



MENTORING IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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1 INTRODUCTION:

Entering a new context of medical practice offers a major challenge, whether the physician is new to the province, new to the country, or is a new graduate. It is a formative period when the knowledge, skills and prior attitudes are applied. It is a transition period which can be stressful as new demands are made upon individuals who are seeking to consolidate their skills, develop professional networks, and understand the organizational dimensions of practice. The concept of continuing support through mentoring during this transition period is well-established in many professions. Effective mentoring can be beneficial for the individual being mentored, for mentors themselves, for the organization and for the community being served.

"Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be."

In Indian higher education system, number of professional courses is conducted. Medical, Pharmacy, Engineering, Law the and Education are the main courses under professional wing. In these courses, skill is the most important aspect. Proficiency depends upon the achieved or developed skills by the candidate. Skills matters the future of the society, future of the youths. So during training period of any professional course, skill development program is very important.

Teacher Education program is also skill based course in which teaching skills are the fundamental part. Teachers have enormous responsibility put on their shoulder by the society to guide and reform the young generation of the nation.

Hence there is a need of teacher being mentored to be a mentor model and guide for their students who could be a friend them and direct them towards proper path. Current Teacher Education course focuses on training in teaching learning process. But main focus should be on training of novice –teachers with skills to deal with real life problems in

schools. It is great need to focus on teacher's attitude, behavior and mentality towards their society and their country.

2 WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is a lifelong relationship in which a mentor helps a protégé reach her or his God-given potential (Biehl, 19).

- Mentoring provides, first, an instrumental or career function (e.g., sponsorship, coaching, corporate culture instruction), and second, an intrinsic or psychosocial function (e.g., serving as a model, a confidant, a friend) (Cunningham, 443).
- Mentoring is a power-free partnership between two individuals who desire mutual growth. One of the individuals usually has greater skills, experiences, and wisdom (Weinstein, 11).
- Mentoring is most often defined as a professional relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists another (the mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person's professional and personal growth.

3 NEED TO MENTOR THE NOVICE TEACHERS:

- i. The Teacher Induction / Mentoring program is designed to provide a novice teacher the support, assistance, and encouragement of a site-based, trained mentor in order for the novice teacher to learn the skills he or she needs to become an effective, knowledgeable teacher. Having the support of a mentor builds a foundation of confidence and expertise benefiting the novice teacher and students for years to come.
- ii. The purpose of the mentoring requirement is to provide a new teacher with support in order to gain skillfulness and more easily make the transition to one's first professional teaching experience. Therefore, new Initial certificate holders are to receive mentoring from an experienced teacher
- iii. The reality of work in a public school classroom - applying theoretical knowledge, developing effective instructional strategies, meeting individual student's needs, incorporating changing curriculum frameworks, developing high stakes assessment, integrating emerging technology, and remaining sensitive to societal issues - may be one of the most challenging transitions faced by teachers in their entire professional careers. Mentor programs help beginning teachers make a successful transition into teaching by relying on the expertise of veterans to provide a clinical, real-world training process.

- iv. New teachers who are mentored receive higher ratings from their principals, develop better planning skills, handle discipline problems more effectively, conduct more productive classroom discussion, and remain in classrooms longer than teachers who are simply left to “sink or swim.” Veteran teachers who serve as mentors report increased professional revitalization, less isolation, greater recognition, and a belief that they impact the profession more than teachers who are not involved in mentoring new professionals

4 MENTORING IN TEACHER EDUCATION

- **Changing the attitude of novice teachers towards the profession:**

The attitude and outlook of novice teachers may change towards teaching profession if better guidance is given to them on the work process of the school. This will enhance the teaching skills and will encourage them to get creative solutions for their problems at school level.

- **Professional development of teachers:**

Teachers need to be well accomplished with each and every duties handed over to them and so, they should be well prepared in advance to face any situation in any field or work given to them. Be it teaching, supervising, administrating, co-curricular activities etc. Teachers must aptly understand about the needs and requirements of all the fields. Hence, mentoring them on such areas will enhance their working methods.

- **Successful induction of teachers in teaching profession:**

There is a need for novice teachers to be valued, accepted and treated as professionals amongst their much experienced counterparts.

- **The goal of mentoring:**

To provide continuous professional growth for the novice teacher is the goal of mentoring. Mentors assist the novice teacher in the implementation of the goals in the Professional Growth Plan, which is developed by the novice teacher and his or her administrator; identification and celebration of strength areas; procurement of resources (both human and material); and identification of professional development opportunities.

- **Mentors play a key role:**

Teachers are consistently cited as the most significant factor influencing student outcomes, supporting novice teachers at the earliest point in their career, to reflect upon their teaching and question their practice, is critical. Mentors play a key role in supporting beginning teachers to become active agents in analyzing and improving their own practice and in doing so develop their identity as teachers.

- **Mentors are transformative change agents:**

“Mentors are transformative change agents who bring clarity, voice, compassion, attitude and direction to the beginning teacher. Mentors are transparent in their practice so that beginning teachers are able to connect theory to practice and make these connections in their classroom.” (Moir et al, 2010)

5 ROLE OF A MENTOR

- A mentor should help the mentee to believe in herself /himself and boost her/ his confidence.
- A mentor should ask questions and challenge, while providing guidance and encouragement. Mentoring allows the mentee to explore new ideas in confidence.
- It is a chance to look more closely at yourself, your issues, opportunities and what you want in life.
- Mentoring is about becoming more self aware, taking responsibility for your life and directing your life in the direction you decide, rather than leaving it to chance.

6 MENTORING MODELS

One of the advantages of mentoring is that it can be adapted to any organization’s culture and resources. There are several mentoring models to choose from when developing a mentoring program, including:

6.1 One-On-One Mentoring

The most common mentoring model, one-on-one mentoring matches one mentor with one mentoree. Most people prefer this model because it allows both mentor and mentoree to develop a personal relationship and provides individual support for the mentoree. In Teacher Education at some extent it is possible this type of model.

6.2 Resource-Based Mentoring

Resource-based mentoring offers some of the same features as one-on-one mentoring. The main difference is that mentors and mentorees are not interviewed and matched by a Mentoring Program Manager. Instead, mentors agree to add their names to a list of available mentors from which a mentoree can choose. It is up to the mentoree to initiate the process by asking one of the volunteer mentors for assistance. This model typically has limited support within the organization and may result in mismatched mentor-mentoree pairing.

6.3 Group Mentoring

Group mentoring requires a mentor to work with 4-6 mentorees at one time. The group meets once or twice a month to discuss various topics. Combining senior and peer mentoring, the mentor and the peers help one another learn and develop appropriate skills and knowledge.

Group mentoring is limited by the difficulty of regularly scheduling meetings for the entire group. It also lacks the personal relationship that most people prefer in mentoring. For this reason, it is often combined with the one-on-one model. For example, some organizations provide each mentoree with a specific mentor. In addition, the organization offers periodic meetings in which a senior executive meets with all of the mentors and mentorees, who then share their knowledge and expertise.

6.4 Executive Mentoring

This top-down model may be the most effective way to create a mentoring culture and cultivate skills and knowledge throughout an organization. It is also an effective succession-planning tool, because it prevents the knowledge "brain drain" that would otherwise take place when senior management retires.

6.5 Peer mentoring

The responsibility for an effective mentoring relationship is not only up to the mentor, but to the mentee as well. The mentee should trust the mentor, play an active role, should be interested in experimental work, should be able to talk about strengths and weaknesses. He/she should not become mentally dependent on the mentor, not concurrent, and able to end the relationship after the contracted time.

6.6 Training-Based Mentoring

This model is tied directly to a training program. A mentor is assigned to a mentoree to help that person develop the specific skills being taught in the program. Training-based mentoring is limited, because it focuses on the subject at hand and doesn't help the mentoree develop a broader skill set.

Components of the training program may also include the following:

- Learning to observe, coach, and give constructive feedback to peers, including strategies for self-reflection.
- Utilizing best instructional practices, classroom management, and organization.
- Dealing with difficult or resistant people and conflict resolution.
- Enhancing communication skills and building relationships.
- Clarifying mentor's roles and responsibilities.
- Practicing time management; an.
- Developing knowledge of school/district policies and procedures including student assessment, curriculum, guides, and supplemental resources.

7 NATURE OF THE MENTORING IN TEACHER EDUCATION:

Mentors are transformative change agents who bring clarity, voice, compassion, attitude and direction to the beginning teacher. Mentors are transparent in their practice so that beginning teachers are able to connect theory to practice and make these connections in their classroom.” (Moiret al, 2010).

In short, mentor teachers should express their experiences and opinions to the novice teachers and should also share the opinions of novice teachers. This interaction will lead the novice teachers understand the policies and practices in their schools and will also make the mentor teachers aware about the new issues to be dealt with around the organization.

7.1 Mentoring in Micro teaching Program:

In teacher education program, skill development is the core part of the training. It is conducted in a small group. A group contains about 12-14 students. The most experienced teacher educator can do the job as a Mentor of the group of Mentees.

The Mentoring could be done in a group or at individual level or peer mentoring also. Basically Teacher Educator is Mentor. He works for teaching skills development. He observes and sort out the strength and weaknesses of an individual mentee and then decide

the strategy to be a professional mentee. Some Skilled mentee could be a Mentor for the peers. A sort of mentoring is called as Peer Mentoring.

7.2 Steps involved during Mentoring in Micro-Teaching :

1. General Orientation about Micro-Teaching program
2. To understand needs and challenges of Mentee
3. Orientation and demonstration about each teaching skill
4. Orientation and demonstration about implementation of teaching plan.
5. Observation about Presentation of the skill
6. Individual feedback about Presentation
7. Individual guidance and remedial feedback about the weaknesses
8. Re- Presentation of the Skill

During Micro teaching program ,if the guidance to the novice teacher is given through mentoring process, it will reflects in the quality of teacher. Quality teacher is the fundamental need of the society. This need can be fulfilled by the process Mentoring. Mentor (Teacher Educator) can use ‘**Training Based Mentoring Model**’ for the skill development program.

8 CONCLUSION

In Teacher Education Program Mentoring is the essential part for the development of teaching skills. For Micro-Teaching , Practice teaching and Internship program Mentoring is the effective way to make professional teachers. Therefore, apart from getting trained in teacher education institutes a teacher must also go through various professional phases, so that he/she gets acquainted with changing contest of education system in school. For this, teacher needs mentoring from experienced teachers who have gone through the same professional difficulties.

9 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

1. For the improvement of professional environment:

Teacher mentoring is needed for the enhancements in teaching practices and also be thorough and clear with them.

2. For developing the mentoring culture and inculcating the skill of leadership and management:

Teacher mentoring is basically needed for novice teachers to develop as a strong leader. They must also have good management skills to administer his/her

responsibilities. e.g. Learning to handle both classroom and administrative responsibility.

3. To develop Trainer – Trainee relation :

The experienced teachers can help other novice teachers to be professionally accepted by the people in their workplace. This will help to establish new relation as a **Trainer – Trainee**.

4. For entrepreneurship development:

Interactions between teacher mentors and teachers will help in bringing out skill development. This will help to develop entrepreneurship among novice teachers .

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