient or insufficient for a year or whether average marks obtained by the learners are low or high.

2.4.2 Extra- and co-curricular activities

Extra - curricular activities are defined as activities that are outside the regular course of work or studies at a school such as music, sport and drama, whereas co-curriculum activities are included in a course of study at a particular school such as teaching Mathematics (Hornby, 1995:297, 426).

The responsibilities of the HOD regarding extra-curricular activities may among others be:

- to organise the sporting codes, e.g. soccer, rugby, tennis, netball, athletics and basketball at school;

- to convene meetings with convenors of these sporting codes; and

- to organise relevant trips for games and tournaments.
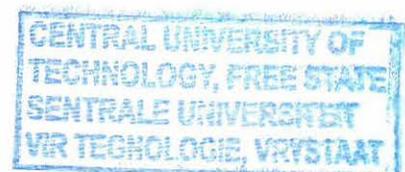
The responsibilities of the HOD regarding co-curricular activities among others are:

- to be in charge of a subject, learning area or phase. For example, the HOD is involved in teaching a certain learning area for certain grades and is therefore able to assist other educators in his/her subject department;

- to jointly develop the policy for that department. As an HOD, s/he must convene meetings where all members of that department will draft and amend the policy related to that particular department.

- to coordinate evaluation/assessment, homework, written assignments, and other activities of all the subjects/learning areas in the department. In this regard a certain number of homework, assignments and other activities are expected to be done per certain period;

- to provide and coordinate guidance:

  - on the latest ideas on approaches to the subject, method, techniques, evaluation, aids, and other elements in their field, and effectively conveying these to the staff members concerned;

  - on syllabuses, schemes of work, homework, practical work, remedial mark, and other activities; and

  - to inexperienced staff members.

- to control:

  - the work of educators and learners in the departments;

- reports submitted to the principal as required;

- mark sheets;

- tests and examination papers, as well as memoranda.

- the administrative responsibilities of staff members.

2.4.3 Personnel

According to Hornby (1995:923), personnel refers to people employed in a public office or institution such as the school. It can also be defined as staff. The HOD has some duties and responsibilities towards the members of the staff in his/her department.

- To advise the principal regarding the division of work among the staff in that department.

- To participate in agreed school/educator appraisal processes in order to regularly review their professional practice with the aim of improving teaching, learning and management.

In order to execute these duties and responsibilities effectively and to ensure that it is important that new educators know where they fit into this framework, the HOD as a mentor must have certain characteristics and roles.

2.5   CHARACTERISTICS AND ROLES OF HODs AS MENTORS

There are common characteristics and roles of a mentor. These are discussed under the following sub-headings.

2.5.1 Characteristics of a mentor

Common characteristics of a mentor include the following.

- Patience and positive expectation

  According to Miller (2002:190), patience is important especially in the early stages of building a relationship with colleagues. Hence mentors should have positive aspirations for their mentees.

- Ability

  The mentor must be capable of performing his/her mentorship roles. S/he needs ability in order to enable new educators to learn through practice (Fish, 1995:107). His/her ability is needed to contribute to the development of the new educator in the sense that the new educator imitate what is practically done by the mentor.

- Professional attitude

  In his/her attitude the mentor as a professional must show kindness, tolerance and understanding (Miller, 2002:190). Opposite to these attitudes such as intolerance and misunderstanding would be unprofessional.

- High personal standards

The mentor must be aware of his/her dignity with regards to the professional status attached to the position of an HOD. S/he must show self-discipline in terms of her/his duties and responsibilities. S/he must be an experienced and effective educator (Brooks & Sikes, 1997:50). These high personal standards must be clear to any new educator, who in turn will try to emulate such behaviour.

- Enthusiasm

The mentor must believe that commitment and dedication lead to success. S/he must be interested in helping the mentee (Miller, 2002:190). The HOD as a mentor must show a great eagerness to help the new educator. Such positive enthusiasm may serve as an example for the new educator to follow.

- Willingness to share accumulated knowledge

The mentor must create a situation where s/he discuss and share the knowledge with members of the department. In a school situation the HODs must discuss subject knowledge and the related issues with existing and new educators in that particular subject department. Miller (2002:190) explains that there should be mutual learning between the mentor and the mentee. When s/he assist the mentee, the mentor gains certain knowledge and skills. Therefore mutualistic learning occurs during the mentoring process.

2.5.2 Roles for mentors

Among the roles of a mentor the following are common.

- Facilitator

  The HOD as mentor make it easier for the new educator to teach by providing subject guidance, department policy and a year plan. (Tomlinson, 1995:57). The HOD as a mentor may also assist new educators to create an educator's portfolio and learners' portfolios.

- Counsellor

  The HOD shows the new educator ways of dealing with challenges. In a counselling role the HOD should be able to listen, ask questions, confront, support and probe (Miller, 2002:192). For instance, when the new educator need support due to stress at work, the HOD can be called upon to perform a counselling role.

- Advisor

  When a new educator struggles with, for instance, certain procedures relating to his/her department, the HOD may fulfil an advisory role (Miller, 2002:192). If the new educator is not sure as to the amount of homework to be given, the HOD should be able to advise her/him.

- Guidance

  A new educator must receive proper guidance from the HOD in order to be

effective in teaching at school (Brooks & Sikes, 1997:48). For instance, if a new educator is unable to effect proper discipline in the classroom, the HOD should be in a position to guide her/him on how to deal with it.

- Assessor

Assessment of the performance of the new educator will be the responsibility of the relevant HOD. As an immediate senior of the new eductor, the HOD would assess her/him for instance, according to the procedure of Integrated Quality Management System. In this regard certain performance standards and criteria are considered (Brooks & Sikes, 1997:48). For example, in the performance standard of professional development in the field of work, there must be evidence of attempts by a new educator to develop professionally. If such evidence is found, the HOD will assess the new educator by providing the level that satisfy the minimum expectation. The reason for assessment is to develop the educator and hence to improve the quality of public education.

- Role model

The HOD must be regarded as the role mode with regard to subject expertise in the department (Miller, 2002:192). When s/he was appointed as an HOD, s/he was appointed by virtue of being qualified and possessing the necessary skills. The new educator will look up to the HOD and as such the HOD has a huge influence on new educators.

- Opener of doors

The new educators must be informed by the HOD regarding information,

developments and changes within the subject department (Brooks & Sikes, 1997:47). The HOD should stay at the forefront of new trends and also allow new educators to attend workshops. Such actions will allow new educators to develop properly.

- Confidant

The HOD must consider that confidentiality is an important professional ethic. Personal issues within the department must not be disclosed to other individuals (Fisher, 1994:5).

- Communicator

Communication must exist within the subject department, the school and the offices of district and provincial education departments. The communication by the HOD as a mentor in this regard will be provision of information and investigation of solutions on behalf of the new educator or mentee (Miller, 2002:192).

- Link

The HOD should act as a link between new educators in a subject department and the school. As a link the HOD maintains contact with the subject educator and coordinate the school experience within the subject department (Brooks & Sikes, 1997:50). For example, by communicating between the educator and the school, the HOD maintains contact and in this regard s/he is a link. This means that the HOD is a link in the sense s/he is a person who unites or provides continuity between the new educator and the school environment, as well as with the school authorities.

- Partner

The HOD as an immediate senior, is a partner of the newly appointed educators. S/He also disseminate information about the partnership within the school and the subject department (Brooks & Sikes, 1997:49). The partnership is practical when both the new educator and the HOD have a common goal of performing well in their subject department. They would work hard together and encourage each other.

- Friend

The HOD and the newly appointed educators in the subject department should aim to have a relationship linked to friendship (Fisher, 1994:5). They are friends whenever they are engaged in their duties within the subject department. This friendship may even be extended outside the school environment.

2.5.3 Good and bad mentors

It is important to identify the characteristics of a the good and a bad mentor based on duties and responsibilities. A comparison between a good and a bad mentor is shown in table 2.1 that follows.

Table 2.1 : Comparison between a good and a bad mentor

	GOOD MENTOR		BAD MENTOR
1	Permissive authoritarian well informed. Analytical.	1	Too directive. Optionated. Dogmatic. Negative.
2	Commitment to training. Commitment to development.	2	Not aware of value of staff training. No experience or interest in staff.
3	Good communicator. Good open questioner. Good listener.	3	Poor communication. Use closed questions. Poor listeners.
4	Good knowledge of organisation.	4	Knowledge limited to department / section.
5	Can apply theory to practice.	5	Not very well educated formally. No real understanding of management theory.
6	Well organised.	6	Disorganised.
7	Clear.	7	Lacks clarity. Insensitivity to the mentoring process.
8	Good time manager : time devoted to role of mentor.	8	Poor manager : always insufficient time for mentor role.

Source : Fisher (1994:6)

A good mentor is permissive and informed as far as authority pertaining to the institution is concerned. For example, s/he understands the school policy and its application. In this regard permissiveness in compliance with the school policy which is also adherent to the national authority of democracy. S/he is committed

to training and development. For instance, the HOD as a mentor must commit him/herself to training such as Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), Whole School Evaluation (WSE), Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), Performance Measurement (PM), Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), Revised New Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and others.

Open communication and knowledge of the organisation are important for a mentor. For example, the HOD must listen and communicate openly with the new educators as they may need assistance. The HOD must have knowledge and they must apply it into practice. S/he must be well organised and practical.

A bad mentor is often negative and believe that the mentee will accept the information without questioning. S/he is not interested in developmental training. S/he is a poor communicator and has limited knowledge of the subject department. S/he is not well organised and lacks clarity regarding relevant information pertaining to the subject department and the school in relation to the provincial department of education.

The HOD is regarded as a bad mentor when s/he always have insufficient time to mentor new educators. This insufficient time will lead to little mentoring. Hence the new educators may be ineffective in teaching and other performances at school.

2.6   MENTORING AND THE NEWLY-APPOINTED EDUCATOR

2.6.1   The new educators' problems and mentoring

All new educators face major readjustments in their life-style, as well as their concept of what teaching entails once they enter the profession. Student life at university or college is very pleasant and there are many hours for relaxation.

Students enjoy more freedom than they are likely to have at any other time in their careers. Teaching, on the other hand, is very demanding (Yule, 1991:11).

However, satisfactory the period of training at tertiary institutions, the new educators encounter a new "atmosphere" when entering his or her first teaching post. Experiencing the world of work requires adjustment in itself, and a new job involves establishing oneself within a new group of people, adapting to the new routines and having one's competence tested (Dowling, 1992:188). The new educator is a stranger to the territory where the rules and customs and culture are unknown, but s/he has to assume a significant role in that society.

New educators, struggling with their first year of teaching often claim that their training at tertiary institutions has not sufficiently prepared them for the classroom (Yule, 1991:151). According to Dean (1996:8), it is the responsibility of the HODs as specialists of their discipline to provide the new educator with all the information needed regarding the inner department, its planning, the resources that are available to the new educator and the classes and learners that the new educator will be teaching. New educators should be able to turn to their HODs as mentors for any problems concerning their academic subjects within the department, as well as any other school activities.

2.6.2 Advantages for mentees

The new educators need to be assisted by the HODs. With proper mentoring the mentees can derive certain advantages from this process. These advantages are mentioned in table 2.2.

With proper mentoring, mentees have the advantage of higher or better performance and to become productive in their professional work. Hence they are

eventually paid more money as financial rewards. An IQMS is an integrated quality management system which was introduced in 2003 in South Africa by the Education Labour Relation Council (ELRC). Its objective is to ensure the quality of public education for all and to constantly improve the quality of learning and teaching (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003:3). In other words, it is a system where educators receive the incentives of financial rewards due to good performance.

Once mentees or educators are rewarded for their performance, they find more pleasure in their work and are more satisfied in their careers. Hence the knowledge of the mentee or the new educator will increase in that particular organisation. The pleasure and career satisfaction derived by the mentee will lead to commitment in an organisation. With the increased organisational knowledge and commitment, the mentee will spent less time wrong position. Ultimately there be a professional grooming in her/himself.

Table 2.2 : Advantages for mentees

• Higher performance and productivity.
• Financial rewards (eventually paid more).
• Greater pleasure in work.
• Greater career satisfaction.
• Increased technical/organisational knowledge.
• Spend less time in wrong position.
• Professional grooming.

Source : Rollnick and Hasson (2003:1)

2.6.3 Mentee responsibilities

In order for mentees to gain the above-mentioned and explained advantages, there

are certain mentee responsibilities that are mentioned in table 2.3.

Table 2.3 : Mentee reponsibilities

• Identify own professional goals.
• Formulate action plan to achieve goals.
• Document own progress.
• Maintain regular contact with mentor.

Source : Rollnick and Hasson (2003:2)

The new educator as a mentee, must identify his/her own professional goals such as becoming an effective educator in the classroom. In order to achieve such goals, the new educator must formulate an action plan collaboratively with the HOD which will be directive. It is also important for the mentee to document his/her progress. Positive and negative aspects of being a mentee can assist the new educator in planning for the future. The new educator must have regular contact with the HOD as a mentor so that s/he must receive assistance and support, as well as appreciation in her/his progress.

2.7   SOME MODELS OF MENTORING

There are different models identified in mentoring. In these models of mentoring, a mentor is defined as skilled craft person, the reflective coach and a critical friend.

2.7.1 The apprenticeship model and the mentor as a skilled craft person

According to Brooks and Sikes (1997:17), apprenticeships were historically used for formal attempts to train educators systematically. Training was carried out on-the-job and involved the trainee and the trainer. The trainee or a novice was

inducted into teaching by an experienced practitioner.

In an educational context the trainee in an apprenticeship is the new educator, the trainer is the HOD and is regarded as an experienced partitioner or the skilled craftperson. Implicit in this model was a dichotomy between educator's own academic study and the acquisition of Teaching skills.

2.7.2 The mentor as a reflective coach

In this model the mentor helps the mentee to use reflection as a tool for self development. Thus the mentees or the new educators' own professional experience becomes the basic material for learning about teaching. Hence the responsibility of the mentees among others, is to identify their own professional goals (Rollnick & Hasson, 2003:2).

The mentor or the HOD in this model is a reflective coach, mentees must take ownership of new knowledge, skills and concepts and relate them to their own experiences. With regard to reflection, Tubbs (1996:5) articulates that new educators have a dual role which are to be an educator and a student. They are required not only to teach, but also to learn.

However, Brooks and Sikes (1997:23) argue that it would be misleading to take the term reflecting coach as an implication as passiveness, contemplativeness role for the mentor. They indicated that coaching is an active process which depends on the mentor making planned and systematic interventions into the mentees' reflection in order to make them more meaningful and analytical. According to Furlong and Maynard (1995:178), the role of the mentor in this regard is to act as a coach, helping the new educator or the mentee to reflect on their practical

teaching experience.

2.7.3 The mentor as a critical friend

The mentor in this model is regarded as a critical friend in the sense that s/he encourages the mentee to look critically at the teaching procedures. However, mentees also need considerable support from the mentor as they are often still insecure about their teaching abilities. It is important that the mentor needs to be able to challenge the mentee to re-examine their teaching, while at the same time providing encouragement and support (Brooks & Sikes, 1997:26).

2.8 COACHING TACTICS ON MENTORING

Apart from models of mentoring, there are some coaching tactics on mentoring. Tomlinson (1995:174) indicates that these tactics are necessary because they are means of getting a desired result. In this regard the desired results are for the newly appointed educator to become competent and effective. In this section there are two coaching tactics which will be discussed. Firstly, the assistance for newly appointed educators to learn from more experienced educators. Secondly, the assistance for newly appointed educators to learn from their own teaching.

2.8.1 The assistance for new educator to learn from others teaching

In this coaching tactic, the emphasis is that the new educator learns to become an effective educator by learning from other educators and especially from more experienced educators. To be able to learn from the more experienced educators, the mentor in collaboration with the new educators, should draft a plan of action to observe and communicate with the more experienced educators. Through observing the actions of more experienced educators as well as communication

with them, new educators may become accustomed to proper culture of teaching and learning. The mentor provides guidance and assistance through this process (Tomlinson, 1995:175).

2.8.2 The assistance for new educators to learn from their own teaching

According to Tomlinson (1995:185) there are four phases when assisting new educators to learn from their own teaching. These phases are assisting planning, supporting the teaching activity, assisting monitoring and feedback and assisting analysis and reflection.

- Assisting planing

  It is important to note that anyone attempting action has to have some idea of what they are doing. The implication is that there must be planning and preparation. In this regard the HOD as a mentor needs to assist the new educator by discussing planning and preparation in advance of the teaching.

- Supporting the teaching activity

  There need to be an active support for ongoing teaching of the new educator such as their teaching approaches and methods in the classroom.

- Assisting monitoring and feedback

  The HODs as mentors need to monitor and record new eductors' teaching for a variety of purposes, but prime amongst these is to get the new educator to realise what they are doing.

• Assisting analysis and reflection

Monitoring and feedback is relevant for activity of analysis and reflection.
Once the new educator has been monitored feedback will be done. The
feedback will enable proper analysis to be done hence the true reflection of
the new educators performance in their teaching.

2.9 THE BASIC FUNCTIONS OF MENTORING ASSISTANCE

There are six basic functions of mentoring assistance within the learning and
teaching situation.

Table 2.4 : Basic functions in mentoring assistance

1	Assisting planning by contributing to pedagogical understanding and grasp of a repetoire of teaching strategies.
2	Direct assistance and support for teaching activity.
3	Assistance with monitoring of teaching activity and its effect.
4	Assisting analysis and reflection both during and after the action.
5	Taking account of skill acquisition phases.
6	Harnessing student motivation and commitment through interpersonal sensitivity and skill.

Source : Tomlinson (1995:39).

The first four functions are related to the four phases discussed in the previous sub-
section. The fifth function implies that there is skill acquisition phases in a
mentoring programme which must be accounted for. For example, the new
educator would acquire skills by phases. In the second phase s/he would acquire
more skills for teaching activities. According to the sixth function, mentoring
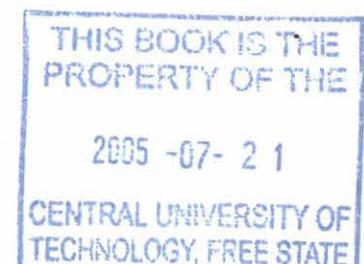
harness motivation and commitment of new educators. This implies that an outcome of mentoring assistance through interpersonal reaction within the learning and teaching situation is that the new educators becomes motivated and committed.

2.10 PROBLEMS WITH REGARD TO IMPLEMENTATION OF MENTORING PROGRAMMES IN SCHOOLS

There have been real problems experienced by formal mentors. These problems are mainly to do with time management, training and unclear communications. Mentors have heavy burdens of both management and mentoring duties (Shaw, 1995:81).

The management and teaching responsibilities, as well as mentoring duties of the HODs are mentioned and discussed. Due to these duties the HODs are unable to implement a complete mentoring programme at schools, according to steps and stages as discussed in sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3.

2.11 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, one may argue in favour of a mentoring programme to form part of a human resource management in an educational institution. It is important to realise that induction is an initial stage of a mentoring programme, supervision. The HOD has certain responsibilities in such a mentoring programme. His/her responsibilities are among others, to assist and support the new educator in teaching, extra- and co-curricular activities, as well as personal. In order for the HOD to perform his/her duties and responsibilities excellently, s/he must have certain characteristics and play certain roles (cf. 2.5). It is therefore necessary to consider that the HOD must exhibit these characteristics and roles in order to be a good mentor (cf.2.5.3).

On the other hand, for the sake of successful implementation of a mentoring programme, the mentee also has certain responsibilities (cf. 2.6.3). Some models and coaching tactics must be considered in the implementation of a mentoring programme. The basic functions in mentoring assistance emphasise the supportiveness and monitoring by the mentor (cf. 2.9).

In spite of the realisation that there is a need for mentoring in human resource management, there are problems with regard to its complete existence. These problems are related to time management and unclear communication (cf. 2.10).

This chapter investigated mentoring and its importance in human resource management of education. There was a discussion on mentoring in relation to the HODs and the new educators, some models of mentoring, coaching tactics and functions of mentoring. The existence of mentoring was also investigated. Chapter 3 is devoted to data collection procedures.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

Firstly, in this chapter, there will be an explanation on the research methodology employed. Secondly, methodological procedures used in this study is described and thirdly, the sample and the research design are described, followed by a section on data collection procedures.

3.2   DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher will use the qualitative research method in this study. According to Schumacher (1997:391), qualitative research is naturalistic inquiry, the use of non-interfering data and collection strategies to discover the natural flow of events and processes and how participants interpret them. Most qualitative research describes and analyses social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions.

Denzin and Lincoln (1998:8) further define qualitative as the word that signifies that emphasis is placed on processes and meaning, not accurately scrutinizing or measuring in terms of quantity, amount, magnitude or frequency. The socially assembled nature of reality is stressed. The researcher has used the qualitative research method because the qualitative research purpose is more concerned with the understanding of the social phenomenon from the participants perspectives as mentioned earlier (cf. 1.6). Through qualitative research individuals can explore a wide array of dimensions of the social world including texture of everyday life (Mason, 2002:1).

The research instrument employed in the qualitative method of this study is an interview. In qualitative research, there are two main types of interviews namely: the unstructured and the semi-structured interview. Researchers sometimes employ the term qualitative interview to encapsulate these two types of interview (Bryman, 2001:313). In this research study the researcher decided to employ semi-structured interviews. Structured questions are drafted in such a way as to allow for probing when necessary.

3.3   POPULATION AND SAMPLING

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which the results are intended to be generalised. This group is also referred to as the target population or universe (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:164). Sampling refers to the method used to select a given number of people (or things) from a population (Mertens, 1998:253).

In this research the target population is the group of educators of schools in the Leweleputswa district of the Free State province. The sample or the selected number of educators to be interviewed are from schools in Odendaalsrus, Welkom, Hertzogville and Wesselsbron. The sample method used in this research is purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling aims to obtain information rich data from respondents who are knowledgeable about the phenomenon under study.

The sample for this study consists of eight newly appointed educators (at the schools for less than one year) and eight HODs. Newly appointed educators are targeted as to ascertain the impact of mentoring by HODs have had on their performance.

3.4   DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

3.4.1 Interview

The data collection instrument to be used in this research is the interview. The interview can be defined as a process of communication of interaction in which the respondent or interviewee gives the needed information verbally in a face-to-face situation. Although the interview is generally associated with counselling or psychotherapy, it can be used effectively to collect useful information about individuals in many research situations (Koul, 1996:173).

According to Schlebusch (1996:114), an interview is very effective because it can provide the kind of in-depth data which cannot be obtained with a questionnaire.

It must also be noted that the researcher has involved the following steps when s/he research questions were framed (Huberman & Miles, 2002:351):

- locating, within his or her own personal history, the problematic biographical experience to be studied;

- discovering how this problem is or is becoming an issue that affects multiple lives, institutions and social groups;

- locating the institutional formations or sites where these experiences occur; and

- attempting to formulate the research question into a single statement.

Open-ended questions were used during the interview sessions to allow

respondents additional variability in their answers. In semi-structured interviews, the researcher has a list of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered (often referred to as an interview guide), but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply (Bryman, 2001:314). According to Wiersma (2000:187), this type of interview allows the researcher the freedom to probe further into responses if deemed necessary. Responses to interview questions were recorded by means of a tape recorder, after seeking consent from the interviewees.

Firstly, new educators were interviewed because one of the purposes of this study seeks to examine the existence of mentoring for newly appointed educators.

Secondly, the reason for the HODs to be interviewed is that the main purpose of this study is to assess the role played by the HODs in mentoring new educators.

3.4.1.1 Procedure

It is important to note that a careful plan and preparation for the interview is necessary in order for the interview to be effective in obtaining the required information. Permission was sought from the Free State Department of Education to conduct the research. It was granted and requests for meetings/interview sessions with respondents were made. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:266), it is best for the interviewer to dress according to existing norms or in a fashion similar to the respondents, and not in a way that may lead to the respondent to thinking that the interviewer represents a particular point of view. The researcher followed these guidelines.

During the first meeting, an initial introduction was done in order to ensure that the interviewee was as comfortable as possible. In this regard the interviewer was friendly, relaxed and pleasant. The importance of the interviewee's participation

and contribution in this study was stressed. Interviewees were assured of their anonymity. Before, during and after the interview sessions, the interviewees were entitled to ask clarity seeking questions.

3.4.1.2   Interview questions

Similar and separate questions were asked to new educators and HODs respectively. The following six questions were asked to new educators.

1   What is your opinion regarding the necessity of mentoring programmes?

2   What type of mentoring assistance did you receive as a beginner educator?

3   What would you consider as constraints or obstacles in the provision of mentoring to you as a new educator by Heads of Department?

4   Do you think you are a more or less successful educator because of mentoring?

5   Should mentoring be compulsory for all beginner educators? Explain.

6   Do you think a mentoring programme should continue for a prolonged time? Motive your answer.

The following five questions were asked to Heads of Department.

1   What is your opinion regarding the necessity of mentoring programmes?

2   What type of mentoring assistance do you provide to beginner educators?

3   What would you consider as constraints or obstacles in the provision of mentoring by you (as a HOD) to newly appointed educators?

4   Should mentoring be compulsory for all beginner educators? Explain.

5   Do you think a mentoring programme should continue for a prolonged time? Motivate your answer.

3.5   SUMMARY

In this chapter a description of the research methodology was given with regard to this study. The justification was given as to the choosing of the sample and the data capturing instrument. In the next chapter the data analysis and the interpretation of the findings are presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the research methodology used in this study was described. In chapter four, the data analyses and findings are reported. The data from the interviews is analysed and reported on. The analysis highlights the educators' and the HODs' opinions regarding the existence of mentoring assistance.

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

In this research qualitative data analysis is employed. Qualitative data analysis has sometimes been portrayed as a somewhat mysterious process in which the findings gradually "emerge" from the data through some type of mystical relationship between the researcher and the sources of data (Mertens 1998:348).

According to Miles and Huberman (1994:351), there are steps in qualitative data analysis. The sequence of the steps are as follows:

- give codes to your first set of field notes drawn from observations, interviews, or document reviews;
- note personal reflections or other comments in the margin;
- sort and sift through the material to identify similar phrases, relationships between variables, patterns, themes, distinct differences between sub-groups and common sequences;
- identify these patterns and processes, commonalities and differences and take them out to the field in the next wave of data collection;

- begin elaborating a small set of generalisations that cover the consistence deceived in the database; and

- examine those generalisation in light of a formalised body of knowledge in the form of constructs or theories.

In this study the researcher has followed the relevant steps to analyse the data captured through interviews.

4.3 INTERVIEWS RESPONSES

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight new educators and eight HODs. The responses of the two sets of interviewees are reported on separately. The researcher will first report on the responses made by the new educators. This will be followed by responses from the Heads of Department.

4.3.1 Responses from new educators

Question 1 : "What is your opinion regarding the necessity of mentoring programmes?"

All respondents said that there is a need for mentoring programmes in schools. They were of the opinion that mentoring is necessary because new educators like themselves do not have sufficient experience in teaching. Therefore in order to work effectively in schools as educators, mentoring programmes are essential. They said that these mentoring programmes will be useful to prepare them to become effective, not only in the classroom, but in all areas of the school as an institution.
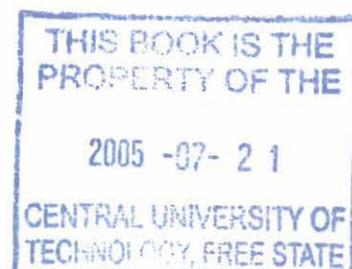
A response was:

"Yes, there is a need to have mentoring assistance during the arrival of new educators. This is because there is nothing that I know when I start to teach at school. Therefore mentoring programmes and assistance will help me to understand the procedure at school."

In addition, these educators indicated that mentoring assistance is very necessary in order to be exposed to policies and procedures regarding teaching and other school activities.

Question 2 : "What type of mentoring assistance did you receive as a beginner educator?"

Most of the respondents said that they received little mentoring assistance. They explained that they were given little orientation and were then left to cope by themselves. They were only introduced to the staff, learners and members of the school governing body (SGB), as well as the HODs.

Responses were:

"When I started to teach in this school, the principal of the school welcomed me and informed me about the subjects I have to teach. He introduced me to the staff ....."

"... I was only introduced to my subject HOD. Then the HOD provided me with the subject file and said to me that I can consult him whenever I have problems."

"... It is only induction that was done for me when I started to teach. Furthermore I was expected to perform the work at my own and without mentoring assistance.

I thought that is because the school management team (SMT) of the school think that I am capable because I have just completed my degree of education from the university ...."

Some respondents said that they did not receive mentoring assistance at all. They explained that they acquired information through staff meetings and by consulting fellow staff members.

A very small number of respondents said that they did receive sufficient mentoring assistance. When they started to teach, there was an introduction to the staff, learners, SGB as well as the HOD for the subject department. They indicated that their HODs explained to them about the subject matter, the use of files, activities for learners, subject content and departmental meetings. They also said that the HODs informed them about the school matters such as the vision and the mission of the school.

Responses were:

"Yes, I did receive mentoring assistance. It was sufficient."

".. Most of the time my HOD was there whenever I have problems in subjects that I am teaching at this school."

"... my HOD assisted me when working with the documents of the subject department ..."

Question 3 : "What would you consider as constraints or obstacles in the provision of mentoring to you as a new educator by Heads of Department?
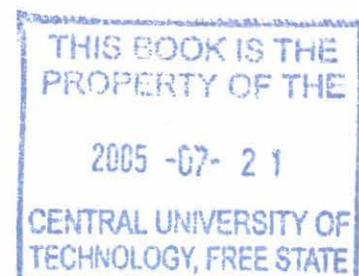
The responses to this question were varied. Some respondents commented that obstacles in provision of mentoring assistance are workload and time. With regard to workload and time, the respondents mentioned the paper work that the HODs are committed with. These respondents said that due to this commitment the HODs do not get enough time to provide mentoring assistance to them.

A response was:

"I think the reasons for the HODs not to be able to provide mentoring assistance to the new educators is that they have a lot of work to do, like paper work. They are too busy with the work of controlling work performed by educators in their subject department. That is to see to it that the educators' work is up to standard."

Some respondents said that the HODs have an attitude when they have to provide mentoring assistance. Regarding the attitude, firstly, the respondents said that the HODs do have a negative attitude towards new educators who are qualified from tertiary institutions. They feel uncomfortable because they think that they are insufficiently qualified to become HODs for these new educators. Secondly, they perceive mentoring assistance to be an overload of work and strenuous for them.

The responses were:

"... they do have mentality that new educators who have just completed his/her tertiary education is well equipped. They do not think about experience the new educator does not have in teaching."

"Yes, there is a problem of attitude from the HODs when they have to provide mentoring assistance to new educators. I think they have a negative attitude and jealously because of qualifications. Most of the HODs are not sufficient with regard

to academic qualifications. Therefore of think they tend to be jealous because most new educators have degrees from universities on the other hand most HODs qualifications are diplomas from colleges, therefore they are feel that their positions may be taken."

The obstacle is that the HODs have negative attitudes toward new educators' qualifications. For the educator who responded that s/he does not know the reason for HODs not to provide mentoring assistance, it shows that s/he has uncertainty since s/he is a newly appointed educator. The other educator responded that the HODs are not strict when they have to perform their work. They have happiness and excitement of being appointed as HODs. The educator who responded added that some HODs are not well equipped indicated the s/he observed this since his/her arrival in the teaching profession.

One respondent indicated that in school the HODs are not committed and dedicated to their jobs.

The response was:

"They are really not fully committed and dedicated to their responsibilities of being heads of subject departments ....."

The other respondents said that the HODs could not provide mentoring assistance to new educators because the HODs are not well-equipped themselves.

The responses were:

"Yes, I think the HODs are not equipped and therefore they are not able to provide mentoring assistance."

Question 4 : "Do you think you are a more or less successful educator because of mentoring?"

Most respondents said that they are successful because of mentoring assistance. These respondents indicated in their responses to question 2 that they did receive sufficient mentoring from HODs.

Most of the responses were:

"Yes, I am what I am because of mentoring assistance. I am so successful in the career of teaching because of it."

Some respondents out of those educators who received sufficient mentoring said that they are what they are because of themselves.

Responses were:

"The sufficient mentoring assistance that I received from my HOD contributed. However, I am what I am because it is through my commitment and dedication that I achieved a success in teaching.'

"I think that I am a successful educator because of mentoring assistance. I believe that I am regarded as a good educator because since my arrival at this school, I have been teaching grade 12 classes."

Only one respondent mentioned that he is not more successful because of mentoring but that he is successful because of his own abilities.

Response was:

"I am what I am because of myself. I am a successful educator because of myself but not because of mentoring received perhaps from the HODs."

This respondent is the one who indicated in his response to question 2 that he did not receive mentoring at all. He mentioned that he received only orientation when he started to teach.

Question 5 : Should mentoring be compulsory for all beginner educators? Explain.

Most of the respondents agreed that mentoring assistance should be compulsory, because it is useful when embarking on a teaching career. They think that a new educator as an unfamiliar newcomer at school, need induction and continuous supervision.

Most responses were in the line of:

"Yes, I think mentoring assistance should be compulsory for all educators who begin to teach. It will help them in their work. First time when one arrive at school one need an assistance that will help him to work effectively in his/her teaching job."

Some respondents said that the mentoring assistance to new educators must be optional and not compulsory. New educators must have a choice as to whether they would like to get mentoring assistance or not.

Most responses were in the line of:

"The respondents must decide for him/herself. I think s/he must choose whether to be mentored or not. With choice regarding mentoring assistance, the new educators will see themselves and develop in their teaching job".

Question 6 :"Do you think a mentoring programme should continue for a prolonged time? Motive your answer.

Most respondents think that mentoring assistance should take place for a short period of time. They motivated that once an educator is assisted during his/her arrival and left to become independent, s/he will develop meaningfully. These respondents said that the mentoring programme should take place for the period until the new educator is well informed with procedures and routines at school. They also indicated that alternatively, such a programme should not exceed one year.

Responses were:

"I think mentoring programme should take place only once. The is for a certian period of time."

"I do think that the HODs must provide mentoring assistance to the new educators up until the new educator is confident."

"I think the new educator must receive mentoring programme for a period of only one year. Thereafter the new educator will work for himself without mentoring. I thinking mentoring will only occur when the new educator has a problem regarding academic work pertaining to the subject department."

Some respondents said that they think mentoring programmes should continue for a prolonged period of time. They motivated that in their long period of teaching, the new educator need continuous assistance.

However, some respondents said that once a new educator is mentored in a certain period of time, that is six months or a year, then the progress must be considered. The consideration of the educators' progress will determine the continuity of the mentoring assistance.

The responses were:

"I think the progress must be considered. The educator who is competent in his teaching job must be left and continue to develop himself. However, if the educator is competent, then the mentoring assistance must continue."

4.3.2 Responses from HODs

HODs had the following responses during the interview session.

Question 1 :"What is your opinion regarding the necessity of mentoring programmes?"

All respondents who were interviewed said that mentoring programmes are necessary. They said that mentoring is very important because the new educator comes into a new situation without knowing didactic and educational procedures at school.

Responses were:

"Yes, mentoring is necessary for new educators because they come to a new situation of school. They come to teach important knowledge."

"It is necessary because the new educator is new in the field. Then the mentoring programmes will expose him/her into a teaching system and give him/her guidance."

"Mentoring is necessary so that when the new educator settle in, s/he becomes conversant with procedures in education system and the school."

Question 2 : "What type of mentoring assistance do yo provide to beginner educators?"

Most of these respondents said that they provide little mentoring. That is only the introduction to the staff members and a little orientation about the school.

Responses were:

"It is just an introduction then I left him/her in order that s/he must do the work at his/her own."

"I provide little mentoring assistance to new educators. It is only induction, knowing the colleagues and policies."

It was also mentioned by these respondents that in some instances, new educators are sometimes given some type of mentoring by ordinary colleagues and principals.

The responses were:

"There are new educators who were provided with little mentoring assistance but it was not the HODs who assisted."

A small number of respondents commented that they are providing new educaors with sufficient mentoring assistance.

Responses were:

"In my school there has been sufficient mentoring programmes by the HODs. As an HOD, I make it a point that I provide sufficient mentoring assistance to the new educators."

Question 3 : "What would you consider as constraints or obstacles in the provision of mentoring by you as an HOD to newly appointed educators?

The respondents responded differently to this question. Some said that the obstacle for not providing mentoring to new educators is that the HODs think that new educators are well equipped for job performance. They do think that due to the educational changes that takes place every time, newly qualified educators from tertiary institution are up to date with these changes.

Responses were:

"I think the obstacle for us to provide mentoring assistance is that we believe that a newly appointed educators are well equipped in academic matters."

Lack of time is one of the obstacles which was mentioned by some respondents.

They said that they do not have enough time to provide mentoring to new educators. They reasoned that they spent much time on administrative work since the introduction of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE).

Responses were:

"Time factor and lack of time is a problem. We (HODs) do not have sufficient time that will enable us to provide mentoring programmes."

Some respondents said that they are too committed to the work that they can not provide mentoring assistance. Too much administrative work due to OBE commits them during the course of the year.

The responses were:

"The workload is an obstacle, I think we have a lot of work to do. We are too busy during the course of the year. I think it is only at the beginning of the year that we can provide a little assistance."

However, some educators said that lack of management experience of the HODs is an obstacle towards provision of mentoring assistance.

Question 4 : "Should mentoring be compulsory for all new educators? Explain."

All the respondents said that they think mentoring programmes should be compulsory for all new educators in the school. Some of these respondents showed concern by facial and verbal expressions. With probing the researcher came to the conclusion that respondents think that compulsory mentoring will occupy a lot of their time. They gave different explanations to this question. They

basically explained the usefulness of mentoring to new educators. They indicated that all newly appointed educators need assistance and support in order that they must be effective in their teaching.

Most explanations were:

"Yes, I think so because it is needed for new educators. S/he lacks experience of this new institution."

"Yes, because the new educator can commit mistakes simply because they are new educators and are not initially informed. I think mentoring will give them relevant information."

"I think it must be compulsory because it will help the new educators to gain the knowledge of facilities at school. In other words, mentoring programme will expose the new educators to facilities available at schools. They will also learn to use facilities properly. It will take up a lot of time of the HOD."

"Mentoring is useful, I think because it familiarised the new educator with the work that s/he must perform in the new institution. The new educator as s/he comes from other institutions such as tertiary institutions where s/he was learning or other school where s/he was teaching is not familiar. S/he comes to a new institution where encounter new situation and system. Therefore I think the mentoring program will be useful by familiarising the new educator in a new situation and system."

Question 5 : "Do you think a mentoring programme should continue for a prolonged time?

Most of the respondents said without hesitation that a mentoring programme should continue for a prolonged period of time. They motivated differently during their responses. They basically motivated by indicating benefits that the new educators will receive from a mentoring programme. They indicated that with mentoring programme new educators will acquaint him/herself with necessary changes, gain necessary experience and have necessary development in teaching.

Responses were:

"Yes, I think it should continue for a long period of time. The reason for this I think is because every time new things are introduced in education system. This becomes a problem to the new educator and ordinary educators. Therefore I think with continuous mentoring programmes, the HODs will help educators in their subject department with any development or changes that takes place."

"I think it should continue in order that the new educator must gain experience. When s/he arrives at school to start to teach s/he lacks experience. However, with mentoring programme, s/he gains experience. It will help him/her to become quality educator."

"Yes, I think it is needed for educator's development and it is very necessary."

Some respondents who also agree that mentoring programmes should continue for a prolonged period of time, set certain conditions. They said that mentoring can continue provided that the subordinate is comfortable. In this regard the subordinate will be comfortable if the decision about the continuing and prolonged
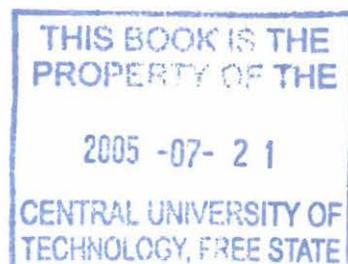
mentoring is took with his/her consultation.

However, some of the respondents said that mentoring programme should take place only for the first year of the arrival of the new educator at school. They indicated that once the new educator has been mentored s/he will learn by practices. If the new educators encounter problems, the HOD will assist.

Responses were:

"Mentoring programme must be for only first year. Thereafter the HODs will provide assistance whenever there are problems in the subject department."

4.4 CONCLUSION

The findings from the interviews confirms that most of the new educators encounter problems when starting to teach. This problem is due to little or no mentoring assistance provided to them by the school, and more specifically by the relevant HODs. In this instance the HODs and the SMTs are still using only induction and little orientation for the new educators.

From the interviews it is clear that the new educators should be exposed to mentoring assistance at schools. The HODs should provide mentoring assistance to the new educators in order to ensure effective teaching and learning at school.

Chapter five gives recommendations and how findings of mentoring assistance can be enhanced so the new educators can teach effectively and become a good educator at school.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the findings and recommendations of the study are portrayed. This chapter also indicates recommendations regarding the mentoring assistance by the HODs to the newly appointed educators. The conclusions devote the discussion around the literature study done in chapter two. Chapters three and four outline the research design, collection of data, reports and analysis of data. This ethnographic research study is qualitative in nature (cf 3.2). Data collection was done by means of interviews (cf. 3.4.1).

5.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings are discussed in two-fold. Findings on the literature study will be discussed first and the findings on the interviews with new educators and HODs will then follow.

5.2.1 Findings from the literature study

- As with any institution, schools have their own individual ways of doing things their practices and expectations. Each school has its own code of dressing for educators and learners, behaviour and levels of formality and informality (cf.2.1).

- Mentoring means assisting the new educator to get acquainted with the ways of doing things at school where s/he is newly appointed (cf.2.2).

- As part of management at schools, the HOD has a mentoring role. S/he must provide mentoring assistance to the newly appointed educators. This is because the main responsibility of the HODs is to ensure effective teaching and learning in that particular subject department (cf.2.3).

- Quality in education is enhanced when HODs play a meaningful role regarding the mentoring of new educators (cf.2.3).

- The mentor as a reflective coach is a model of mentoring where the new educator take ownership of new knowledge, skills and concepts. S/he take these by relating it to his/her own experiences (cf.2.5.1).

- In Anderson and Shannons' model, mentoring has a relationship, functions and activities. The relationship is between the mentor (HOD) and the mentee (new educator). Functions are to inform, to protect, to support and encourage. Activities are lessons and feedback (cf.2.5.3).

- The new educator can be more effective when learning from other educators, such as the HOD (cf.2.6.1), as well as from his/her own teaching (cf. 2.6.2).

5.2.2 Interviews with new educators

Interviews with new educators lead the researcher to draw the following conclusion.

- The mentoring programmes are necessary for new educators because they lack experience (cf. 4.3.2).

- The new educators receive little or no mentoring assistance when they begin to teach (cf.4.3.2).

- There is a lack of time spent for mentoring due to heavy workload. Once more a negative attitude is seen to be an obstacle for the HODs to provide mentoring assistance (cf. 4.3.2).

- HODs have the perception that new educators are capable when they have recently completed their teaching qualifications (cf.4.3.2).

- Sufficient mentoring leads educators to become successful in their teaching job and hence effective to teaching and learning (cf. 4.3.2).

- All new educators need mentoring assistance by means of induction and continuous supervision (cf. 4.3.2).

- Mentoring should take place for at least a period of one year (cf. 4.3.2).

5.2.3 Interviews with HODs

The interviews with the HODs lead the researcher to draw the following conclusions:

- Mentoring programmes are perceived by the HODs to be necessary for new educators. This indicates that HODs are prepared to provide mentoring (cf.4.3.2).

- Currently, not enough mentoring assistance for new educators is provided by the HODs (cf. 4.3.2).

- The workload of HODs is seen to be an obstacle towards provision of mentoring to the new educators (cf.4.3.2).

- Mentoring programmes should be compulsory for all new educators (cf. 4.3.2).

- Mentoring programmes should continue for a prolonged time (cf. 4.3.2).

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are discussed against the background of information obtained from the literature study and the data collected through interviews.

- It is important for the new educators to be provided with a mentoring programme from the first day of their arrival at schools. The HODs in this regard must provide these educators with induction and continuous supervision.

- The HODs must have the characteristics of being a student and mentor in order to mentor the new educators effectively.

- There should be a friendly relationship between the new educator as a mentee and the HOD as a mentor.

- The approaches or models and the coaching tactics used by the HODs in mentoring new educators should be effective.

- Mentorship workshops should be conducted for HODs in order to be skilled as effective mentors. New developments in education should also be on the
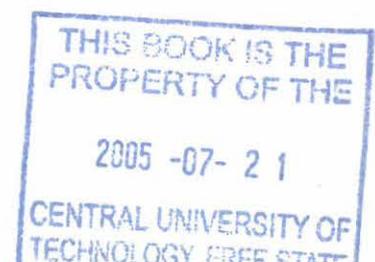
agenda for these workshops.

- Time should be allocated in the time tables of HODs in order to assist new educators regarding issues of academic importance and general school related issues.

5.4   CONCLUSION

Findings from the literature review generally indicates that mentoring means that the new educators should be assisted by the HOD in order to be acquinted with school routines. This means that the HOD plays a meaningful role regarding mentoring the new educators (cf. 5.2.1).

In the interviews with the new educators and HODs, there are findings that there is little or no mentoring assistance to new educators. This is due to a time management problem and heavy workload for HODs (cf. 5.2.2 and 5.2.3). One can conclude that there should be a proper time allocation for academic work, as well as for a mentoring programme.

Since it is indicated from the findings that there are not enough effective mentoring for new educators which exist in schools, it must be emphasised that mentoring should be implemented according to the above-mentioned recommendations. The HODs as part of school management team, have a responsibility to implement mentoring programmes. Their mentoring role must be sufficient and effective so as to help the new educator to teach effectively and to hence quality education.

5.5 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Before the areas for further research will be looked at, the attainment of the research aims are import to mention. The aims of this research as indicated in 1.4 were achieved by means of the literature study and data gathered from the field work.

The following aspects require some studies which are scientific in nature:

- the role of the LFs (Learning facilitators) regarding the mentoring role of the HODs;

- research on the necessity of training workshops for the HODs in their mentoring role; and

- research on career development and management skills of the HODs.

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ANNEXURE A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR NEW EDUCATORS

1   What is your opinion regarding the necessity of mentoring programmes?

2   What type of mentoring assistance did you receive as a beginner educator?

3   What would you consider as constraints or obstacles in the provision of mentoring to you as a new educator by the Heads of Departments?

4   Do you think you are more or less successful educator because of mentoring?

5   Should mentoring be compulsory for all beginner educators? Explain.

6   Do you think a mentoring programme should continue for a prolonged time? Motivate your answer.

ANNEXURE B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HODs

1   What is your opinion regarding the necessity of mentoring programmes?

2   What type of mentoring assistance do you provide to beginner educators?

3   What would you consider as constraints or obstacles in the provision of mentoring by you (as an HOD) to newly appointed educators?

4   Should mentoring be compulsory for all educators? Explain.

5   Do you think a mentoring programme should continue for a prolonged time? Motivate your answer.

Tel: 083942574   R.J. Morake
Fax: (057) 3610484   Rearabetswe S. School
                                                  Kutlwanong Loc
                                                  9480

                                                  15-09-2003

THE HEAD:EDUCATION
ROOM 1213. CR SWARTS BUILDING
PRIVATE BAG X20565
BLOEMFONTEIN
9300

Dear Sir / Madam

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN THE LEJWELEPUTSWA DISTRICT

I am postgraduate student at Vista University. Welkom campus and would like to be given permission to conduct a research. The little of my research is: THE ROLE PLAYED BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENT IN MENTORING NEW EDUCATORS.

If given permission and there is a positive response from educators, the study will involve conducting interviews with Heads of Department and new educators.

I hope my request will be positively attended to the findings of the study will be disclosed to the Department as soon as it is accepted by examiners

Yours faithfully

MR R.J. MORAKE

FREE STATE PROVINCE

Enquiries	: Mrs M V Wessels/	Tel :(051) 404 8075
Reference no.	: 16/4/1/42-2003	Fax :(051) 4048074

2003-09-29

Mr RJ Morake
Rearabetswe Secondary School
PO Box 902
Kutloanong
Odendaalsrus
9480

Dear Mr Morake

REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

1.   This letter is in reply to your application for the registration of your research project.

2.   Research topic: **The role played by Heads of Departments in mentoring new educators.**

3.   Your research project has been registered and you may conduct research in the Free State Department of Education under the following conditions:

    3.1   Heads of Departments participate voluntarily in the project.
    3.2   The names of Heads of Departments and schools involved remain confidential.
    3.3   This letter is shown to all participating persons.

4.   You are requested to donate a report on this study to the Free State Department of Education. It will be placed in the Education Library, Bloemfontein.

5.   Once your project is complete, we should appreciate it if you would present your findings to the relevant persons in the FS Department of Education. This will increase the possibility of implementing your findings wherever possible.

6.   Would you please write a letter **accepting the above conditions**? Address this letter to:

    The Head: Education, for attention: CES: IRRISS
    Room 1204, Provincial Government Building
    Private Bag X20565, BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301

7.   We wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely
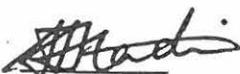
JS Tladi
Chief Director: Strategic Management Services

cc Director of District: Lejeweleputswa

Department of Education V Departement van Onderwys V Lefapha la Thuto