

**THE EFFECT OF MENTORING AS A STRATEGY FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT IN MOPANI DISTRICT-
LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

by

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DECLARATION

I, **MMAMODIMO MAAKE**, declare that:

**“THE EFFECT OF MENTORING AS A STRATEGY FOR TEACHER
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOPANI DISTRICT-LIMPOPO
PROVINCE”**

Is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted in any form, by myself or anyone, to this university or any other educational institution for any degree or examination purposes. All the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and duly acknowledged by means of complete references.

SIGNATURE

DATE

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my beloved parents, the late Njabadi Herbert and Phenye Maria Maake. They both played a very important and significant role in taking me to Maake Primary School in January 1967.

- To my wife Mosibudi Margaret Maake and three children Makoma, Phenye and Njabadi, I say thanks for your understanding and patience.
- To my siblings Ngate Michael and Manto Rosinah Maake for being supportive throughout my study time.
- To my co-workers, thanks for your undying support and for giving me time and space to complete my studies.

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- The participants who made this project possible, by sacrificing their time and sharing their experiences and inner feelings with me.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to explore the effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development. The study was underpinned by Vygotsky, Piaget and Bandura socio-cultural theories. The study is anchored on the interpretivist or constructivist paradigm to enable the investigator to deconstruct the realities of the experiences of practicing teachers during the mentoring process. The qualitative research approach was adopted in the study. The population comprised all teachers at six (6) selected high schools in the Thabina Cluster schools. Purposeful sampling method was employed to select 12 teachers that participated in the study. Qualitative data was generated through face-to-face interviews, observations and document analysis. Data was analysed thematically. The study established that teachers value and acknowledge the importance of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development. There is also a need for mentoring to be conducted with new teachers to offer them opportunities for professional growth. The study recommendations are that the Department of Education should develop and regularly implement mentoring programmes to enhance the competency of teachers.

KEY WORDS: Mentoring, mentor, professional development, mentee, modelling, professional growth.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAs	:	Curriculum Advisers
CASS	:	Continuous Assessment
COLTS	:	Culture of Learning and Teaching
CPTD	:	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
DAS	:	Developmental Appraisal System
DBE	:	Department of Basic Education
FFLC	:	Foundation for Learning Campaign
HODs	:	Heads of Departments
IQMS	:	Integrated Quality Management System
MKO	:	More Knowledgeable Other
NCLB	:	No Child Left Behind
SACE	:	South African Council for Educators
US	:	United States
WSE	:	Whole School Evaluation
ZPD	:	Zone of Proximal Development
NPFTED	:	National Professional Framework on Teacher Education Development

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CHAPTER 1

“Education is about promoting learning and that promotional development is about promoting learning among teachers” (Davis, et al., 2006:607).

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The optimal functioning of schools, in general, is largely depended on the expertise of its personnel, teachers included. The recent spate of resignations by a substantial number of teachers in South Africa is revealing and sends warning signs from a demoralised workforce. It is significant that so many of our experienced teachers are leaving in such numbers. An independent study by Stellenbosch University researchers found that low salary, unsatisfactory student behaviour, too much paperwork and more importantly, lack of support play an important role in teachers leaving the profession (Van Wyk, 2010:84). There is a need to act urgently to eradicate some of the causes of the high turnover of experienced staff to ensure that wisdom and experience is not lost but is being effectively passed down the school system (Johnston, 2014:13). This shows that mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development must be put in place and must done very quick to eradicate the high turnover. Based on the need for urgent eradication of high turnover of experienced teaching personnel, mentoring is discussed hereunder by various studies as a potential strategy to help retain teachers in the profession.

According to Kirsten and Poulsen (2013:76), mentoring is a mutual learning alliance which creates fresh insight, knowledge and synergistic relationship between the concerned people. The focus is to identify mentors that could give advice, share experience and transfer knowledge to ensure mentees fit into the organisation (Kirsten & Poulsen, 2013:255). Mentoring is usually conceptualised in terms of a young colleague that is being assisted by an executive that is advanced in years (Gallo, 2011:104). According to Law (2013:19) mentoring entails the navigation of the world and the required actions to

forge ahead. It is an old belief that a wise and old teacher is the one expected to advise another. The relationship between a mentee and a mentor has ceased to be the standard in the modern society even though is still a current phenomenon. Mentoring is also defined as “connecting with a variety of people in different organisations and age groups” (Smith, 2015:2). Induction that is based on mentorship assist beginning teachers to adapt to new schools and their culture. The evidence is that mentor-based induction helps new teachers to adapt to the culture of the new school.

Van Louw and Waghid (2008:76) report that, mentoring has been increasingly considered as a strategy for enhancing the capacity and competence of teachers. Mentoring assists novice teachers to learn how to teach in a school-based setting (Tomlinson, 1995:7). It takes away nervousness and help to reduce pressure and frustrations while at the same time providing new teachers with role models. According to Harris (2004:511), mentoring is crucial for clarifying expectations for new teachers, socializing them into the school culture and helping them to assess their strengths and weaknesses. The rationale attached to mentoring, as a support strategy for teachers is that it addresses some of the challenges that lead to mediocrity in certain schools. For many years, mentoring as a strategy has developed actively in organisations to socialize teachers, propel high performances and improve diversity in the management positions (De Vries, 2010:03). Mentoring is a valid technique to address depression in career success for new teachers and continuous under performance.

According to Terri (1996:48), mentoring for teachers and those in administration rests on the belief that teacher professional development needs opportunities to learn from others. According to Robert and Sage (2011:753), professional development contributes to a positive ethos where people feel valued and motivated. Professional development is a structural professional learning that results in changes to teacher knowledge and practices, and improvements in student learning outcomes. A hierarchical relationship exists in mentoring in which the mentor, who is better experienced avails skills and knowledge to the less experienced mentee that needs to grow in a defined field (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010:45). Most mentoring programmes are targeted on

supporting new teachers through the provision of guidance, information and advice enabling them to withstand the demands and stresses of the challenging vocation.

Most mentoring programmes focus on support for beginning teachers by providing advice, guidance, information and enabling them to survive and accommodate the stressors of a new and demanding job. Mentoring is a form of a learning mode in which the mentee is not only supported by the mentor but again challenges the individual to make productive progress. Mentoring is viewed as complex social interactions where in mentor teachers and mentees construct and negotiate ways of achieving efficiency. It is an intense interpersonal relationship which develops the whole person, rather than parts.

Mentoring is crucial to enhance the opportunities of new teachers so that they are able to learn in the context of teaching and learning. Mentoring is a three-faced interaction among the mentee, mentor and the organisation. A mentoring relationship which is healthy needs contributions among the three partners (Marks & Goldstein, 2005:216). In the relationship, the mentor contributes to the mentee's development by taking on roles of a coach, facilitator, counsellor and networker. Mentors provide high levels of support to the mentees, which helps the latter in developing a vision of the point they intend to arrive at and their future prospects which at the end benefits the organisation. The main purpose of the mentor is to direct the novice teachers to the ropes of the trade, which include teaching and research, and to act as advisors (Ronald, 2010:01). Mentoring needs a mentee who is willing to assume responsibility for his/her own development. The mentees should be open and willing to learn, take advantage of opportunities provided and achieve to the best of their ability. A successful mentoring relationship requires a minimum of a two-way flow of kindness and respect and it must happen in an environment that allows the relationship to develop. Mentors guide, direct and assist mentees to become better teachers so as to make their schools centers of excellence.

For schools to emerge as centres of excellence, teacher quality should be at the very centre of teaching and learning as it is the key determinant of variation in learner achievement. This implies that professional development is aimed to raise the academic

performance of both teachers and students. According to Grima (2014:472), individuals in professions should continuously enrich their skills and raise their standard of professionalism during the period of their employment as a way of implementing recent practice based on research. The teaching of infants is demanding duty which requires teachers that are dedicated, high quality professionals who value their practice, and with the willingness to advance their knowledge, skills and effectiveness (Goble & Horn, 2014:2). Teachers need a great grasp of their subject knowledge in order to be effective. They should know the way in which students learn best coupled with a catalogue of practices and strategies to scaffold the learning of students. Darling-Hammond, *et al.*, (2009:49) argue that for teachers' professional learning to be effective, teachers should "learn by engaging in continuous dialogue and examination of their practice and student performance and to develop and implement more effective instructional practices". Engaging teachers in high quality professional learning is most appropriate for the total improvement of teacher effectiveness. Teaching is a dynamic profession, hence, new knowledge about teaching and learning is always emerging. It is on the basis of this that teachers need to keep abreast and learn new types of expertise required to continually refine their conceptual and pedagogical skills.

Mentoring improves the teachers' understanding of the subject content as well as empowers them with strategies which enable learners to master subject content. Mentoring is always aimed at equipping teachers with the expertise to teach and assess learners. Therefore, the provision of relevant mentoring competencies helps to improve the professional practices of individual teachers. The effectiveness of teachers is the most pivotal school-related variable which influences student achievement (Levin, 2014:01). Mentoring is enriching, supportive and motivating and generates enthusiasm in teachers as this on-going professional development practice is a significant contributor to the advancement of the teachers' thinking in relation to teaching and learning.

Mentoring, therefore, can occur in the case of a senior organisation member assisting a junior colleague or helping another to provide a number of development activities. Mentoring is conceived as a reflective, participative and interactive process of

engagement, development and relationship building involving a mentee and a mentor. The mentor evaluates and develops mentee skills as a form of capacity building and empowerment, with a focus on targeted competencies (Seekoe & Arries, 2011:26). Mentoring has the capacity to build and drive desired improvements as a professional development strategy in education. Effective mentoring of teachers should occur at a local level during regular working day at school and be relevant to the teachers' duties. On-going professional learning must be intensive and always focus on improving student learning. Mentoring enhances and creates opportunities for adult learning and promotes the quality learning in the classroom through activities designed to develop the knowledge, expertise and skills of individuals and other critical characteristics of teachers (Caena, 2011:03).

Mentoring allows teachers to address fast changes, keep abreast with changes, experiment, engage reflective practice and share knowledge and innovation. Mentoring as a professional teacher development strategy is an aspect of educational training to improve individuals in the profession. It is an effective method of transferring skills and to activate the loyalty of new employees for organizational cooperation (Abiddin, 2006:107). The professional development of teachers empowers them and provides them with opportunities and confidence to put into practice ideas which assist them to excel in their profession. Empowerment entails teachers being able to engage, share control and influence events which affect their institutions (Murray, 2010:03).

Mentoring is one of the required mechanisms of support which draw upon the competencies that exist among staff in schools, allowing them to offer support to new teachers. Involvement of teachers in the mentoring relationships entails career advancement, job satisfaction, promotions and increased incomes (Hansman, 2010:02).

This study explored mentoring of teachers as a way of enhancing their skills, competency and capabilities in providing quality teaching and learning. The approach blended the old/traditional perspectives of mentoring with the recent ones so as to broaden the content of the subject. The process involved mentees being allocated mentors to guide them and

introduce them to network groups to exchange ideas and experiences as peers. The research investigated whether mentoring of teachers brings the much-desired outcomes of turning schools into real centres of teaching and learning. I argue that mentoring can help boost the morale of teachers and that through this strategy, mentee teachers receive assistance specifically aimed at enhancing their performance.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are a number of initiatives that the government of South Africa have put in place to raise the competencies of teachers for instructional delivery in schools. These include the Foundation For Learning Campaign (FFLC), Culture of Learning and Teaching (COLTS) and mentoring. Mentoring normally involves the training and advising of newly-appointed personnel as well as experienced teachers as it takes into account various aspects of socialisation (Hertting & Phenis-Bourke, 2007:7). Sarri (2011:730) states that a reverse form of mentoring can occur in cases where a junior person provides advice to a more senior person such as on the issue of technological innovation. The quality of the relationship between the mentor-mentee is pivotal for a mentoring process that is successful (Robert & Sage, 2011:753). The mentor has to create a relationship that offers stimulation, creative ideas, knowledge and mental models to optimize academic effectiveness (DuBois & Karcher, 2014:15).

Despite efforts by the government to improve the standard of education in the country through mentoring, challenges are still evident. Late coming, absenteeism and the current spate of resignations are some of the issues that seem to demonstrate a general discontent amongst teachers, reflecting a weak implementation of mentoring programmes. Demoralised and demotivated teachers are likely not to deliver on quality teaching, although teachers remain the critical component towards delivery of quality education. The reason of engaging teachers in mentoring is mainly to reduce mediocrity, improve their classroom practice and develop them professionally which in the end will result in improved quality of teaching and learning. In view of this, the study explored the effects of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development.

1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to explore the effect of mentoring, as a strategy for teacher professional development.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following are the research objectives of the study:

- 1.4.1 to examine the strategies used in mentoring to develop teachers professionally.
- 1.4.2 to assess whether serving teachers also require mentoring.
- 1.4.3 to establish the perceptions of teachers towards mentoring as a professional development programme.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question was:

- What is the effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development?

The following subsidiary research questions were raised:

- 1.5.1 What are the strategies used in mentoring to develop teachers professionally?
- 1.5.2 To what extent do serving teachers also require mentoring?
- 1.5.3 What are the perceptions of teachers towards mentoring as a professional development programme?

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

In the next section, the researcher discusses the following key terms: mentoring, mentors, professional development, mentee, modelling and professional growth.

1.6.1 Mentoring

Mentoring is described as involving the collaboration of partners that work together to establish mutual interest and share ideas (Tillman, 2005:116). It is concerned with individuals that work as a group or team for developing the abilities and careers of an individual. Practitioners in the service are instructed to succeed through adapting to the roles of new professions (Tally, 2008:103). It focuses on two or more individuals that interact from different levels of expertise and experience. These interactions are to develop in education, in a career or as an instance of socialisation in a school (Ball, 1999:57). In the context of this study, mentoring is a programme that involves a person with expertise giving assistance to an individual of lesser experience.

1.6.2 Mentor

Wang and Odell (2002:491) state that a mentor is an individual that assists novices to master the relevant principles and to ponder the reasons and assumptions related to teaching practice as well as the link between theory and practice. A mentor is an individual with experience, better skilled and knowledgeable in a given field. Mentors act as change agents, advice and collaborate culture and break existing barriers to enable individuals to attain their aspirations (DuBois & Karcher, 2014:05). A mentor refers to an individual that ushers another person through significant transactions inclusive of coping in new conditions, shifts in personal situations, personal growth and development (Murphy, 2011:610).

In the context of this study, a mentor is an individual that serves as a professional role model who guides and actively participate in the professional development of a mentee.

1.6.3 Professional Development

Professional development is defined as an on-going initiative necessary to develop new concepts, skills and behaviours (Caena, 2011:3; Geijssel, Slegers, Stoel & Kruger, 2009:416). Professional development has the potential to offer opportunities that encourage active learning in tandem with the goals and needs of individual teachers. Professional development is an on-going process that systematically attempts to affect the professional practices, beliefs and understanding of school persons towards an announced goal (Ingersoll, 2012, 73; Harris & Jones, 2010:173). The activities need to reflect the daily practice of the teacher rather than stacked on to their normal responsibilities. In the context of this study, professional development is a process that endeavours to improve the knowledge, skills, beliefs and practices of teachers for the achievement of set goals in schools.

1.6.4 Mentee

A mentee is a person whose experience and knowledge needs to be advanced, and is a junior that requires guidance, support and assistance in regard to personal, career and professional advancement (Fowler, 2007:666). A mentee is a person who is aided by a more knowledgeable and experienced person in the acquisition of specific skills and job-relevant knowledge. It is a person who is helped to access information and resources that facilitate task accomplishment (Van der Merwe, 2010:153). Mentees need to be able to set their own goals in the participative process and to communicate openly for the development of knowledge and skills that are relevant to the profession (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010:49). In the context of this study, a mentee is an individual with less knowledge and junior in rank but receiving material and conceptual assistance for the achievement of quality teaching and learning.

1.6.5 Modelling

Modelling is another effective process for promoting professional learning because mentors can provide follow-up modelling, observation, and feedback that is necessary for learning to make a difference (Levin, 2014:2). Modelling is regarded as powerful learning because it promotes collective participation, staff development, communication, teacher networks and study groups. It promotes professional learning programmes that are longer, sustained and intensive (Caena, 2011:10). This is the type of learning that allows new teachers to learn and acquire new knowledge and skills by observing seasoned practitioners for improved classroom practice. Modelling involves practical, goal-focused forms of one-on-one learning and ideally, behavioural change (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2014:2). Modelling engages new teachers in interactive online networks in which they share tools, resources and strategies while being helped to change their philosophies about teaching and increase the use of exemplary teaching practices (Borko, 2014:08). In the context of this study, modelling is the process in which experienced teachers provide relevant experiences, knowledge and skills to new teachers so that these can be emulated and evaluated for desired reproduction.

1.6.6 Professional Growth

Professional growth embraces the activities that are done by qualified teachers as a follow up to their initial certification. This is intended to boost professional skills and knowledge, clarify values of the profession as well as improve the education of students (Bubb & Earley, 2007:4). It fosters individual commitment of teachers to professional advancement. Professional development programmes have the potential to help in staff development and improve workplace performance - a sign of professional growth. Professional growth involves programmes that are well-structured to increase the content knowledge of teachers in the subjects which they teach and to broaden the range of instructional competencies in the targeted areas. Engaging teachers in professional growth is the most fundamental way to uplift their effectiveness (Greenwald, Hodges & Laine, 1996:2). In the context of this study, professional growth relates to on-going

learning chances for teachers to improve knowledge, dispositions and skills that are desired in order to achieve higher standards of teaching.

1.7 SOCIOCULTURAL THEORIES ON MENTORING AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Several theoretical perspectives have been linked to mentoring as a teacher development strategy. This study is underpinned by three theories comprising Vygotsky's Social Constructivist theory which stipulates that cultural tools, activity and social interaction shape the learning and development of an individual. Vygotsky's conceptualisation formed the basis upon which the practice of mentoring rests. This stipulates that a person that is more capable such as a mentor should guide a less capable individual in the mould of a mentee. Piaget's theory of cognitive development (1970) sees human behaviour as a result of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioural, and environmental influence. This implies that an individual's cognitive learning is enhanced by learning from and observing others through the facilitation of the mentor-teacher in a social context. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1997), also illuminates the practice of mentoring, in which a learner (mentee) needs to be integrated with developments in the environment in which the practice is anchored. Bandura (1986:18) contends that the cognitive responses, environmental aspects and behavioural factors of the mentee have to be considered in mediating learning. This implies that the base of human learning is embedded in the willingness of individuals to imitate behaviour observed in others.

1.7.1 Vygotsky's (1978) Social Constructivist Theory

Vygotsky's (1978) Social Constructivist Theory contends that cultural tools, social activity and social interaction shape the learning and development of an individual. This perspective provides the foundation for the roll out of mentoring. This implies that a more able individual (mentor) need to guide one that is less capable (mentee). The theory views learning as a social process which is assisted by more knowledgeable individuals. The mentee is engaged in a professional development that is happening in settings or

contexts that are very supportive, and the most critical part of that support must come from experienced practitioners. The professional development process needs to be driven by an educational practice which is sound and based on a particular teaching context.

Contextual teaching has to do with the presentation of data in a context that is familiar and in which the information is beneficial. Harwell (2003:14) contends that contextual learning relates to the manner in which the mind functions naturally. It is a developmental process where participants are allowed to learn fresh practices within the situations that required such practices. This is found to be far relevant to learning and should be encouraged. In other words, professional development that is contextual can be very effective in changing teacher behaviour as contextual learning in the classroom improves student behaviour.

The theory emphasises that learning takes place in context. It utilizes the advantage which allows learners to process new knowledge being influenced by the fact that the meaning has to be reliant on their existent frames of reference. Murphy's (2011) argues that social variables such as instructional strategies, feedback from experienced personnel and demonstrations might impact teachers' personal factors. These include issues such as self-regulation, self-efficacy, goal setting and outcome expectancy. The researcher used this theory because it emphasizes the relevance of contextual learning, showing the benefits of teachers learning from a natural setting.

1.7.2 Piaget's (1970) Theory of Cognitive Development

The theory of cognitive development proposes that human behaviour is a consequence of continuing mutual interaction among behaviour, cognition and environmental factors. Piaget's constructivist theory assists to understand mentoring as a phenomenon which is intended to facilitate growth in the learning of teachers. The cognitive factor relates to the mental development of teachers in the process of acquiring new knowledge, skills and attitudes. The environment pertains to the setting with which teachers function in schools.

The behaviour influences relates to the manner in which teachers disseminate acquired skills and knowledge in classroom teaching.

The theory suggests that individuals learn through the observance of behaviours, attitudes and experiences from the results of executed actions. Many forms of human behaviours are learned through observing modelling. This involves people observing the performance of a model and later on the use of the learnt experiences of the model to perform their own actions. Piaget's theory of cognitive development relates to mentoring in the sense that a mentee teacher has to learn the trade of the profession while integrated within the environs of his context. According to Piaget (1970), the mentee's responses, behaviour and environment all work together to create learning. This theory is backed by Vygotsky's (1978) Social Cognitivist theory. Self-efficacy highlights the importance of cognitive abilities and related components such as motivation, confidence as well as eagerness to be innovative (Bandura, 1997:34). The researcher decided on this theory because it recognizes the professional development of teachers through social interaction and integration within the environment.

1.7.3 Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory

Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977:81) dispels the idea that individuals are passive hosts with little control over their fates. Individuals become active role players in determining what to be imitated as well as determining the frequency and intensity of the imitation. Social Learning Theory puts emphasis on the role of social modeling in human motivation, thought and action. Bandura's Social Learning Theory presents the relationship between observation and modeling of behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others involved in the learning process of an individual. The theory posits that human behaviour is learned, observationally, through modeling (Bautista, 2012:110). This implies that from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviours are performed. Like Vygotsky and Piaget, Bandura also emphasizes the importance of learning through social interaction in a natural setting through observing and imitating those with advanced knowledge, skills and expertise. These theorists analyzed the

foundations of human learning and the willingness of individuals to imitate behaviour observed in others. The theories and how they relate to teacher mentoring are discussed in detail under Chapter 3 on theoretical framework.

1.8 RESEARCH PARADIGM, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section focuses on the research paradigm, research design and methodology which were used in the study.

1.8.1 Research Paradigm

The study was underpinned by interpretivism or constructivism. This is also referred to as anti-positivism. According to Irene (2014:1), anti-positivism is the belief within social science that the social realm is not subject to the same methods of investigation as the natural world. The social realm requires a different epistemology in which academics do not use the scientific method of the natural sciences. Constructivists hold that researchers need to be, first, aware that our concepts, ideas and language shape how people think about the social world.

In constructivism, realities are apprehended in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, which are socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature (Guba & Lincoln, 1994:101). The main tenet of interpretivism is that research can never be objectively observed from the outside but rather, it must be observed from inside through the direct experience of participants. The role of the researcher in the interpretivist paradigm is to understand, explain, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:19).

The researcher used constructivism as a paradigm in the study because constructivism deals with data obtained through interpretation from the participants. The researcher used interviews, observation and document analysis. In this case, the obtained data was interpreted and analysed through development of common themes for the study.

1.8.2 Research Design

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:117), research design relates to a plan which is used to select participants, research sites as well as procedures for collecting data to address research questions. Creswell (2009:3) states that research designs are concerned with plans and procedures that are built on assumptions about the methods to collect and analyse data. This study employed a case study design which allows for an understanding of the way in which ideas and practices fit together. It is an investigation of an instance in action. The case study design afforded unique examples of real people in real situations. A case study allows the audience to comprehend ideas with clarity rather than just presenting abstract ideas (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:133). In the next section the researcher discusses the research methodology used in the study.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Henning (2004:36) mentions that methodology is a comprehensible group of methods that complement data and findings that will reflect the research question, fit the research purpose and is capable of delivering research results. Naidoo (2006:64) describes methodology as a concept which describes and analyses the methods that are chosen in conducting a research. This study is qualitative in nature. Creswell (1994:02) posits that a qualitative study involves the understanding of human or social problems through the construction of a picture that is complex and holistic. The phenomenon of study is reported in detail in words through reliance on the informants in a setting that is natural.

1.9.1 Qualitative Approach

A qualitative research approach was used in this study because it accommodated the researcher's aim for the study. Qualitative research enables researchers to study issues in their natural settings, with an attempt to derive meanings from the contributions or narrative of the researched. It is a form of a situated activity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:3). The qualitative approach was employed as it enabled knowledge to be constructed

through the interaction of participants in a social reality. From the research methodology, the researcher looks at the population of the study.

1.9.2 Sampling Process

The sampling process relates to the target population, sampling and the determination of the sample.

1.9.3 Population

The population for this study comprised of high school teachers in Thabina Circuit in the district of Mopani. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:119) views a population as consisting of individuals that are conforming to a certain defined criteria with the intention of generalizing the results of a study. "Population includes every individual found within certain descriptive parameters, such as location, age or sex" (Charles & Mertler, 2002:45). In line with Charles, Mertler and Neumann (2008:216) a target population refers to an entire pool of people that the researcher intends to study. The study was located in the Thabina Cluster to save time and minimise costs.

1.9.4 Sampling

The study used purposeful sampling. Creswell (2007:125) presents purposeful sampling as a technique to select participants based on their knowledge on the phenomenon of study. The sites and individuals are selected on the judgement that they provide useful information about the problem and the core issue of study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:138) argue that purposeful sampling allows the researcher to select samples of individuals that are informative and knowledgeable about the phenomenon of interest. The situations, events and participants are chosen on the likelihood that they are able to obtain fruitful data on the research topic (Teddlie & Yu, 2007:79). The use of purposeful sampling allowed the researcher to gather relevant and specific data from the selected

participants. The study involved six (6) purposefully selected high schools in the Thabina Cluster in Mopani District based on their accessibility and to reduce travelling costs.

1.9.5 Sample

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:129) defines a sample as a selection of participants that are earmarked to contribute research data. Walker (2000:73) indicates that a sample is made up of individuals that are selected from the entire population. Bubb and Earley (2007:07) state that a sample is a small group that is generated from the target population through a strategy which retains resemblance to the population in regard to essential characteristics. The researcher purposefully selected (6) public high schools in the Thabina Cluster in Mopani District and from the six schools, 2 teachers were sampled per school. Thus, if these few cases are studied in-depth have the potential to harvest detailed information about the phenomenon.

1.10 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was conducted through the use of qualitative research methods. Three data collection tools employed included face-to-face interviews, document analysis and observation. The following section presented and discussed the data collection instruments that were used in the study.

1.10.1 Data Collection Instruments

The following data collection instruments were employed in the study: face-to-face interviews, document analysis and observation.

1.10.1.1 Interviews

The researcher developed an interview schedule for face-to-face interviews. The interviews, therefore, were conducted through face-to-face meetings with each research participant. Glanz (2006:67) suggests that interviews allow the researcher to learn details

about participants' experiences from their own point of view. Interviews allowed the researcher to explore the teachers' experience regarding mentoring as a strategy used for the professional development for teacher. In this study, the researcher used interviews because it is a flexible tool for data collection and enables multi-sensory channels like verbal, non-verbal and other expressions to be captured.

1.10.1.2 Document analysis

Documents have always been a significant source of data in qualitative research. Bogdan and Biklen (2007:136) state that schools, like other organizations, produce documents for specific kinds of consumption. The researcher explored official documents relating to mentoring programmes at school level to check the availability of mentoring programmes. For the purpose of this study, a brief discussion of official documents relating to mentoring was held between the researcher and relevant personnel at the schools. Best and Kahn (2006:257), state that analyses of official documents serve to add knowledge to research and explain certain social events.

1.10.1.3 Non-participant observation

In order to get the first-hand information, the researcher visited the schools in which the participants were attached to. The purpose of the visit was to conduct direct observations, for the researcher to hear, see and experience reality. The researcher was able to hear and record observations instead of relying on the responses of the participants. Through this method, the researcher observed the state of the schools paying special attention the physical environment of the school, furniture, conditions of the buildings, infrastructure and all the things related to functions and efficiency of teachers.

1.10.1.4 Observation

The researcher conducted direct observations in the schools in which the participants are working. In an attempt to avoid lesson interruptions, the researcher observed some participants conducting extra lessons in the afternoons to get the first-hand information. The method allowed the researcher to hear, see and record the observations rather than relying on participants' responses to questions only.

1.11 DATA ANALYSIS

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:364), qualitative data analysis is a process that is inductive and involves data organisation, categorising it into patterns or themes in order to derive explanations that are plausible. Data was analysed thematically. The researcher transcribed audio-taped data, read and re-read the transcribed data to establish categories. The analysis of interviews and open-ended questions helped to identify themes that are common (Seale, 2000:46). This enabled the researcher to arrive at themes in line with Kvale's (1983:91) guidelines for a qualitative research interview when analysing the gathered data. The collected data was broken into themes that are manipulatable, trends, patterns and relationships to derive sense from them.

1.12 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

Maree (2007:297) maintains that trustworthiness relates to the manner in which the reader is convinced by the researcher that the results of a study are of high quality and worth taking note of. Trustworthiness of the study is achieved basing on the quality of the data which participants contribute during data collection process. In this study, the results obtained through interviews and documents were of importance. The researcher endeavoured to maintain objectivism but remained sensitive to individual biases that are crucial in shaping the study. However, researchers experience difficulty in avoiding data filtering through the lens of individuals that are within their socio-political and historical background (Creswell, 2003:182). The researcher, therefore, must affirm limitation which arise from an interpretation that is personal but still acknowledge the intrinsic value contained in a qualitative analysis. The records of the conversations that are conducted with participants need to be retained to enable the checking of the veracity of participants (Briggs (2007:115). Trustworthiness has been further divided into credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability. The four criteria for trustworthiness used in the study included the following:

1.12.1 Credibility

Credibility is defined in relation to the confidence which the results of a study creates. It is concerned with establishing the plausibility of the data contributed by participants and its reflection on the research results (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002:276). Bitsch (2005:86), states that credibility of results relates to the way in which research outcomes are stable over time. The trustworthiness of a study depends on the judgement given by the reader (Gunawan, 2015:04), and with the qualitative research paradigm depends upon the ability and effort of the researcher; whenever researchers address the concepts of reliability and validity in qualitative research they are referring to credibility. The value attached to credibility is that it deals with the focus of the research and has the ability to really capture the multiple realities of those studied. The trustworthiness of a research study is important to determining what it is worth. Golafshani (2003:66), suggests that the credibility and dependability of the results of a study are achieved when trust worthiness is maximised. This would then lead to the emergence of generalisability. The quality of a study is ultimately related to its generalisability and trustworthiness. The rigour of a qualitative study is established through the adoption of the strategies listed hereunder:

1.12.1.1 Prolonged engagement in field

Qualitative data gathering process demands the researcher to be immersed in the world of the participants (Li, 2004:321). This requires spending enough time observing many aspects of the setting, interviewing a lot of people and developing excellent rapport with organisation members. This prolonged engagement between participants and the researcher helps to gain a rich understanding of the organisation and the participants. It is a strategy that assists the researcher to access insight into the study context. This reduces the distortion of data which might occur as a consequence of the researcher's presence in the field. The extension of time in the context of study helps to win the trust of participants and offers increased grasp of the context and cultural aspects of the participants (Macnee & McCabe, 2008:61). Extended engagement is important because as the understanding between the researcher and the participants increases, participants may volunteer to give varied and more sensitive data than they would have done without

the establishment of this kind of relationship. Immersion in the field assists the investigator to conceive the central issues which might impact the quality of information.

1.12.1.2 Member checks

Member checking is a strategy to improve data quality. This is because the nature of data and the related interpretations continue to be tested. It is a critical process which qualitative researchers do as it is a defining issue of credibility (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2008:19). This means that researchers have to care for the voices of participants when analyzing and interpreting data. Member checking helps to eliminate bias and prejudice in the analysis and interpretation of results. It calls for the analysed and interpreted information to be referred back to participants who are supposed to evaluate these interpretations in terms of their representation of the truth. Recommendations for changes might be made in cases of glaring misreporting. Participants might reject interpretations that are socially undesirable or those which are not well presented by the researcher (Schwandt, Lincoln & Guba, 2007:16). Therefore, the strategy checks for corroboration and coherence. The checking focuses on eliminating inconsistencies or internal conflict. The process is undertaken to test the nature of interpretation against the information contained in the documents which were employed during the data gathering stage prior to the compilation of the final report (Anfara, Brown & Mangione, 2002:30). The participants can be requested to read selected transcripts of conversations in which they participated.

1.12.1.3 Triangulation

Triangulation relates to the employ of multiple sources, methods, theories and researchers to gain corroborative evidence (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Sorensen, 2010:14). It can involve the utilisation of methods such as focus groups, observation and individual interviews, which are central qualitative data collection strategies. Triangulation helps to reduce bias as well as cross examine the responses of participants for integrity. The researcher might triangulate informants (sources) or instruments such as focus group discussions, participant observation and interviews to improve the quality of data. In this

study the researcher employed triangulation through the use of face-to-face interviews, document analysis and observation as tools for data collection. This technique aims to examine the consistency of various sources of data within the same research design.

1.12.1.4 Peer debriefing

Peer debriefing is a means to explore the researcher's product to a peer that may be disinterested in the study but done in a way that parallels a session that is intended to analyse a study. The purpose can be to explore issues of inquiry which may normally remain hidden in the mind of the researcher (Gelo, Braakmann & Benetka, 2008:273). The process involves thorough analytical probing. The debriefer might assist to reveal biases that are times taken for granted. It is crucial that a qualitative researcher presents findings of the study to peers after the report writing stage for comments to be given (Koch, 2006:97). This means that the researcher needs to receive perceptions from peers in regard to a study prior to crafting conclusions of the study. Through peer debriefing, perspectives and assumptions of the researcher are subjected to challenge. The process helps a researcher to become aware of his/her position towards data and analysis. According to Schutt (2006:16), peer debriefing provides inquirers the latitude to evaluate their developing insights and to avail themselves to the interrogative process. The qualitative investigator is encouraged to seek support from professionals that are available to offer academic guidance during the research process. The feedback provided by peers assists the researcher to enhance the quality of the research outcomes (Bowen, 2009:306).

1.12.2 Dependability

Dependability deals with participants that evaluate the outcomes and recommendations of the research in order to ensure they find support from the data given by participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:89). Dependability is equivalent to reliability in quantitative research. It establishes the consistency and repeatability of the findings. Dependability implies that the study can obtain similar results if conducted using similar methods, participants and contexts (Creswell, 2012:77). To ensure the dependability of

the study, the process need to be provided in detail to allow future research to obtain similar results. Dependability involves the employment of “overlapping methods and in-depth methodological description to allow the study to be repeated” (Bernard, 2000:17).

- **Peer Examination**

Peer examination is similar to member checking, which is a strategy to improve the credibility of the study (Chilisa & Preece, 2005:08). Peer examination requires the researcher to discuss findings with colleagues that are neutral. This can improve doctoral students who may be conducting qualitative research or with experience in the research approach. According to Pitney and Parker (2009:31), peer examination assists the investigator to be honest in regard to the study and to deepen skills of reflective analysis. Peer examination also has the advantage of assisting the researcher to locate categories that evaded the research questions or negative cases.

1.12.3 Confirmability

Confirmability expresses the degree of neutrality. It relates to the manner to which findings of the study are informed by the contributions of the participants and not the motivation, interests and biases of the researcher (Bryman, 2008:21). This implies that necessary steps should be adopted by the researcher to make sure that the outcomes of the study are derived from the ideas and experiences of the participants instead of the preferences and characteristics of the investigator. Confirmability is “concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer’s imagination but are clearly derived from the data” (Tobin & Begley, 2004:392). Confirmability, therefore, is used in a study to eliminate biases and favours from the findings obtained. The following techniques may be used by a researcher to ensure confirmability in a research:

1.12.3.1 Audit trails

In a study, audit trails are performed to keep a record of what was done in the investigation. It is a way of describing the steps undertaken by the research process form

the beginning of the project through to the establishment of the findings and the subsequent reporting of them (Shenton, 2004:63). This can be confirmed by way of providing all raw data, written field notes, summaries, themes, personal notes, designs including methodological notes. An audit trail is concerned with the examination of the research process and the outcomes as a way to validate data. The researcher needs to account for all the activities and decisions in a way that reflects data collection, recordings and the analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994:17). This process works to evaluate the accuracy of the findings and to check if the research outcomes, conclusions emerge from the collected data.

1.12.3.2 Reflexivity

Confirmability can also be established using a reflexive journal. Wallendorf and Belk (1989:13) refers to a reflexive journal as a document in the possession of the researcher which is used to reflect on, plan the collection of data as well as offer tentative interpretation of the findings. The research contains all activities that transpire in the field and individual reflections in regard to the study. According to Krefting (1991:214), reflexivity is “an assessment of the influence of the researcher’s background, perceptions and interests on the qualitative research process”. That includes the personal history of the researcher. Reflexivity is an activity that involves evaluating the effectiveness of the process of inquiry undertaken.

1.12.4 Transferability

Transferability involves the provision of information pertaining to the background of the study as a strategy for establishing the study context. It includes providing a detailed account of the issue of concern to make it possible to make comparisons. Transferability affords the study the possibility to be transferrable to other situations involving different participants (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007:35). Purposive sampling and thick descriptions of the phenomena facilitate judgement regarding transferability of the study. Lincoln and Guba, 1995:24) argue that it is the responsibility of the researcher to make sure rich data is supplied about the field work sites to allow for the transferability of such

transferability of such research inquiries. Thick description is identified as a strong technique for establishing transferability.

1.12.4.1 Thick description

Detailed description is a crucial component that addresses the credibility of the findings. It allows for the presentation of the real situations under investigation and their contexts. Lincoln and Guba (1995:24) posit that thick description is a strategy adopted to obtain external validity. Thick description affords judgement to be made in terms of how the study context reflects other similar contexts. It captures the experiences in the field and reflects the cultural and social aspects put in context. Researchers employing similar methods but conducted in different contexts can be used to express the truthfulness of the findings. In thick descriptions, detailed information is provided in regard to the research context, data collection methods, through to the production of the final research report.

1.12.4.2 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is the technique that is pre-dominantly employed in a naturalistic investigation. Purposive sampling is concerned with selecting individuals, institutions or groups of people depending on particular purposes in order to answer research questions (Teddlie & Yu, 2007:77). Purposive sampling enables the researcher to be interested in crucial participants who may be knowledgeable about a phenomenon of study.

1.13 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study would assist the Department of Basic Education and policy makers to develop tools and strategies to assist educators understand and embrace mentoring. Rejuvenated and motivated teachers remain paramount to the delivery of quality education. Teachers will also benefit from mentoring programmes emanating from recommendations that have been arrived at in this study.

1.14 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Mopani district is a vast area that cannot be covered within the scope of this study; hence it was delimited by selecting six schools within a single circuit, from the Mopani District. The study would, therefore, as a case study, be limited to Thabina Circuit, around the town of Tzaneen, in Mopani District.

1.15 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:104) state that there is an increasing concern about the ethical aspects of social sciences research. The researcher ensured that participants had a good understanding concerning the confidentiality of the findings of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:104; Maree, 2007:76). All participants signed a consent form and were informed about their right to withdraw from the project at any time, if they so wish. Basically, the researcher ensured that the three most crucial elements of ethics were well catered for, that is, right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were given numbers to hide their identity and permission to conduct the study was sought from the Provincial Education Department, District Office and Circuit Offices involved, in accordance with the recommendations of Cohen and Manion (2007:367). Assurance was given to all stakeholders that no disruption of classes should occur during the study.

1.16 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher explored the impact of mentoring as a form of professional development for teachers. The introduction explored mentoring of teachers as a way of enhancing their skills, competency and capabilities in providing quality teaching and learning. It was explained that the study employed a qualitative approach, interviews, document and analysis to collect information. In the sampling process, the researcher indicated that 12 teachers, from 6 purposefully selected secondary schools in Mopani District in the Limpopo Province were selected as participants. The chapter noted that

transcribed audio-taped data was analysed and divided it into categories in order to easily work with them.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: MENTORING AS A TEACHING STRATEGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter was to examine the literature about the effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development. In the study, the main focus was on the necessity of mentoring for serving teachers, their perceptions about mentoring and its significance.

This chapter attempted to address present trends in the literature regarding the effect of mentoring as a support strategy for teacher professional development.

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF MENTORING

The concept of mentoring refers to the existence of people that assist and seek to sustain the professional and personal competencies of others (Hansman, 2014:03). It has now taken on numerous meanings and has been applied in a variety of corporate and educational contexts since its origin. Mentoring has continued for a very long time as attested to by the varied definitions for mentors and the plethora of expectations in the mentoring relationships. This is a concept that has been adopted by politicians, actors, sports personalities and academics to reflect on the role of the individuals that work as role models of people, particularly during early career stages.

Hoppey (2007:6) explains mentoring as a process of instructional improvement in which an individual with expertise or especially equipped, works with a beginning teacher collaboratively. These deliberate together in a non judgemental fashion on the way in which instruction can be improved in the classroom. It is a form of coaching that tends to be shorter. Villegas-Reimers (2003:16) presents mentoring as a rewarding and powerful way of helping someone, especially in the context of education (Mckimm, Jollie & Hatter,

2007:1). Mentoring is a relationship which is complementary and build upon the needs of the mentor and the mentee (Shulman-Sato, 2006:110). In the context of this study, it is assumed that mentoring contributes to improving teaching as well as being a vital tool for professional advancement. Apart from equipping the teacher with teaching standards and expertise, mentorship provides an on-going psychological and emotional boost.

The process of mentoring relates to the transfer of knowledge, wisdom and thoughts from an experienced individual to a less experienced person. This is done based on a relationship which is hinged on equity and which encourages active involvement of concerned parties to allow the mentee an opportunity to tackle challenges that are encountered in practice (Sarri, 2011:722). The process of school-based mentoring and staff development is highly dependent on the knowledge, skills and personal qualities of the mentor. The mentee has to be assisted in learning to be mature, independent, mature, self-confident and autonomous (McMillan, 2010:4). This is an educational technique that enhances work place learning based on the belief that an experienced person that is in a position should be able to provide advice, information and support to a novice.

Mentoring is a process of nurturing individuals. This is done by a more experienced individual that serves as a role model to teach, sponsor, encourage, counsel and befriend a less experienced individual that is required to grow professionally. It is an in-service training of teachers undertaken by mentor-teachers that serve as mentors and whose support and advice may be required based on the way in which they teach and interact with students. Their competencies may need to be observed by new teachers (Hobson, 2002:01). The process of mentorship helps teachers in obtaining skills, knowledge and dispositions required for organizational and professional effectiveness in schools. Through mentoring, teachers are empowered with the skills, behaviour and knowledge that enable them to perform effectively.

Teachers who are exposed to mentoring are provided with the space to develop their own way of doing things, establish their own philosophies and conviction in pursuit of greater

learner achievement (Duncan & Stock, 2010:32). In the process, mentees receive guidance in learner-motivation that involves intrinsic motivation associated with recognition of each person. It leads to team work, inspired by a sense of belonging in pursuit of learner well-being, increased capacity, improved deliverance and understanding of school context.

The functions of mentoring are conducted in the environment of continual and caring relation involving the mentee and the mentor (Anderson & Snyder, 1993:17). The mentoring process that is given to a new teacher is an important part of inducting fresh teachers into the trade. This process encourages the personnel and professional growth of the teacher, connects the teacher to the theory and practice of teaching as well as avail opportunities for academic advancement. The programme is most appropriate for developing competent teachers and has to meet the needs of the mentee as well as have an impact on the mentee's future career. It is a process through which beginner teachers are assisted to find their footing on their own. Mentoring assists with issues related to stress, disillusionment and stress in regard to the beginning teacher. A meaningful and well-structured mentoring system helps to ease the traumatic feeling that beginning teachers experience on entering the profession of teaching. It helps the novice teachers to master the art of learning to teach in a school (Tomlinson, 1995:7).

The initiative associated with common historical practice of giving assistance in the development of vocation. The development of mentees relates to the teaching abilities which lead to teacher retention. In a psychological sense, mentoring raises the sense of professional effectiveness and competence of mentees. This includes the roles of mentoring such as friendship, modelling and counseling (Kram, 1983:613). Mentoring works to develop attitudinal and behavioural skills that new teachers have to acquire to become self-reliant teachers. It encourages dedication, responsibility, diligence and a disposition of self-motivation and self-driven.

Mentoring leads beginner teachers into believing in themselves and getting involved in an active way in teaching activities. It inspires the spirit of team work, collaboration, open

criticism as well as the principle of *Ubuntu* (Van der Merwe, 2012:231). It fosters the attitude to consistently review the decisions that individuals engage in the quest to improve teaching and learning. It helps the mentee to develop listening skills in order to understand the contributions of learners and colleagues. It encourages the mentee to accept differences and adopt healthy interpersonal relations.

The mentoring of beginning teachers is mainly focused on the development of teaching skills, with the purpose of facilitating learning to be constructive and meaningful (Kram, 1983:613). Mentoring programmes enable beginner teachers to move ahead with regard to teaching competencies as well as benefiting in a holistic manner through skills, knowledge and behaviour change. The acquisition of behaviour relates of being emphatic and humble on the path to constructive performance (Van der Merwe, 2010:231). The acquisition of skills and knowledge involves maintenance of the requisite standard of subject teaching. The strategy improves learning at the work place and implies that an experienced person who is senior in an organisation avails information, emotional support and advice to a junior individual in a defined context. This occurs with a relationship that is extended and characterised by an emotional commitment of substantial nature by concerned parties (Mertz, 2000:13). The functions of mentoring as a career allows the novice teacher to master the ropes of the organisation and prepares the individual for growth as teachers.

Utilising the programme ensures beginner teachers are equipped and familiarised with the procedures to also perform learner assessments in accordance with the National Protocol on Assessment. New teachers need to be introduced into the teaching processes to enable them to manage classes in an effective way. Mentors socialise mentees in both organisational and professional areas. Mentors grow mentees through challenging them, supporting their developmental processes and acting as their role models and critical friends (Duncan & Stock, 2010:303). Schools with well-mentoring programmes are functional and closely associated with high expectations with regard to learner achievement. These programmes assist the beginner teachers to develop their

own convictions and philosophies in relation to teaching and these conceptualisations have to be linked with modern societal demands (Peters, 2010:110).

As part of its function as professional socialisation, mentoring, equips beginner teachers with skills to facilitate students' learning while organisational socialisation enables mentees to manage and enforce school rules while liaising with everybody involved. It is academic achievement as reflected in standardized tests which indicates classroom performance as well as school effectiveness. Schools contribute to student success through supporting and developing the competencies of teachers and the practice of organisation practices that are effective (Blair, 2002:183). Mentees are provided with skills to allow them to relate well with other people. Mentoring avails the ropes of the teaching profession to mentees and this is realised through providing conducive learning environments and coaching. The professional nature of mentoring is demonstrated through the provision of programmes which are career-related as well as enriching the capacity of teachers. Mentees are empowered to gain intensive grasp of the psychology build around context of interest (Crow, 2006:315). Mentees in the process are being relevantly equipped for their future leadership roles. Mentoring aids in the acquisition of task-specific skills and job-relevant knowledge if a functionalist approach to mentoring is arranged (Darwin, 2000:103).

Mentoring is a training strategy to improve organisational practice and formal programmes establish a learning environment that enables participation and achievement in all aspects of academic life, including teaching skills (van der Merwe, 2012:321). It is a programme focusing on ensuring sustained excellence involving the advancement of the career of the mentee as well as general development of the career. This is because mentoring is conducted by an individual with great expertise, experience and commitment to meeting organisational goals. Mentoring rekindles the purpose and passion of teaching. It is a way to encourage the development of individuals so that they can cope with changes related to shifting on to a new role or job. It is a strategy to give help to an individual and is a rewarding and powerful endeavour in the context of teaching and

learning (McKimm, Jollie & Hatter, 2007:2). It is, therefore, a strategy that supports development and work-based learning programmes.

Properly structured mentoring programmes have the potential to increase maturity of the beginner teachers, broaden their horizons and increase the sense of job satisfaction. The mentoring process enhances teaching and works to increase the professional acumen of both mentees and mentors. Mentees are made to understand the career challenges that reflect at the beginning of a job (Johnston, 2014:15). The concept assumes that both parties have a crucial role to play in the process of recasting teaching as a profession (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1995:01). Mentoring helps new teachers to align goals, respond to quick transformations in the organisation and to build a shared purpose. This process requires all parties to understand its centrality in transforming teaching. In the next section, the focus was mainly on corporate mentoring and educational mentoring.

2.2.1 Corporate Mentoring

Companies that are successful, both small and large, employ mentoring strategy to deal with human resources challenges that are complex such as managing succession plans, retention of employees as well as raising workforce production (Kriek & Grayson, 2009:186). Mentoring for corporate businesses target leadership and career development areas of employees in an endeavour to impart new skills and to get them involved in the functions of the organisation. In the corporate world, mentoring, unlike in the educational institutions is looking at reducing turnover costs and maximising employee productivity more than before and a successful one helps the organisation to strategically attract, develop, and retain employees (Ambrosetti, 2010:29). It is used to develop good talent and management strategy as mentoring consultants provide the knowledge, processes, and tools to roll out the best possible programme as a key component of business strategy.

Corporate mentoring helps to establish a diverse leadership and succession pipeline that drives business results, empower employees to grow and achieve their career goals in

ways that enable organisations to achieve their highest potential (Bower, 2007:70). Just like in the educational institutions, corporate mentoring is a relationship that involves the mentor and mentee with the former giving guidance, support and empowering the junior and less experienced mentee. Corporate mentoring helps organisations to maintain a competitive advantage in global environment as through the programmes, organisations find themselves in good positions to discover top talent and utilise it to create good and attractive brand. The mentoring programmes in the corporate world are used to empower employees of all backgrounds to effectively navigate their career paths, hence, they enhance the employees' career development to meet specific organisational needs and objectives. In the corporate world, mentoring programmes are aimed at maximising efficiency and implementing technology to improve, for example, reporting capabilities.

Mentoring consultants in the corporate world are the ones responsible for the application and implementation of mentoring programmes and are in strategic planning for the sake of promoting continuity. The mentoring consultants use their expertise in workplaces for employee career development and knowledge transfer as the more seasoned employees are coming into retirement age, which could potentially leave a company vulnerable if not properly prepared (Marable & Raimondi, 2007:27). Continuity is essential to keep the company functional and relevant in the competitive world, so employees are also on the hunt for careers that satisfies them, for if they are enticed by other companies this could have a negative impact on the company. For the sake of continuity, companies are avoiding this by offering incentives such as mentoring programmes to show the employee they are willing to invest in their future career paths. The companies are prepared to give their employees on-the-job experience through mentoring programmes where objectives are set out from the beginning and development is tracked and measured according to set objectives. Mentoring in the corporate world is mainly aimed at achieving three objectives, namely; employee career development, leadership development and knowledge transfer which are discussed hereunder.

2.2.1.1 Employee career development

Mentoring programmes in the corporate world are looking at the possibility of retaining the skilled employees and develop future leaders (Hansman, 2014:3). In mentoring, companies ensure that employees take an active role in spreading knowledge and best practices throughout their organisations. The idea behind this is the need to hold on to knowledgeable, skilled and potential future leaders of the organisation; retention of skilled employees reduces turnover costs and ensures continuity. Apart from equipping employees with knowledge and skills, corporate mentoring prepares future leaders. The collaborative nature of mentoring develops interpersonal links between individuals, which increases engagement and succession planning strategy. When all these factors are brought together they lead to happier employees and a better retention rate for a stronger, more effective organisation.

2.2.1.2 Job satisfaction

Teacher professional development programmes that are applied and implemented correctly have the potential of lifting the competency and efficiency of the serving teachers. Competent workers have the confidence to venture into new things and test their knowledge. The belief is that behaviour of satisfied people will make positive contributions to the organisation. Efficient teacher professional development programmes lead to satisfaction with the job. This has to do with the teacher exhibiting a sense of success and satisfaction on the job. Job satisfaction is crucial in leading to promotion, recognition, income and the realization of some objectives which lead to feelings of fulfilment (Kaliski, 2007:446). Job satisfaction may also be described as the extent to which an employee is content with the benefits obtained from a vocation, particularly, with regard to intrinsic motivation can be defined also as the extent to which a worker is content with rewards he/she gets out of his/her job, particularly, in terms of intrinsic motivation (Statt, 2004:78). It represents the feeling and perception that job satisfaction leads to psychological and material satisfaction. It is pertinent in addressing issues of effectiveness and efficiency of organisations (Aziri, 2008:46). This implies that schools as organisations must have developmental programmes that are aimed at

producing effective, efficient and competent teachers just as a satisfied employee is a happy employee and a happy employee is a successful employee.

2.2.1.3 Leadership development

People with expertise are regarded as constituting great assets in an organisation. The individuals prove to be difficult to retain but current mentoring programmes raise the levels of retention and the possibility of appointing suitable future leaders in the organisation. This implies continuity with people or employees who know the culture of the company very well. High potential people are crucial to companies, such that it becomes imperative to involve them as well as expose them to various areas of business as a way to develop their skills for excellence. Mentoring programmes are seen by companies as commendable strategies to benefit people with great potentials to attend and guide others (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2007:253). This aims to nurture the leadership chain of an organisation. Mentoring enhances productivity in companies and assists employees to be in harmony with the future plans of business. The belief is that the transfer of knowledge for smooth success is achieved to enable company executives to be appropriately replaced on their retirement.

2.2.1.4 Knowledge transfer

Cull (2006:18) contends that mentoring is a key to the health of an organisation. In the corporate world, mentoring is seen as an appropriate strategy of helping employees to obtain requisite skills, expertise and knowledge which are very critical to the organisation. Mentoring serves as an effective method to create, organise, capture as well as distribute understanding. It is useful in supporting both long-run and short-run situational learning among individuals and groups. Many companies, big and small, attach value to mentoring because it provides quick access to a wide spectrum of peers and experts that can share a wide range of skills and knowledge within an environment which promotes fast learning. Hereunder the study discusses educational mentoring which is the main focus of the researcher.

2.2.2 Educational Mentoring

Educational mentoring is an improvement of serving teachers' overall instructional practice, skill development and social development. Social development includes, amongst others, aspects, such as psychological and emotional support. Educational mentoring is a vehicle through which the beginning teachers build relationships and partnerships with their superiors. It is an acculturation process that ensures the success of beginning teachers in the first few years of their teaching profession. It strengthens the added value of the new teachers who are beginning to build their career in teaching.

For many years, mentoring has grown exponentially and enthusiastically within organisations. This has occurred in areas inclusive of socializing new staff, improving diversity along management ranks and the fast tracking of high achievers (DuBois & Karcher, 2014:3). The concept has taken on numerous meanings and has been applied in educational and cooperate settings. Mentoring has progressed through centuries, as reflected in multiple definitions and expectations in the mentoring relationships. An array of characteristics of mentorship is shown in the different definitions embedded in formal and informal relations. Informal relations of mentoring are much more psychological in nature and enhance the mentee's self-esteem and confidence through emotional bonds, interpersonal dynamics and the discovery of mutual relationships and interests (Jane, 2007:669).

This type of relationship can also have a process that is formal to match new teachers with mentors as a way of building careers. Goals to be achieved are set out at the commencement of the programme in formal mentoring. The results are evaluated in regard to standards that have been crafted. For the sake of acculturation, in formal mentoring, access is open to all serving teachers who meet programme criteria. In this type of relationship, mentor-teachers and mentees (beginning teachers) are paired based on compatibility and shared interests. Mentoring programmes that are formal need to utilise best aspects of informal mentoring and make sure these are institutionalized. The

relationships that emerge from mentorship are recognised to contribute to the development of individuals.

From the definitions given above, many authors agree that mentoring involves beginning teachers getting advice from more experienced teachers. Smethem and Adey (2005:93), maintain that there is evidence that structured mentoring programmes provide opportunity for improved collegiality, openness, reflection, communication, increased autonomy, personal efficiency and self-development of teachers. Mentoring is specifically for enhancing the skills of serving teachers with special focus placed on their instructional practices. Mentoring as a teaching strategy has been employed in several contexts for varied purposes, creating difficulty in the definition of the phenomenon (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2007:253).

Mentoring is viewed as a relationship which is characterised by long term commitment to a situation where by a senior individual gives support to a junior person for the improvement of personal and professional qualities (Barret & Beeson, 2002:13). This pertains learning that is effective, ranging from facilitated learning to focused learning, which is of high impact. The kind of learning is meant to transform individuals and organisations. Mentoring, as used in the discourse of this study, does not refer to training and advising newly-appointed personnel only but Hertting & Phenis-Bourke (2007:7) contend that veteran educators would also greatly benefit from a mentoring experience that takes into account both aspects of socialisation. The mentoring programme should not only consider supporting new or first-year teachers, for veteran teachers should not be ignored (Hertting & Phenis-Bourke, 2007:16). The researcher supports the idea that mentoring should encompass both veteran and beginning teachers.

Mentoring can be mutual learning alliances that create new knowledge, new insight and synergy between people (Kirsten & Poulsen, 2013:76). Mutual learning supports the idea that in the mentoring relationships, both the mentor-teacher and the beginning teacher benefit in different ways. They both create a relationship that is based on mutual learning, respect and shared understanding. Mutual learning has the sense of caring,

empathy and reciprocal understanding. Initially, managers of programmes were not aware of the opportunities of learning for mentors. Therefore, the essence was to identify those mentors that could give advice, transfer knowledge and share experiences to ensure mentors fit into the organisation (Kirsten & Poulsen, 2013:255). When mentors are involved in mentoring they are in “competence development”.

Tillman (2005:116) regards mentoring as a partnership that is collaborative, involving individuals that work together for the sharing and development of mutual interests. In this case, the competencies of a single individual are developed by two or more individuals that work together as a collective. Tally (2008:103) describes mentoring as a strategy that assist new teachers to adapt and excel in new roles of a profession. These different definitions from different authors, all point in the same direction, that mentoring is about developing, guiding, and assisting the beginning teacher to develop into a competent and effective teacher. It is a process of interaction involving individuals from different levels of expertise and experience. The better experienced individual helps the other one to develop in education or a career in the process of socialisation in a school environment (Ball, 1990:57). The process detects that a less experienced individual be assisted by a better experienced individual (Zepeda:1999:97). This is further supported by the notion of ZPD which states that a more experienced individual helps the beginning teacher to move from actual developmental levels to potential levels. The main emphasis is on helping the beginning teacher to establish himself/herself, build confidence, develop strong self-esteem and have improved instructional skills. Yendol-Hoppey (2007:6) contends that mentoring relates to the practice that operates to realise improvement in instruction, in which case, a specialized and experienced teacher engages a new and weakly experienced counterpart in a collaborative way. This activity is done in a situation that is not judgemental to find ways in which classroom instruction could be improved.

Mentorship is considered as one of the strategies to assist another person. However, it is praised as a rewarding and powerful means to leverage the learning of beginning teachers (Mckimm, Jollie & Hatter 2007:1). According to Shulman-Sato (2006:110), it is a relationship that is complementary and built upon the needs of mentees and mentors.

Complementary in the sense that the beginning teacher is not left to himself/herself, but there is somebody knowledgeable willing and prepared to give a helping hand. In the context of this study, mentoring contributes to improve teaching as well as being an essential tool for professional development. Apart from equipping the beginning teacher with teaching techniques and skills, mentoring extends to providing strong and continuous psychological and emotional support.

Mentoring involves an experienced individual transferring knowledge, thoughts and wisdom to a less experienced person. This is done through active participation of the concerned participants in a relationship which is characterised by equity to allow the new teacher to come up with own solutions to problems (Sarri, 2011:722). This is done to close the gap that is there between teacher education and the reality of handling classroom situation. It is the knowledge, personal qualities and skills of the mentor that determine the success of staff development and school-based mentoring. The programme is directed at assisting the new teacher to develop self-confidence and to increase in autonomy, maturity and independence (McMillan, 2007:4). It is a learning strategy that enhances workplace learning that is based on the belief that an experienced senior person who is in a position can provide advice, information and emotional support to a junior person that is less experienced.

The process of mentoring is a nurturing one, in which a more skilled person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels and befriends a less-skilled or less-experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional development. As a nurturing process, mentoring programmes are instrumental in supporting, enabling and triggering major changes within the individual; it helps to accelerate personal changes and uplifts the serving teachers to a greater level of operation. This process, for the beginning teacher is much more of a caring activity by the mentor and involves emotional support from the mentor so as to reduce, for example, the rate of burnouts on beginning teachers. Mentoring is an in-service training of teachers undertaken by mentor-teachers whose advice and support is sought or whose teaching and interactions with pupils may be witnessed by new teachers (Hobson, 2002:01).

This statement brings to the fore the value of learning from others, through for example, observing how more-experienced experts go about their teaching. Mentoring contributes to teachers acquiring skills, dispositions and knowledge that is required for organisation and professional efficiency. Through mentoring, beginning teachers are empowered with skills, behaviour and knowledge to allow them to deal with issues of efficacy in a successful way. Teachers who are exposed to mentoring are accorded the latitude to grow in the way they do things, establish own philosophy and conviction to achieve greater attainment (Duncan & Stock, 2010:32). This implies that, the serving teacher under the supervision of a more-experienced mentor is able to venture into the unknown without fear of failure.

Mentees are not reluctant to take risks because experienced mentor teachers are available to give guidance and assistance. Inexperienced mentees receive guidance in learner motivation that involves intrinsic motivation associated with recognition of each person. It leads to team-work inspired by a sense of belonging in pursuit of learner well-being, increased capacity, improved deliverance and understanding of school context. The mentor teacher, as a role model is expected to have positive and meaningful influence on the professional development of the beginning teacher by displaying conduct that is compatible to his/her role.

Mentoring functions should be carried out within the context of an on-going, caring relationship between the mentor and the mentee (Anderson & Snyder, 1993:17). For this process to be meaningful and effective, it must be a continuous activity that takes the beginning teacher through various aspects of professional development. The mentoring of beginning teachers is a pivotal aspect in the development of beginning teachers as they enter into the teaching profession. Mentoring involves a connection of theory with practice. It boosts the personal and professional advancement of new teachers while at the same time creating fresh opportunities for the mentors. This is a means of closing the gap that exist between the actual knowledge the beginning teacher has and his/her potential developmental levels. In a way, this confirms the idea that the education which

the beginning received during teacher training is not enough on its own, therefore, developmental programmes to assist the beginning teachers to find their footing are very essential hence the need to apply and implement the mentoring programmes that are goal-directed.

The act of mentoring is valuable for developing competent teacher since it has to meet the needs of the mentee and must have impact on his/her future career. It is a process through which beginning teachers are assisted to find their footing on their own, dealing with issues related to disillusionment, frustration and stress. Mentorship programmes which are meaningful help to reduce the trauma which new teachers encounter as they enter into the teaching profession. They are assisted to discover the strategy of teaching in a school setting (Tomlinson, 1995:07); it is all about easily and harmoniously allowing the beginning teacher to navigate freely into his/her profession.

Van der Merwe (2012:321) classify mentoring as a training strategy to improve organisational practice; this stands to reason that not only the mentee benefits from the mentoring programmes, but the organisation as well. Formal mentoring programmes establish a learning environment that enables participation and achievement in all aspects of academic life, including teaching skills. It is a programme that is focused on ensuring sustained excellence which can only materialise if serving teachers are well equipped with skills and techniques to improve their instructional practices. Mentoring relates to the professional advancement and career progression of a mentee because it is performed by a member that is high rank and experience on an individual of a lesser rank and experience. The facilitator needs to rekindle the mentees' purpose and passion for teaching. The process is a way of encouraging personal development of individuals as they engage in new demands such as internship of a profession or job. Mentoring is a pivotal component particularly with regard to learning (McKimm, Jollie & Hatter, 2007:02). This powerful way of learning can equip, motivate, and improve the quality of serving teachers' instructional practices; it is a strategy that supports development and work-based learning programmes. The intention is keep serving teachers, updated, abreast, informed, in keeping with the latest developments.

Meggison and Clutterbuck (1995:13) considers the process as a “off-the-line help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking”. The scheme can be used to support individuals or organisations to negotiate transition that would lead to improved effectiveness of their respective environments. Mentoring helps beginning teachers to develop and reinforce self-confidence and their willingness to take risks while also accelerating their professional development and strengthening their autonomy and independence (McKimm, Jollie & Hatter, 2007:02). Properly-structured mentoring programmes have the potential to increase maturity of the beginning teachers, broaden their horizons and increase their sense of job satisfaction.

Mentoring contributes to enhanced teaching and is also an effective instrument for the professional development of new teachers. The programme is also a critical tool for teaching beginning teachers to allow them to acclimatize with the challenges of the profession (Johnston, 2014:15). The process should be associated with the conviction that the modern society is at the edge of recasting teaching as a profession (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1995:01). Mentoring helps new teachers to cope with uncertainty, address issues of rapid transformations and the development of common purpose. Therefore, the programme may never attain its potential unless it is driven by an understanding of its centrality in the transformation of teaching as a profession.

Honesty and respect, Grima (2014:472) believes are valuable factors in the mentor-mentee relationship because they help in creating a bond and good chemistry between the parties. The relationship is developed through mutual respect for the moral contract between mentor and mentee, and it influences beginning teacher’s satisfaction. The mutual trust leads the mentees to believe in the complete understanding of their circumstances by the mentor. The relationship between the mentee and the mentor should be of quality for the success of the process (Robert & Sage, 2011:753). Quality mentor-mentee behaviours open up avenues in which the interaction is supportive and satisfying to the concerned parties. In the next topic the researcher is going to discuss how mentoring is applied in other countries and in South Africa.

2.3 MENTORING AS SUPPORT STRATEGY FOR MENTEE

Leaders in education need to be aware that some teacher development programmes are not that intensive to tackle changes in the attitudes and dispositions of teachers (Wang & Odell, 2002:16). The implication is that is that the skills and knowledge that student teachers acquired during their teachers' training must be supplemented. The concept of continued support after a qualification through mentoring is a norm in various professions, therefore, a newly-qualified teacher needs to be provided with support that will help him/her to build confidence which will, in turn, lead to competency.

It is through well-organised mentoring programmes that a newly-qualified teacher is supported to navigate through the complexities of the organisation. Mentors are needed to help the mentees in setting high but achievable goals, making realistic plans and passing on needed skills. Mentors are always there to provide resources and opportunities for the development of the mentee and with their support, the mentee teacher can confidently solve some of the problems that come his/her way. Well-structured mentoring programmes provide personal support and motivation that will help the mentee to look ahead.

Mentoring has the ability and potential of improving awareness of learning gaps on the side of the mentees for it creates the space for them to engage in self-assessment and develop the ability to give and take criticism. Mentorship concerns assisting the mentee to increase in independence, confidence, autonomy and confidence since the relationship that develops enables the mentee to learn and grow in a safe and protected environment (Mckimm, Jollie & Hatter, 2007:05). In the initial stages, the mentee will be largely dependent, and that is when the mentor needs to be supportive, helpful, friendly and encouraging for the mentee to learn and grow.

When the mentee operates in a safe and protected environment that develops or reinforces his/her sense of self-confidence and willingness to take risks. The mentoring relationship that develops between the mentor and mentee, if properly managed, has the

ability to accelerate professional development and increased maturity. Through learning, the mentees get to understand how things operate, and that helps to broaden their horizon and increase their sense of job satisfaction. A good relationship between the mentor and mentee recognises the need for personal development and offers opportunities for effective role modelling. Every mentoring relationship is unique depending on the aspects of the mentee such as interests, needs and the interactive relations between the mentee and the mentor (Jansen, 2003:73).

Mentoring has an added advantage for the mentee because it encourages on-going learning, develops and identifies learning opportunities in the working situation while also facilitating peer relationship within the working environment. Mentoring offers opportunities for experimental learning and helps with problem-solving mechanisms. Hence, through mentoring, beginner teachers build a reservoir of strategies for problem-solving in handling the practical and complex issues in the concept of teaching in schools (Hudson, 2012:72).

Different opinions about the impact of mentoring on serving teachers have been articulated, and they mostly agree that mentoring is a way of encouraging, supporting and promoting the acculturation of the mentee. The concept of having mentors to develop skills and manage work stress under the guidance of mentors has steadily been accepted (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1995:01). It is apparent that in a given occupation that is complex, new teachers require someone to teach them the way of doing things and develop their competence. Like in other occupations, new teachers must be helped to fit in the school environment. However, the mentoring of fresh teachers might never reach its intended potential unless it is considered central in the transformation of teaching as a profession (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1995:1).

Mentoring programmes must commit to the view that the entirety of teachers are effective if offered the opportunity to learn through the support of a community of colleagues that is strong. Mentoring is a strategy which is meant to prepare teachers to be the agents of change and with a commitment to create a difference in young individuals. These

possess the expertise for the development of student success at both the pedagogical levels (Van der Merwe, 2015:21). It is a strategy to improve workplace learning, capacitates newcomers with techniques to survive and leads to career advancement. Therefore, it is considered a device that helps in building a culture of teaching that is strong in schools and committed to the advancement of teaching and learning.

Teaching, by nature, is an emotional activity, and as a result, new teachers' increasing needs for emotional support must be taken care of. Caring and forming relationships is an emotional experience which needs somebody who is well-guided and is properly handled by those with the know-how. Working with children from fractured, poor, and single-parent families is an emotional experience which also needs to be handled well. Beginner teachers require strong emotional support especially with regard to issues of frustration, anxiety and insecurity. Mentoring has to be directed and associated with an overarching conviction that the programme is at the verge of redefining the profession of teaching. The process promotes collegial professionalism which, by itself, implies working with and learning from teaching colleagues (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1995:2). In the next section, the researcher discusses the need for mentoring as a professional development strategy.

2.4 THE APPLICATION OF MENTORING

Different countries in different contexts apply and implement mentoring programmes for serving teachers based on what the country intends to achieve educationally. In this study, the researcher looks at the application of mentoring programmes for serving teachers in other countries in comparison with the South African way of handling professional development of teachers. The researcher will also examine the implementation of mentoring programmes for serving teachers in the United States (US) and New Zealand, as well as in South Africa.

2.4.1 The Application of Mentoring in the United States

The American educational system is directed by the motto: Teaching is 'our nation's most valuable profession'. Based on the essence of this motto, each year, schools, districts and the federal government spend millions of dollars on in-service seminars, mentoring and other forms of professional development. The federal government went on to legislate the continuous professional development of serving teachers through The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. Continuous professional development of serving teachers became so central that educational scholars and policy makers were mandated, through the NCLB, to establish professional development programmes for serving teachers. The NCLB stipulates that governments make sure that professional development programmes are available for the entire group of practicing teachers (Borko, 2012:03). The Act sees the importance of investing in the potential of human beings which is pivotal to guarantee prosperity and the future of Americans. The NCLB emphasises the need to help serving teachers to succeed and children to learn.

The Act mandated educational scholars and policy makers to develop professional programmes that create opportunities for serving teachers to develop new instructional practices. Through the Act, a proposal for a multifaceted approach was established through which serving teachers will be assisted to succeed. It must be an approach that includes high standards for teacher classroom performance and learner achievement and should be an on-going professional development aimed at assisting serving teachers to meet the demanding new standards. The federal government noted with concern, the inadequacy of conventional professional development as the most serious unsolved problem for policy and practice in American Education, currently. Conventional professional development is one that follows generally-agreed and accepted ways of doing things. McLaughlin & Talbert (2001:21) admit that this conventional professional development can lead to improvements in instructional practices and child learning. Under The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, however, the professional development of serving teachers focused on four areas to produce effective teachers,

namely, situative teacher learning, subject matter knowledge, student thinking and instructional practices.

2.4.1.1 Situative teacher learning

This is the type of professional development where learning is based on participation in socially-organised activities with the emphasis being on the individual's employ of knowledge which is part of their involvement in social practices. The learning of teachers that is situative is seen as a professional learning endeavour which entails active development of individuals as well as their acculturation into the society at large (Duncan & Stock, 2010:294). The situative approach, demands that individuals be deeply involved in the teaching practice which stands to reason that learning is socially-constructed. Situative teacher learning occurs in many social places including in the classrooms, social communities and during professional development courses or workshops (Borko, 2012:14). The implication is that in situative teacher learning, serving teachers learn through active participation in various activities as lots of learning come in the form of direct participation and experimentation which, in the long run leads to increased subject matter knowledge.

2.4.1.2 Subject matter knowledge

Professional development programmes which are of high-quality assist to transform teaching through the deepening of understanding in the field. In-depth knowledge is critical for quality teaching and learning. Professional development is a motivation in its own right as it helps serving teachers to raise their knowledge and improve instructional practices. Scalon (2008:58) contends that teachers should possess flexible and rich understanding of the subjects that they teach. It helps the serving teachers to understand the central facts and concepts of the subject, making teaching easy and a pleasure. These professional development programmes are designed to make serving teachers knowledgeable on how facts and concepts are connected and know the processes used to establish new content. Increased subject-matter knowledge improves serving teachers' understanding of student thinking which is crucial for effective teaching and learning.

2.4.1.3 Student thinking

Professional development programmes for serving teachers in the United States (US) are designed to help them (serving teachers) to understand how children's ideas about subject develop, hence, help teachers to select their instructional methods based on the child's level of understanding. Bower, (2007:73) argues that through activities, such as clinical interviews with students, serving teachers learn about the children's conceptions. Knowing about a child's conceptions, enables serving teachers to explore students' thinking and plan ways to build on their existing knowledge. These programmes equip serving teachers with knowledge to develop different ways to pose problems to students and also lead to an increased awareness of the role that the children's thinking plays in the learning process. Through these programmes serving teachers are taught the worth of listening carefully to students in order to build on their understanding.

2.4.1.4 Instructional practices

Dufour (2002:12) maintains that a key reason for deepening serving teachers' knowledge of subject matter and student thinking is to improve classroom teaching. To improve their instructional practices, serving teachers must learn to observe others for improved classroom control, strengthening the long-held perception that learning through active participation increases and fast-tracks the grasping of concepts. Through these professional development programmes, serving teachers are taught problem-solving strategies and how to use students' responses to assess their understanding. Serving teachers who are equipped with problem-solving mechanisms have a better classroom control which simplifies their instructional practices. The programmes help modifies some elements of serving teachers' knowledge and practices so that in the end, serving teachers incorporate strategies for eliciting students' thinking, into their teaching.

2.4.2 Application of Mentoring in New Zealand

The country has since 1985, been committed to provide intensive mentoring programmes for practicing teachers. The mentoring system has roundly been commended as being 'state of the art' (Wong, 2005:42). Sufficient policies materials, funding and time

resources have been expended in schools and services for early child hood education. Serving teachers are also exposed to on-site mentoring as a strategy to collect evidence to evaluate the extent to which they meet the requirements for full registration of teachers.

The 'Learning to Teach' (LT) programme was introduced by the New Zealand Teachers in 2006. This was meant to explore the quality of mentorship programmes that were being provided to those teachers who were provisionally registered (PRT). Draft guidelines were established to drive mentoring programmes. In the main, the council was tasked with goal-setting, provision of documents, development of content for mentoring and provision for skills development; the guidelines aimed to bring in New Zealand a transformative, educative approach to mentoring of serving teachers. The guidelines developed by the Council urged school management to give mentoring a status within the school and according to Duncan and Stock (2010:309), these programmes should be embedded within the school's vision, policies, practices and procedures. The statement implies that schools were to take mentoring as an integral part of their programme. The government was so eager that it declared that mentoring must be a commitment for the schools.

The mentoring programmes were designed to ensure that serving teachers had adequate "advice and guidance". They were intended to offer teachers the chance for assessment and appraisal in regard to established standards of registration. Their mentoring programmes were all encompassing because they provided, amongst others, knowledge transfer, skills development, emotional support and enculturation into the workplace. In terms of their provision, mentoring should be teacher-oriented. The policy required that participation takes place for a duration of more than a year. There was need for adequate resources to support the goal-oriented approach to development and that which would justify the existence of substantial paid time. The country perceived mentoring as a planned process to encourage the interaction of complementary providers (mentors). The mentoring programmes purposed to provide excellent working conditions for the kind of training to improve the quality of teaching.

It was upon the council to ensure that programmes are high-quality and responsive to PRTs needs, thus, the expectations were that the programmes should be supported and promoted by professional leaders and implemented by appropriately-trained mentor teachers. The programmes should support PRTs to become effective teachers, allow for observing excellent teacher practices and be evidence-informed reflective practice, ensuring that serving teachers should be taught how to make the right decisions, follow the right path and stay motivated. The council, therefore, viewed mentoring as a form of professional development that empowers serving teachers to contribute to the world around them and prepare them for the future. The emphasis was to develop programmes that would help serving teachers make professional judgments, manage difficult conversations and improve instructional practices.

2.4.3 Application of Mentoring in South Africa

It is required that teachers be adequately equipped with the necessary competencies to address needs and challenges for the transformation of South African education (Department of Education, 2007:04). Education transformation in South Africa is driven through the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development. This seeks to address the demand for teachers that are well qualified to teach in schools (Department of Education, 2007:05). The policy is based on two sub-systems that complement each other. They include continuing professional Teacher development (CPTD) and Initial Professional Education of Teachers (IPET). The focus of the study is on enhancing the skills and knowledge of teachers through the employ of professional development programmes. Through the policy programme, it is possible to transform instructional provision in South Africa.

The Policy was developed nationally for the provinces to implement and manage it. The Policy Framework identifies four types of CPTD activities for the development of serving teachers: school-driven activities, employer-driven activities, qualification-driven activities and others offered by approved organisations (Department of Education, 2007:17). School-driven activities are the professional development programmes carried out at

school level. These types of activities are meant to develop serving teachers' abilities to improve their instructional practices. At the school level, principals are expected to create a school climate wherein schools' curriculum and administrative issues receive collaborative attention by all teachers in the school. School principals are responsible for the formulation of action plans that should focus on achieving schools' aims and objectives. This approach directly involves school principals in the development of serving teachers by expecting them (principals) to systematically reflect upon the outcomes of their plans.

Employer-driven activities are normally taken care of by provinces in collaboration with districts and circuit offices. The activities, amongst others, include seminars, workshops and courses. The Department of Education believe that in-service training (INSET) should be seen as an on-going process of professional development for serving teachers whereby teachers continuously improve their skills, knowledge and attitudes, while continuing their employment (Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009:03). This is the type of professional development that seeks to keep the serving teachers actively and continuously involved in activities that improve their instructional practices.

Qualification-driven activities are those that the individual teacher gets involved in with the sole intention of improving personal qualifications and this is possible through reading and furthering one's studies. There are times, however, when certain universities and other educational formations offer serving teachers workshops, seminars and training to improve their knowledge and instructional practices.

2.4.3.1 Objectives of CPTD

Continuous Professional Development (CPTD) endeavours to empower qualified teachers to address the demands and challenges of South African education system in the 21st century (Department of Education, 2007:01). The application and implementation of CPTD is premised on the understanding that teachers are the bedrock of the education system (Department of Education, 2007:03). The principle clearly indicates how essential teacher professional development is. To highlight the value of teacher education, former

Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, in a speech on World Teachers' Day in the National Assembly in 2001 said "Let us recognise the importance of teachers and their work". CPTD enables learners to "learn well and equip themselves for further learning and for satisfying lives as productive citizens, for the benefit of their families, their communities and our nation" (DoE, 2007:25).

These development initiatives should strive to assist teachers to improve their skills of teaching. They need to be assisted to be effective in executing tasks that are essential but demanding. Teachers are required to ceaselessly boost their performance through professional competency. They should be empowered to improve their subject knowledge, self-confidence, skills and the management of learners in the classroom. It is the teachers that should play a pivotal role in enhancing the status of their profession. This can be done by assisting teachers to identify programmes which are suitable in contributing towards their professional development (Department of Education, 2007:1). It has to be realised that a difference exists between self-selected and compulsory professional development programmes. Compulsory programmes are funded by the authority that is in charge while teachers engaged in self-selected programmes might receive bursaries (Department of Education, 2007:03). This statement from the Department of Education, concurs with the earlier assertion that there are school-driven, employer-driven and qualification-driven activities.

2.4.3.2 The Regulation of CPTD

The South African Council for Educators (SACE), the statutory body for professional teachers, has an overall responsibility for quality assurance and implementation management of the CPTD (Department of Education, 2007:19). All teachers registered by SACE have to earn professional development points by selecting approved activities that meet their developmental needs. From the countries discussed above, the United States and New Zealand, they talk of mentoring as a form of professional development for serving teachers while the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, also discusses professional development of serving teachers. Professional development programmes for serving teachers in these three

countries are applied and implemented in different contexts, but they all have common direction, that is, to nurture, develop, and transfer knowledge and skills as well as to improve instructional practices of teachers.

2.5 SERVING TEACHERS AND MENTORING

The professional development programmes for teachers are a strategy to make them to be more effective. They ultimately encourage the learning of students through the enhancement of the skills, knowledge, attitudes and value systems of teachers. Mentoring advances professional development which is an avenue to growth and self-actualisation (Roland, 2006:22). Well-structured mentoring programmes are very essential for the professional development of staff for it is through these that mentees are advised, by a more senior official about the organisational culture. Mentoring can turn a trial-and-error approach to the mentee's career, into a more efficient and effectively-directed one (Terri, 2015:51). The mentees will have somebody more experienced to lead, guide and support them to navigate the policies and complexities of the organisation. The mentor provides safe and secure environment for the mentee to express his/her views and the more the mentee operates from a protected environment, the more the senses of job security and career advancement grow; that leads to job satisfaction. Serving teachers need mentoring because it has got some of the following long-term benefits: professional development, professional growth and job satisfaction.

2.5.1 Professional Development of Teachers

Professional development is defined as an on-going initiative and cumulative learning necessary to develop new conceptions, skills and behaviours (Zepeda, 1999:2). A well-structured process has the potential to offer more opportunities for learning that are suitable for the individual goals and needs of the teacher. Willis (2002:13) advocates that professional development activities need to be long term site, based, inclusive and accessible. These activities should not be appendages but part of everyday practice of a teacher. Professional development programmes are critical in the development of

positive ethics, in which individuals are motivated through experiencing the teaching of being valued (Bubb & Earley, 2007:2). The central aim of professional development is to add to the knowledge teachers have, improve their skills thereby helping them know their professional values, so as to facilitate growth in individuals, as well as the organisation (Van der Merwe, 2010:73). Professional development deepens the knowledge of teachers regarding the subject matter and the way in which learners think, with the main aim improving teaching in the classroom. The programmes that explicitly focus on the subject content may assist teachers to deepen their understanding.

Programmes that are of high quality enable teachers to obtain in-depth knowledge of the subject to leverage their teaching, for teachers become motivated to try out new ideas and experiment with new teaching practices (Borko, 2004:3). Teachers benefit a lot through learning in schools of their practice, which naturally provide them with feelings in which new knowledge can be immediately applied. Teacher development is effective especially if it takes place in their usual environment. Programmes for teacher development have to allow teachers to keep abreast with changes, stay updated, engage in reflective practice, experiment, be innovative and share knowledge (Geijel, Slegers, Stoel & Kruger, 2009:416). On the other hand, teachers that are not exposed to professional development initiatives find it difficult to improve their teaching skills. Consequently, the learning of students suffers as such teachers are devoid of abilities to try out teaching practices that are effective. Informal contexts can also provide opportunities for teacher development. This occurs when teachers discuss as colleagues, personal reading and research, observing others in practice and emulating the work of peers (Hayes, 2010:5).

New teachers are prone to learn to use practices that are effective through extra support from others. Strong, Fletcher and Villar (2004:27) argue that new teachers can have a significant impact on the achievement of students through exposure to intensive professional development activities for a period of two years. This kind of development needs to take place in the context of teachers' daily practice. It is effective for all teachers to be engaged in growth programmes at a school than for teachers to participate in

development programmes as individuals. School-based development programmes allow teachers to analyse student academic progress for the year, identify learning gaps, develop solutions and immediately apply them to enhance student attainment (Perrone, 2003:53).

Development programmes need planning which is well thought out. This has to be followed by implementation strategies that are carefully executed for the attainment of useful feedback. This feedback determines future actions for ultimate student achievement. Professional development has to cause teachers to improve the way they deliver instruction for it to be deemed as effective. Those in administration have to be turned into better leaders that are capable of assisting teachers to understand, plan and implement effective student learning discourses (Hayes, 2010:10).

Teaching is a challenging endeavour that needs teachers that are dedicated, of high quality and professional. These teachers have to be aware of the importance of their practices and continue eager to increase their knowledge, skills and understanding (Goble & Horm, 2014:12). Teacher development programmes that are offered at schools enable teachers to learn from colleagues, support each other and demand accountability for the implementation of acquired knowledge. A culture of learning is also created across the school with the efforts of teachers to actively engage students being supported. Williams (2000:31) argues that the programmes provide continuous chances for teachers to improve their skills and knowledge so that they can assist students to achieve. In fact, students learn when teachers also learn. Therefore, the purpose of the programmes is to enhance the learning of both teachers and students. Teachers have to continue to learn and raise their professionalism throughout their careers for ease of implementation of practices based on research (Bubb & Earley, 2007:4). Teachers benefit by participating in professional development programmes because they learn new effective approaches and techniques.

Teacher professional development activities aim to revamp the core attributes as regard effective teachers. Teachers are assisted to understand the subject content in their fields

to also facilitate the learning of their students. Teachers are provided with teaching skills which include assessment of their students for content mastery and cognitive improvements (Goble & Horm, 2014:21). Professional development enhances the professional capacity of teachers on issues such as skills, self-confidence, reflection, motivation and the propensity to implement innovations. Professional development as an on-going engagement can be formal and informal but allow teachers to rethink their practice. The ultimate goal is to foster requisite skills and knowledge to better service delivery for students' academic achievement and well-being. Involvement in professional development programmes creates room for adult learning and quality learning in the classroom (Bubb & Earley, 2007:4). Well-crafted and rolled out development activities consistently yield positive results in the learning of teachers and their students.

A strong link exists between teaching experiences and student outcomes. Professional development is not primarily focused on student outcomes but the transformation of practices and the improvement of teaching (Stoll, Harris & Handscomb, 2012:4). Effective professional development needs to begin with an analysis of the needs of students which is then used as the basis for the provision of teacher development opportunities. Many forms of teacher development endeavours are driven by the ability to identify knowledge and skill areas of teachers that required development (Harris & Jones, 2010:173). Learning from and with colleagues present a very powerful constituent of vibrant professional learning. Purposeful collaboration between peers ensure school systems become excellent channels to deliver education. Teachers should value collaborative learning that is focused, as this is a strategy to substantially improve the learning of students (Blair, 2007:36). Collaborative professional development brings with it a greater sense of ability, confidence, enthusiasm and commitment to revamp the learning of students through the use of innovations.

Teachers working in partnership with others encounter high chances for learning from and with each other as it opens channels for mutual engagement. The programmes avail opportunities for the sharing of information and the co-construction of strategies to develop practice. Stoll, Harris and Handscomb (2012:4) argue that development and

professional programmes that are successful are linked with learning communities in regard to differences they bring to the practices of teachers and the achievements of students. By offering teachers the opportunity to participate and work with these communities' essential high-quality professional development is the outcome.

Professional development that is effective requires leadership to create the necessary conditions with the assistance of senior officials that recognise the importance of such processes in improving the outcomes of students (Williams, 2000:13). Leaders play a significant part to establish a culture of mutual and respectful relationships that are characterised with mutual trust. This ensures that professional development activities are undertaken in contexts which encourage teachers to be positive about themselves and which is a critical factor for a commitment in on-going advancement (Blair, 2007:72).

Bubb and Earley (2007:1) argue that the development and management of people as reflected in Human Resource Development (HRD) and Human Resource Management (HRM) are crucial in improving the performance of schools, colleges and other organisations. Programmes for continuous development of professionals need to be viewed as an investment of note. Schools have to establish means of implementing the programmes through management and leadership. Continuous professional development helps everyone in the organisation to be more efficient on the job, improves retention and recruitment. Professional development establishes learner-centred communities as it creates beneficial ethos where every individual feels motivated and valued (Robert & Sage, 2011:753). The main purpose of professional development is to extend the knowledge about the profession which teachers already possess, improve skills and concerns of value. This ultimately facilitates growth in individuals as well as organisations (Zepeda, 1999:2). Professional development deepens the knowledge of the teacher in regard to the content of the subject and improves the nature of student thinking. Therefore, development programmes that focus on the content of the subject have the effect of improving teaching in the classroom as well as an overall understanding of teaching.

Caena (2011:03) presents professional development as a notion involving the development of expertise, knowledge and other requirements for teachers. The academic achievement of students is raised when teachers subscribe to professional development activities aimed at the acquisition of skills that teachers need so as to address the main learning difficulties of students. Professional development programmes should provide teachers with experiences which allow them to deal with quick transformations, experiment, engage reflective practice and share knowledge and innovations (Geijsel, Slegers, Stoel & Kruger, 2009:416). Teachers that fail to take part in professional development discourses are unable to improve student learning through enhanced skills. Informally, professional development can occur through discussions among colleagues at work, research, observation of the work of colleagues and independent study (Hayes, 2010:05). Professional development which is school-based affords teachers the opportunity to analyse student performance for the year and to implement solutions to the needs of students (Hayes, 2010:07).

In professional development, the leadership team has to analyse the records of students to identify learning gaps in a given class level. The problems are identified and investigated to find out what teachers need to know and implement to remedy the problematic situation (Hayes, 2010:07). Professional development allows the less competent teachers to relate with and learn from the experienced teachers. Teachers can boost school-based professional development initiatives by voluntarily participating as individuals, in activities which expose them to new skills and knowledge to better leverage student learning. Teaching stands as one of the professions that demand dedication and high-quality practice, usually attained through extension of skills, knowledge and positive activities (Goble & Horm, 2014:02). Involvement in professional development activities at school enables teachers to learn from each other as challenges and to be accountable for the application and implementation of their acquired knowledge.

Professional development is an on-going process including informal and formal learning processes which allow the entire teachers in schools to rethink that which they do, to improve their skills, knowledge and the way in which they work so that the well-being and

learning of students are improved. In effect, adult learning is carried forward to ultimately lift educational quality in schools (Grima, 2014:472). The reason is that professional learning is consistent in crafting a difference in the learning of teachers and students as there is a connection between student outcomes and professional experience of teachers. Professional teacher development improves the student outcomes first and foremost but also ushers in transformations in teaching and overall practices (Bubb & Earley, 2007:04). Professional development that impacts student learning is one that begins with a diagnosis of their needs. This implies that the learning of students need to directly determine that which teachers have to learn (Stoll, Harris & Handscomb, 2012:04). Many professional programmes are driven by an identification of areas for development such as skills, attitudes and knowledge (Harris & Jones, 2010:173).

The effectiveness of professional development endeavours occurs when it is done as an integral component of the entire improvement effort in schools instead of being undertaken as an isolated programme independent of school wide changes. Professional development that is of high quality has to involve a well thought out infusion of school-based facilitated activities as well as the participation of external expertise (Stoll, Harris & Handscomb, 2012:05).

Professional development initiatives that are worthwhile are linked to learning communities and produce real changes in teacher practices and student outcomes (Stoll, Harris & Handscomb, 2012:07). Enabling teachers the chance to participate and work with these communities is critical for quality professional development of serving teachers. It also allows for the location of professional development with cultural environments that are sustainable. School leadership needs to work hard to ensure quality professional growth is advanced and supported at all levels.

The mentee, as a role player in the mentoring process, is discussed in next section.

2.5.2 Professional Growth of Teachers

Professional growth embraces the practices that engage serving teachers after certification owing to their completion of teacher training. The activities are earmarked to boost their professional skills, knowledge and the clarification of values for effective learning of students (Bubb & Earley, 2007:4). Professional development is pivotal in promoting the commitment of serving teachers to professional advancement. The management of the development of people entails the provision of structures to mediate the desired level of development. Professional development programmes that are properly administered have the potential to help in staff development and to improve their workplace performance.

Hedegaard, (1992:57) acknowledges teaching as an intricate profession that needs teachers to interpret the art and the science of the craft as a way to impact the acquisition of knowledge. Therefore, teaching as a science requires an understanding of the theory of learning as well as the functioning of the brain. Teachers are expected to conceptualise the content, process as well as the engagement of experiences of learning for the promotion of student achievement (Clarke, 2004:119). Teachers should sharpen the theory and practice of teaching in an environment which is characterised by sudden change, cultural diversity and great progress in the application of knowledge. Therefore, the modern world needs institutions to improve the nature of teaching and to institute development programmes that are of quality.

Sparks (2004:4) argues that quality development initiatives that are aimed at professional growth of teachers are based on principles of collaboration and collegiality between teachers, among teachers and the principals of schools in addressing teaching and learning problems which are of great importance in the education system. The programmes have to be designed in a way that avails concrete support to improve teaching and learning. These need to enable teachers to collaborate in reviewing performances on some particular set standards and to discuss ways to enhance teaching and learning competencies (Berk, 2002:27). Institutions need to subject teachers to

professional development activities that are rigorous intellectually and standard-focused as a part of continuous upliftment in their work practices. Teachers have to be allowed to identify their professional development needs in the process of crafting growth plans by schools. These growth plans are a strategy to increase the participation and competencies of teachers.

Professional learning programmes that are well-structured, deepens teachers' knowledge of the content they teach and expand their repertoire of instructional skills to teach that content. School developmental programmes are essential for they also provide practicing teachers with the classroom assessment skills that allow them to regularly monitor gains in student learning resulting from improved classroom practices (Daniels, 2001:11). For teachers to progress professionally they need to take initiatives of engaging in professional development programmes. Schools are learning communities, and they must at all times strive to promote the culture of collaboration and collective responsibility for the development of effective teaching practices, is up to them as teachers to engage in professional learning that focuses on developing their core attributes. Engaging teachers in quality learning is the most successful way to improve teacher effectiveness; they need the kind of professional learning that is directed towards providing teachers with the skills to teach and assess for deep understanding (Greenwald, Hodges & Laine, 1995:2).

To achieve results, professional learning should deepen teachers' knowledge of the subjects being taught, thus, the need to make beginning teachers master the content of what is presented in the classroom (Harwell, 2001:4). High-quality professional learning sharpens the teachers' teaching skills in the classroom which is essential for their professional growth. Teachers belong to learning communities which influence them to take their personal studies very serious and get additional qualifications as this goes with upward mobility, increased remuneration and personal growth. Professional learning contributes and generates fresh competencies in the profession, enable teachers to stay in tune with advancements in their fields, raise the capacity to monitor the work of students, offer valuable feedback as well as redirect the teaching process (McDowall-

Long, 2004:93). Professional learning has to be desired taking cognizance of the activities which allow teachers to develop skills for the implementation of learnt content.

Through professional development programmes, serving teachers are provided with the means to experience continuing education - vital for improved instructional practices as these lead to improved learner performance, the main objective of teaching and learning. In the process, the serving teacher continues to develop the knowledge and skills required for effective professional practice. According to Merrill (2002:50), development programmes have the potential to help the serving teacher have accelerated subject knowledge, become versatile, competent and be able to handle sophisticated and complex issues. The programmes help the teachers to close the gap between their actual developmental levels and the potential levels which is good for the confidence of a serving teacher.

In order for teachers to be effective, there is need for them to have an immense grasp of the subject knowledge, the students as well as various strategies to realise student learning. Quality professional learning provides teachers with knowledge about teaching and helps them to keep informed. Teachers need knowledge to continually refine their conceptual and pedagogical skills. Professional learning addresses areas for improvement of individual teachers' practice. Schools must provide on-going learning chances for teachers to improve knowledge, dispositions and skills that are desired in order to achieve higher standards of teaching.

Professionals must continually enrich their knowledge and increase their sense of professionalism over the course of their careers so as to implement current research-based practice (Goble & Horm, 2014:2). Teachers need to recognise and realise the need for professional learning and be encouraged to assume an active role in their professional and personal growth. Teachers need to take an inactive part in their professional development through engagement in on-going development programmes as it is quality teachers that produce effective instruction for quality outcomes.

Professional learning must be guided, directed and supervised by a school leadership that is committed to enhancing teacher competency. Social justice occurs in a school environment, in a case, in which mentees are exposed to productive criticism coming from mentors while at the same time being aware and assuming control of available strategies for upward movement (Van der Merwe, 2014:113). Astute leaders are able to activate a number of qualities which encourage effective teaching for productive learning. Schools with strong leadership that values and provides professional learning opportunities for teachers are characterised by high learner achievement, a shared sense of purpose and a frequent and systematic evaluation of learners. In such schools, the environment is orderly, and comprehensive resources are available.

2.5.3 Job Satisfaction

Beginning teachers should regularly check their practices of teaching with the different parts of their training and engage in critical self-study to improve their work and profession (Wang & Odell, 2002:14). Through self-study, serving teachers will be able to identify their needs and demands in order to take their profession to another level. Having identified their needs and demands, they then engage in mentoring relationships aimed at improving their skills, techniques, and knowledge and assessment strategies for them to become effective and efficient teachers. When mentees get involved in mentoring programmes, they become better, well prepared and competent enough to stand on their own. Quality professional learning sharpens and deepens the teachers' teaching skills in the classroom - essential for their professional growth. To be effective, professional learning should broaden the teachers' horizon and knowledge of the subject being taught (Harwell, 2001:12). Teachers need to recognise the value of professional learning and be encouraged to be proactive about their own personal and professional growth.

Professionals must continually enrich their knowledge and increase their sense of professionalism over the course of their careers so as to implement current research-based practice (Goble & Horm, 2014:2). To become competent and more effective, the beginning teachers should associate himself/herself with learning communities which

would influence them to take their personal studies very seriously and get additional qualifications; an additional qualification goes with upward mobility, increased remuneration and personal growth (Ingersoll, 2012:20). A teacher equipped with classroom knowledge, skills, techniques and assessment strategies is professionally developed implying that, professional development of teachers extends their experience in career development and promotion. The programmes develop the professional knowledge, extend personal or general education of teachers and promote job satisfaction.

A teacher who is satisfied develops an enhanced view of the job which enables him/her to prepare for change. Professionally-developed teachers are recognised and respected by both the organisation and colleagues with their personalities taking a boost; all these positives lead to job satisfaction on the part of the mentee and that reduces the rate of teacher-turnover (Miller, 1993:23); the organisations (schools, in this context) benefit as turnover costs are highly curtailed. Professional growth, which breeds job satisfaction embraces activities that teachers engage in following the period of their certification. These activities are done to enhance professional skills and knowledge, clarify values of the profession as well as allow students to learn in an effective way (Bubb & Early, 2007:04). Job satisfaction raises the competency and willingness of teachers to add to the development of their schools.

2.6 THE NEED FOR MENTORING

Mentoring has a social role to enhance opportunities for beginning teachers to learn in the context of their own teaching. It is a three-fold engagement of the mentee, mentor and the organisation in which they work. A healthy relationship in the mentoring process is needed for the benefit of the three parties (Marks & Goldstein, 2005:216). In the mentoring relationship, the mentor acts as a facilitator, coach, net worker, and coach in the provision of quality support to the novice teacher. This assists the new teachers to forge their own vision of what they intend to achieve in future. It is the function of the mentor to guide the mentee to the desired ropes of the profession. There are comprised

of teaching, learning and research skills that the mentor avails as the human advisor. The quality of teachers emerge as crucial in determining learner achievement, for those with improved instructional practices are necessary for improved learner performance.

The provision of instruction to young learners is a demanding task that requires dedication and high quality of professionalism, for teachers who also should be eager to improve their knowledge, effectiveness and skills (Goble & Horm, 2014:2). All that is possible, if serving teachers are engaged in professional programmes through which they learn to be more effective and efficient.

Teachers that are effective have a strong grasp of the contents of the subject they teach, are clear as to the way in which students ought to learn, possess a repertoire of teaching strategies and are supported in the teaching and learning encounters. Professional development programmes help serving teachers to acquire and develop their knowledge, attitudes and improve their job performance skills for improved learner performance. Engaging teachers in quality professional learning is vital for the total improvement of the teachers' effectiveness because they are taught to set higher educational goals and they are more likely to realise their potentials. Teaching is seen as a dynamic profession and, new knowledge about teaching and learning are always emerging. It is on the basis of this that teachers need to keep abreast and acquire new types of expertise required to continue to refine the way they conceive issues and deliver instruction. Professional learning aims to develop the central attributes of effective teachers. Therefore, mentoring improves the manner in which teachers understand the subject content as well as the strategies that are available for students to grasp that content. This is a learning programme that is always directed at empowering teachers with skills to teach and assess students.

The provision of mentoring helps to address areas for improvement of individual teachers' professional practice since this is the most obvious school-related factor influencing student achievement (Levin, 2014:1). It is enriching, supportive, motivating, it generates enthusiasm in teachers, provides stability and support during a critical time in serving

teachers' professional career. The on-going, high quality professional development is a major contributor to the development of teachers' thinking about teaching and learning because it expands their educational and professional opportunities.

Mentoring as a strategy for professional development has the power to drive and build capacity for needed improvements in education; it is one gateway to help serving teachers achieve their desires to become better teachers. Competent mentoring for teachers should occur locally at the school level during the regular workday and be relevant to teachers' responsibilities. This stands to reason that, mentoring becomes effective when it is carried out in a context that is familiar to the teacher. The on-going professional learning must be intensive and always focused on improving student learning as these initiatives enhance and create opportunities for adult learning while promoting the quality of education in the classroom. The activities should be designed, as Caena (2011:3) notes, to develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other commendable characteristics of a teacher. Mentoring enables teachers to tackle rapid changes, keep updated, experiment, reflect on their practices, share knowledge and be innovative. The development of people in a given profession is a component of educational training and is useful as the most effective way to quickly transfer skills and knowledge. Teacher professional development empowers teachers which could be the difference between remaining static in the profession and growing professionally.

It affords teachers opportunities and confidence to act upon their ideas and influence the way they perform in their profession; it is a powerful asset to ensure that serving teachers become productive, efficient, and effective, have high self-esteem and self-confidence which are necessary traits for serving teachers to be successful. Empowerment involves the capacitation of teachers to engage, share and influence institutions or events which have an effect in their lives (Murray, 2010:3). It is a support mechanism which tapes upon the experiences of serving teachers that can offer immediate help to beginning teachers. Participants in the mentoring process has long been linked with promotion, incomes, job satisfaction and career enhancement (Hansman, 2010:2). Mentoring help

serving teachers to stay on track in their professions, assist them make good choices and it provides consistent support.

It has been argued that for effective mentoring relationships to be developed, mentors need to adopt both a “pulling” and “pushing” style (Pegg, 1999:38). In the relationship, the mentor should offer sanctuary and a safe place where the mentees feel able to share their agenda, interests and goals. It must be a relationship that supports personal development of serving teachers and teach them how to make the right decisions, follow the right path and stay motivated. The mentor is there to offer support by helping the teachers to arrive at their own answers to their problems through providing tools and techniques, leading-edge thinking and wisdom. The mentor creates a relationship that allows him to offer stimulation, creative ideas, knowledge and mental models (DuBois & Karcher, 2014:15).

Mentors perform a variety of intense functions that include teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counselling and modelling, therefore, a way of conveying advice and encouragement to serving teachers and empowering them to contribute not only to their respective schools, but to the world around them (Duarte & Miller, 2013:32). Mentoring is normally conducted to provide new teachers the skills for a smooth and effective transition into the culture of teaching. It is an activity that is aimed at supporting the instructional practice of new teachers for the ultimate transformation of the culture of teaching as a profession. It is then desired that leaders in education realise that teacher education programmes are not adequate in changing the attitudes and dispositions of teachers. This implies that the skills and knowledge that student teachers acquire during teaching may not be adequate (Wang & Odell, 2002:16). .

Grant (1999:72) gives mentors ‘mystical powers’, declaring that “mentors give us the magic that allows us to enter the darkness; a talisman to protect us from evil spells, a gem of wise advice, a map and sometimes, simply courage”. Mentors are described as individuals with advanced knowledge and expertise that are willing and committed to support and lift the mentee up the level of career development (DuBois & Karcher,

2014:5). Mentoring involves a guide that nurtures the mentee for successful promotion of capabilities. Mentors should be available to beginning teachers so that they can share strategies that are effective for the delivery of educational content as well as exploration of a wide spectrum of general teaching methods (Balfour, 2004:30). It is a one-on-one interaction of people for the benefit of both parties.

When people think of mentoring, they often think of an older executive counselling a young colleague (Gallo, 2011:104), however, recent studies have revealed an element of shift from the previously held views about mentoring, where a senior leader advises the junior employees on their career, how to navigate the world of work, and what they need to do to get ahead (Law, 2013:19). Just as many strategies become outdated, so is the idea that career advice must come from a wise old sage, for the traditional mentor-mentee notion, although, not necessarily a thing of the past, is no longer the standard. In one of the recent studies mentoring is defined, by Smith (2013:2), as “connecting with a variety of people in different organisations and age groups”. Programmes that are mentor-based assist beginning teachers to adapt to new school culture (Vail, 2005:16). It is not individuals at early stages of their work experience that need mentoring, but this benefit is desired by people at each and every stage. Sarri (2011:730) argues that reverse mentoring allows a senior person to be advised by a more junior individual especially on issues of technology. The mentoring process to be useful, supportive and beneficial to the concerned parties as there are plenty points at the work place that require the services of a mentor. Individuals need not wait for mentors to come to them because any transition may present an appropriate time to seek out a mentor (Johnson, 2014:15). The beginning teacher needs to identify personal weaknesses and short-comings and get a mentor to help overcome such challenges.

The advice of mentors might be helpful in situations such as assuming a new role, thinking about exiting from a job or a change of career. A mentor can be desired in an environment experiencing rapid transformation. Both old and young individuals need a mentor as they attempt to navigate the intricacies of an organisation (Kram, 1989:508). The learning process is spearheaded by the mentor and has to be shaped by a

relationship that is healthy and complemented by a willingness by both individuals to learn from each other (Smith, 2013:41). Mentors traverse the part of growth and personal learning together with mentees. Mentoring has been used across the globe in professional development programmes and in-service training services in countries such as the United States of America and England (Van der Westhuizen & Erasmus, 1994:194). It is a creative strategy for professional development which is a vehicle for personal growth and self-actualisation (Roland, 2006:22). It is vital that mentees begin by making a self-assessment of the challenges that confront them prior to seeking the services of a mentor. Mentees should ask themselves. Mentees should ask themselves if they have resources to handle those challenges, if the answer to the above question is 'No', then now is the time to seek out a mentor (Ronald, 2006:23).

The strategy of mentoring is associated with the practice which is common in history concerning vocational development. It is focused on the teaching of competencies for the retention of teachers. A sense of professional effectiveness and competence constitutes one of the functions of mentoring. This also includes the roles of friendship and counseling which resonates with the intention of the mentor to model practice (Kram, 1983:613). Mentoring assists in the development of attitudinal and behavioural aspects which beginning teachers need to be self-reliant. These encourage dedication, responsibility as well as diligence, which go hand in hand with being self-motivated, self-believing, self-driven and active participation. Mentoring cultivates the principle of *Ubuntu* which emphasises team work, openness and collaboration (Van der Merwe, 2012:231). Mentoring fosters the attitude to be consistent in a review of decisions that an individual makes for enhanced teaching. It helps the mentee to develop listening skills to understand colleagues and learners. It further encourages the mentee to pursue interpersonal relations that are healthy and to tolerate differences.

The mentoring of serving teachers is mainly focused on the development of teaching skills, with the purpose of facilitating learning to become constructive and meaningful (Kram, 1983:613). The mentoring programmes enable beginning teachers to move ahead of the pack with regard to teaching competencies. They benefit participants holistically

through behavioural changes, as well as skills and knowledge acquisition. Behaviour transformation include the exhibition of humility and empathy in regard to constructive communication. The acquisition of skills and knowledge involves an attempt to sustain the standard for teaching of the main subjects (Van der Merwe, 2012:231). As a learning strategy, mentoring enhances learning at the work place and advocates that a senior individual with expertise avails advice, emotional support and information to a new person in the same context. The relationship which is established lingers long period of time which is characterised by substantive commitments emotionally for the two parties (Mertz, 2004:13). Career functions of mentoring enable mentees to learn the ropes of the workplace and prepare for the advancement of the beginning teacher.

Mentoring ensures that serving teachers are equipped and familiarised with the procedure to conduct assessments as guided by the National Protocol on Assessment. The teacher has to be familiarized with the situations in the new classrooms to be able to manage students with the expected effectiveness. Mentors assist in the socialisation of mentees both in terms of the organisation and professional considerations. Mentors support mentees as they assume the functions of role model, critical friend and strategists (Duncan & Stock 2010:303). Schools with well-mentoring programmes are functional and closely associated with high expectations with regard to learner achievement. Mentoring programmes assist the beginning teachers to develop ways to lead which reflect their own philosophies and convictions and which are aligned to contemporary societal demands (Peters, 2010:110).

Mentoring with its socialisation in the professional processes equips serving teachers with skills to facilitate pupil learning while organisational socialisation enables mentees to manage and enforce school rules while liaising with everybody involved. Classroom achievement mainly determines the effectiveness of schools. Student achievement is viewed in terms of performances in standardized tests. This is realised through the support for the development of competencies of teachers owing to the participation of teachers in growth activities (Blair, 2002:183). Mentoring helps in the acquisition of skills where by mentees are taught the ropes of professional practice. Mentees are accorded

learning opportunities and coaching with the intention to advise and broker professional growth. Mentoring is both organisational and professional. Professional mentoring serves to build the capacity for career related leadership while organisational mentoring works to enable in-depth psychological grasp of a specific context (Crow, 2006:315). Mentees get prepared for leadership roles in future. Job-related and task specific skills are acquired during the mentoring process. This relates to a functionalist mentoring approach (Darwin, 2000:103).

The multiple ways in which mentoring is defined reflect the varied characteristics of formal and informal mentoring relationships. Informal relationships of mentoring are psychological and enhance self-esteem and confidence of the mentee. Informal relationship of mentoring also increases emotional bonds and mutual discovery of issues of common interests (Jane, 2007:669). The formal process allows the matching of mentees and mentors for the goal of developing careers. Mentoring relationships contribute towards the psychological growth of individuals. The participation of mentees in the relationships of mentoring is associated with promotions, career enhancement, increased incomes and job satisfaction.

From the definitions given above, many authors agree that, basically, mentoring involves novice educators getting advice from more experienced teachers. Smethem and Adey (2005:93) argue that there is evidence that structured mentoring programmes provide opportunity for reflection, improved collegiality, openness and communication, greater educator autonomy, self-growth and personal efficacy. They also agree that mentoring is specifically for enhancing the skills of practicing teachers.

2.7 TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF MENTORING

Mentoring is an evolving relationship of joy, learning, frustrations, growth, wisdom and reflection (Duarte & Miller, 2013:01). Teachers believe that mentoring as professional development strategy is a very powerful growth experience for both the mentor and the mentee. It is convincing to believe that teacher quality has a direct impact on the quality

of their teaching and the consequent achievement of students. Increasing teacher quality through the provision of development programmes enhances the overall performance and quality of the education system.

Mentoring enables the serving teachers to develop their own skills, strategies and capabilities to tackle the hurdles that lay ahead of them more effectively. Teachers derive pleasure from mentoring programmes because in them the communication and accessibility are also enhanced, and it helps them to explore, develop and implement problem-solving skills in their work (Bower, 2007:73). To serving teachers, mentoring is a way of supporting, guiding and fostering professional development of teachers so that teachers stay long enough in the profession, with much reduced turnover and there is a lot of productivity.

A number of researchers have criticized the professional development of teachers that have been implemented in the past inclusive of seminars, courses and workshops. These programmes usually offered by universities and school districts have been judged as fragmented, adhoc and too distinct from actual practices in classrooms (Villegas-Reimers, 2003:37). Therefore, it is important for role players such as districts and schools to plan programmes for teacher development which allow continuous advancement of teachers within their contexts. Teachers need intensive professional development for them to improve their classroom practice. Short seminars and workshops fail to encourage the development of new skills and have a brief effect on the pedagogy of teaching (Guskey, 2003:13).

The serving teachers perceive continuous professional development as an investment and so essential that each school should establish the means of implementing the programmes through effective management and leadership. Darling-Hammond (2009:17) argues that to achieve professional learning for teachers that is effective involves teachers engaging in on-going dialogues and examining their practices as well as the performance of students. They would allow for the development and implementation of instructional practices that are relevant. Mentoring programmes play

a very crucial role in the professional and personal developments of serving teachers. Therefore, no wonder the positive perception teachers have on mentoring. Teachers view the support they obtain from mentors as quite positive and rewarding. Mentees tend to be comfortable in their roles when they are assisted by mentor teachers to institute adjustments to their teaching regime (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez & Tomlinson, 2009:5).

Mentor teachers, through the programmes provide social support, encourage collaborative learning and reflective teaching practices. Serving teachers appreciate a mentor teacher who provides a listening ear, meet frequently, and maintain confidentiality while sharing ideas and materials; teachers appreciate the act of socialising them into the school community. This means that serving teachers feel excited about attempts made to help them socialise into the society of teachers; they perceive mentoring as a positive strategy that affords them opportunities for common planning, time with mentor teachers and chances to observe other teachers.

The Vygotskian's (1978) socio-cultural theory contends that mentees have a lot to learn about the teaching profession. This includes handling parents, managing classes, dealing with students, offering student-based instruction as well as comprehending the culture of the school. This is only possible if the beginning teacher is guided and supported by the mentor teacher who is willing and prepared to give a helping hand. Common planning time with mentor teachers is seen as beneficial to serving teachers, just as time spent planning with mentor-teachers allow serving teachers access to seek the fine art of scheduling the school day, planning daily lessons, as well as general tips on how to be an effective teacher.

The situation of enabling serving teachers to observe others teaching if highly supported as a professional development strategy. Beginning teachers value greatly the opportunity of observing teachers in practice with time being availed for reviewing and examining what would have transpired (Hobson, 2002:7). Hall, Johnson and Bowman (1995:23) contend that beginning teachers highly appreciate the opportunity of observing other teachers giving instruction in classrooms. This is further supported by the

perception that beginning teachers value mentor teachers that demonstrate rather than just offering abstract ideas about teaching. In a way, this supports the notion that knowledge is constructed socially through interactions that are made with other individuals. The role of school principals is also very significant as they are responsible for the creation of organisational structures that allow beginning teachers to be able to observe actual teaching processes (Roberson & Roberson, 2009:113).

Mentoring of serving teachers is good for improving their pedagogical knowledge and skills for the process provides support in the form of constructive feedback and instruction, tips on classroom management and how beginning teachers can deal with everyday challenges of the classroom and school environment. When beginning teachers are mentored, this increases their learning and supports their professional growth, therefore, this is an effective strategy for improving beginning teachers' skills and the likelihood that they will remain in teaching (Blank & Kershaw, 2009:13). The programme is very critical to the beginning teacher's development in the sense that it helps in the improvement of instructional effectiveness, hence, serving as a tool that helps beginning teachers develop and hone their skills (Hudson, 2010:9). It is highly recommended for every school to apply and implement mentoring for it provides on-going assistance, collaboration and the development of knowledge and skills.

Mentoring is essential for beginning teachers as it is necessary for the improvement of education; it is a way of helping teachers to become competent and comfortable in the classroom (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb & Wyckoff, 2009:418). A teacher who is competent and comfortable has the confidence and courage to do more. Mentoring, therefore, has a positive impact on the performance levels of beginning teachers as the process increases teacher effectiveness, commitment, satisfaction and career retention. A motivated, competent and comfortable teacher has increased job satisfaction and mentoring programmes will help keep beginning teachers in the profession. Over and above mentoring help, beginning teachers find easy, the transition from preparation to practice and they become more effective.

2.8 THE EFFECT OF MENTORING ON SERVING TEACHERS

Leaders in education need to conceive that educational programmes for teachers are not always intensive to the extent that they can alter the attitudes and dispositions that are learned at the instance of teachers training (Wang & Odell, 2002:16). This statement implies that the skills and knowledge which student teachers acquired during their teachers' training must be supplemented. The concept of continued support after qualification through mentoring is a norm in various professions. The newly-qualified teacher needs to be provided with support that will help him/her to build confidence which will lead to much-needed competency. It is through well-organised mentoring programmes that the newly qualified teacher is supported to navigate through the complexities of the organisation. Mentors are needed to help the mentees in setting high but, achievable goals, making realistic plans and passing on the skills to the students (Freeman, 2008:23). A mentor is always there to provide resources and opportunities for the development of the beginning teacher. With the support of the mentor, the mentee can confidently overcome some of the problems that come his/her way as well-structured mentoring programmes provide personal support and motivation that will help the mentee to look ahead.

Mentoring has the ability and potential of improving awareness of own learning gaps on the side of the mentee (Scalon, 2008:51). By collaborating and interacting with others, one is able to identify personal shortfalls and develop strategies to fill the gap. The programme creates a space for the mentee to engage in self-assessment and develop the ability to give and take criticism. Mentoring is about helping the mentee to grow in self-confidence and develop independence, autonomy and maturity (Mckimm, Jollie & Hatter, 2007:5).

The relationship that ensues regarding the mentee and the mentor allows the former to learn and develop in an environment which is safer and better protected. At the onset of the process the mentee would be more dependent upon the mentor and which calls for the mentor to engage in more friendly, supportive and motivational actions (Walkington,

2005:28). When mentees operate in safe and protected environments that develops or reinforces their sense of self-confidence, they will be willing to take risks. The mentoring relationship that develops between the mentor and mentee, if properly managed, has the ability to accelerate professional development and increased maturity. Through learning, the mentees get to understand how things operate and that helps to broaden their horizon and increase their sense of job satisfaction.

Every relationship in mentoring has to be varied as detected by the particular needs, interest of the mentee as well as the nature of the developed relationship (Jansen, 2003:73). A productive mentor-mentee relationship recognises the need for personal development and it offers opportunities for effective role modelling. Mentoring has an added advantage for the mentee because it encourages on-going learning, develops and identifies learning opportunities in the working situation (Bullough, 2003:70); it is a process that facilitates peer relationship within the working environment. Mentoring if taken seriously has the potential to develop increased-reflective practitioner skills and it offers opportunity for individualised one-to-one teaching, experimental learning and help with problem-solving mechanisms. Through quality mentoring, beginning teachers can develop a repertoire of problem-solving strategies for dealing with the practicalities and complexities associated with contextual school and teaching situations (Hudson, 2012:72).

Different opinions about the impact of mentoring on serving teachers have been articulated, and they mostly agree that mentoring is a way of encouraging, supporting and promoting the acculturation of the mentee (Sandberg, 2013:21). It becomes essential that in complex occupations, new members need an individual that can introduce them to the way of doing things and develop their competence. It has become increasingly accepted that new professionals require mentors to assist them to develop requisite skills to manage work place stress (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1995:10). Like in other companies, new teachers must be helped to fit in the school environment. Mentoring of beginning teachers will seldom attain its potential until it is informed by a conceptualisation of mentoring which views as comprehensive in in transforming the teaching profession

(Caena, 2011:36). Mentoring programmes need to recognise that teachers become effective through supported by and learning from a community of colleagues that is strong. These programmes prepare teachers to be agents of change that is effective. These are committed to changing the lives of young individuals as they are skilled in partnership and pedagogical aspects that guarantee success with students a possibility (Van der Merwe, 2015:21).

Mentoring is a strategy to improve workplace learning, capacitates new comers with techniques to survive and leads to career advancement. It is considered a device that help in building strong professional culture of teaching in our schools as is dedicated to improving teaching, learning and caring. Teaching by nature is an emotional practice, and as a result, new teachers' increasing needs for emotional support must be taken care of (Van Wyk, 2010:84). Caring and forming relationships is an emotional experience which needs somebody who is well-guided and properly-handled by those with the know-how; working with children from fractured, poor, and single-parent families is an emotional experience which also needs to be handled well. Mentoring must be guided by and linked to an overarching appreciation that, for better or worse we are on the brink of redefining the teaching profession (Sandberg, 2013:47). Emotional support is one of the strongest needs of beginning teachers when guilt, frustration, anxiety and insecurity threaten them. Mentoring promotes collegial professionalism which by itself implies working with and learning from teaching colleagues.

2.9 FORMS OF MENTORING

There are various forms of teacher professional development strategies that are closely linked to mentoring, in this study the researcher focuses only on modelling and coaching.

2.9.1 Modelling

Staff professional development is all about motivating and encouraging teachers to take their instructional practice to another level. To improve the competency of teachers in

their classroom practices, the instructional leader should occasionally demonstrate teaching techniques, during classroom visits, to model good instruction (Walker, 1996:73). The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) emphasises that learning happens with the assistance of other people. Modelling is one of the developmental strategies that allow a beginning teacher to observe experienced teacher in the actual teaching situation. In such instances, the beginning teacher is able to observe other teachers demonstrating how it is done and that enables him/her to model instructional practice around that of the mentor. Through modelling mentors cultivate respectful and trusting relationship with mentee teachers because modelling sessions are always followed by discussions.

Modelling is always viewed as bringing about an impressive effect on teachers' motivation as well as on their reflective behaviours (Coutts, 1996:36). Modelling is regarded as teachers' powerful learning strategy because it promotes collective participation, effective staff development, communication, teacher networks and study groups. The instructional leaders need to realise that there is a need to remodel the school workforce, to explore more thoroughly the contributions that can be made by teaching students in an efficient way (Revell, 2005:37). Modelling promotes professional learning programmes that are longer, sustained and intensive. It is the type of professional learning that allows new teachers to learn and acquire new knowledge and skills by observing seasoned practitioners for improved classroom practice.

Modelling is another effective way for promoting professional learning because mentors can provide follow-ups, observation, and feedback that are necessary for professional learning to make a difference (Levin, 2014:2). Modelling is carrying out tasks explicitly for the new teacher to observe, and during the process, a mentor takes different roles, and one of those is that of being a provider of feedback. In this role the mentor discusses the new teachers' performance in the classroom, interaction with learners and the application of knowledge and skills acquired during teacher education and through mentoring. Effective professional learning includes demonstrations and multiple opportunities for active engagement, practice and feedback to be followed up by on-going modelling and more feedback.

The notion of modelling involves practical, goal-focused forms of one-on-one learning and ideally, behavioural change (Hemez-Brooms & Hughes, 2014:2). It allows for collaboration and help for new teachers to overcome constraints while exploring new possibilities as demonstrated by the mentor. New teachers are exposed to practical courses connected to reality of classroom activities. To develop the sophisticated teaching required for effective learner achievement, new teachers must be offered more and more effective professional learning that is based on action learning as this is linked to changes in participation in socially-organised activities (Caena, 2011:9).

In modelling the mentor also takes the role of counsellor, where he/she is helping the new teacher with professional and personal problems. It is an action-learning process where the mentee is observing how the seasoned practitioners go about doing it. The more experienced practitioner, therefore, shows the mentee how to go about dealing with different situations. It is a kind of professional learning that includes opportunities for reciprocal observation, co-planning and co-teaching as well as presenting, leading or writing activities (Borko, 2010:8). If new teachers learn from experiencing and experimenting and the learning is on-going through active engagement in practice, then action professional learning is unfolding.

The activity engages new teachers in interactive online networks in which they share tools, resources, strategies and are helped to change their philosophies about teaching and increase the use of exemplary teaching practices (Levin, 2014:2). Professional networks connect new teachers form their personal vision as regard their intended goals and areas of accomplishment in life. Professional development allows mentors to model innovative teaching practices, inspire teachers to engage, create instances for growth and to reflect on their performances.

During the mentoring process, the mentor is expected at some stage to be a role model for the mentee to model his/her conduct and teaching practices around those of the mentor. As a role model, the mentor sets good examples of professional behaviour. The mentor creates time for sharing successful teaching strategies, collaboration and co-

planning. One of the most important aspects of the culture of a school is collaboration which promotes the teachers, teacher effectiveness and job satisfaction (Caena, 2011:10). Professional learning that is based on observation and demonstrations promotes changes in teachers' beliefs, practices and attitudes. It alters the behaviours of teachers in the classrooms as also does the attitudes to the profession. Demonstration by a more senior practitioner involves mutual learning, monitoring and commitment to collaboration. It develops collegial, interactive and participative professional learning in a trusting environment that helps to create a platform for new teachers to engage in different activities (Borko, 2012:8).

Working as a collective is a basis for beginning teachers to take risks, raise issues as well as tackle dilemmas in the practice of teachers. The involvement of teachers that are in a similar grade, subject or department enhance coherency of experience, active learning and a shared culture of the profession, a common grasp of the goals of instruction, problems, methods as well as solutions (Ingersoll, 2012:79). Modelling is a form of empowering teachers as decision- makers because it provides regular feedbacks; new teachers learn on the job and through experimentation. The knowledge, skills and instructional techniques the beginning teachers gain during modelling help them to move from their actual level of understanding towards gaining new knowledge and skills. That in itself implies closing the gap that exists between the actual developmental levels and potential levels of the beginning teacher.

2.9.2 Collaboration

Professional development within the context of ZPD, individuals allows (teachers) to learn from engaging in social experiences within a cultural context. Collaborative learning requires the beginning teachers to develop teamwork skills. It takes place where two or more individuals or organisations work together to realise a goal. The ZPD suggests that individuals attain the best form of learning when working with others in collaboration. One of the recently employed models of collaboration is co-teaching, which is evidenced in educational institutions across content levels and areas (Eun, 2008:142). Therefore, it is

through collaborative practices with experienced individuals that beginning teachers learn and internalise innovative psychological tools, concepts and skills. Darling-Hammond (1990:19) argues that for professional growth to entail, there needs to be appropriate structures in schools to create a supportive environment for decision making and collegial sharing.

Supportive environment helps the serving teachers to handle challenges which arise from working in increasingly diverse institutions. Due to the diverse nature of learning institutions, teachers need to work together, collaboratively, to develop new approaches that provide additional support (Lantlof, 2004:109). In practice, collaboration is an inclusive model where different people of different levels of knowledge work together for a common goal. The contention that an isolation of teachers hinders the attainment of desired standards of professional development. There has to be regular and frequent chances within the culture of a school to discuss challenges of practice. Working together as a team is much more productive and this advances the notion that “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts” (Kalyuga, 2007:521). Each individual brings to the collective unique characteristics. The contributions of every individual in the group contributes various characteristics which are put together to create a greater product (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:39). This is good for new teachers because working together minimises weaknesses and accentuates strengths. This implies that collaboration involves team building which requires mentors to build rapport as they work well together.

More recently, collaboration has shifted from being direct and physical to a more advanced technological way of working together (Mercer & Littleton, 2007:78). Collaborative software is increasingly being used by teachers to create virtual learning situations. This enables teachers from different institutions to work together through sharing materials and feedback as peers. This is beneficial to new teachers as collaborating in technology embraces a wide spectrum of tools inclusive of instant messaging, web sharing, team spaces, video, audio-conferencing, telephony and social networking. This enables groups to work together. A collaborative tool relates to any technology which facilitates the linkage of two or more individuals that work together.

Mentoring needs such tools to mediate teaching within or close to the classroom. This involves working with an experienced teacher in the zone of proximal development of the teacher to realise professional development that is effective (Otero & Graesser, 2001:148). Institution collaboration tools are centered on attaining collaboration of staff and collective intelligence at the level of an organisation. This includes, among others, issues such as expert recommendation, expertise location, staff networking, peer feedback and information sharing. This in turn, will enable teachers to improve their profiles, interaction and social awareness.

Fowler (2008:21) advocates that learning takes place through reflection and experience combined. To achieve optimal learning, the mentee has to start with reflective observations, make sense of experiences and then activation of experimentation. This is theoretically known as experiential learning. Experiential learning involves the merging of a personal experience of quality with reflection that is meaningful. Mentoring that takes place in a collaborative way offers new teachers the chance of experiencing, reflecting and experimenting in an environment that is supportive. This kind of environment serves to optimize learning and cultivate professional development (Wood, 1988:17). A supportive influence in regard to the professional growth of mentees may come from the external domain in the form of intervention support from an expert teacher (mentor)

Therefore, this implies that the individual's ZPD is assessed by way of collaboration with colleagues as it offers a latitude for imitation. Teachers appreciate the support and encouragement they obtain for collaborating with mentors and colleagues. The collaborative support of colleagues and mentors can raise the courage of teachers in occasions when they appear to lose confidence as a result of a shortage of self-efficacy and experience (Nathan & Kim, 2009:101). This in a way supports the idea that, to bring about professional growth in mentees, one way is for them to be part of the classes in which model teachers and coaches conduct lessons to allow them to observe the instructional methods, techniques and strategies. The mentee benefits from collaborating with instructional role models for they are capable of providing chances for novice teachers to scrutinise various methods of instruction in a number of contexts (Yelland &

Master, 2005:363). In the process, mentees find themselves in socially-supportive learning environment which allows them freedom to ask questions and get a feedback.

This model provides an incentive for new teachers to take a more active role in their own learning (Caena, 2011:42). This implies that the mentees share the responsibility of teaching and learning through the support that requires them to move beyond their current skill and knowledge levels. It is through this type of social interactions that mentees are able to take ownership of their learning, become less dependent on instructional support and start working independently. This type of support is very much in line with Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD) which states that a mentee is taken from current/actual level of development to potential level of development. A mentee at the potential level is less dependent but is capable of practicing acquired skills and techniques in different contexts (Lantolf, 2004:110). The understanding here is that what mentees do collaboratively or with help today, they can do independently and competently tomorrow. This therefore implies that if the mentees are determined to improve their act of teaching, they must engage in that shifting process and continuously define new ZPDs.

2.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher has outlined the theoretical framework underpinning the study. The literature brings to the light the zone of proximal development regarding how individuals learn. The literature highlights how mentoring is applied and implemented in the corporate and educational institutions, internationally and locally. The literature exposes the need for mentoring for serving teachers, how they perceive mentoring and its significance on teachers' performance. The effect of mentoring as a strategy for professional development of serving teachers was clearly explained. The following chapter details the theories used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

“Mentoring is a complementary relationship... built on both the mentor’s and mentee’s needs” (Shulman-Sato, 2006:110).

SOCIOCULTURAL THEORIES: VYGOTSKY, PIAGET AND BANDURA.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present the theoretical frameworks that underpinned the study. The researcher used Vygotsky, Piaget and Bandura’s sociocultural theories because they are well positioned to direct the study based on their position that the more knowledgeable other would always direct and facilitate the development of the learner (the less knowledgeable). Theories, from their constructivist point of view would enable the researcher to have knowledge regarding what to examine and measure. Both theories view learning through the lens of interconnectedness of human beings and their sociocultural tools, in real contexts. The theories view learning as a harmonious working together of human beings and the use of sociocultural tools in constructing knowledge in real contexts.

Piaget and Vygotsky are the central architects in the proposition of the constructivist theories. The outstanding stance is that classrooms need to resemble a constructivist environment which emphasises socio-cultural learning. However, variations exist in regard to the nature of their theories and specifications on the manner in which constructivism has to be applied to classroom practice. In terms of learning, they both argue that the responses of learners are not triggered by external stimuli but their interpretation of it. The theories assume that the mental functions originate from and find explanation in the outcomes of social interaction (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:33). They both hold that each individual experiences a range of ways to construct and interpret knowledge as informed by cultural factors and personal experiences. This implies that the mentees learn and develop through the use of cultural tools, for example, language,

in an environment where friends, peers and mentors interact collaboratively to construct knowledge.

As constructivists, they both envisaged constructivist learning environments that provide multiple representations of reality and present the complexity of the real world. The implication here is that, learning is based on discovery, collaboration, social interaction and usage of sociocultural tools in real settings. It must be a learning environment that enables context-and content- dependent knowledge construction, that support collaborative construction of knowledge through social interaction under the supervision of the mentor-teacher. The mentee's learning and cognitive functions develop through the guidance of the mentor-teacher; this is similar to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development through which the individual's development is measured by moving from actual to potential level of understanding. According to Vygotsky, learning has its basis in interacting with other people.

3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORIES

Grant and Onsanloo (2014:13) state that a theoretical framework is the 'blueprint' for the entire dissertation inquiry. It is the foundation from which all knowledge is constructed for the research. This suggests that the vision and structure of an investigation is opaque in the absence of a theoretical framework. Eisehart (1991:63) observes that a theoretical framework is a formal theory which gives structure to the research process. This is an acknowledgement that a theoretical framework guides all decisions that are made regarding the research endeavour. The theoretical framework relates to a structure which holds a theory which informs the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982:72). It is the instrument which guides the logic pertaining to that which the researcher aims to do in the research. It determines the variables that the researcher would examine and measure. A theoretical framework attests to that which is reliable and solid for building research and informing the design. It is the theoretical framework that assists in introducing and describing the reasons for the existence of a problem. Clearly, a theoretical frame work is an anchor

that determines the literature to be reviewed, methods to be used and the strategy for data analysis.

3.3 STUDY FOCUS

The main focus of the study is on mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development, teachers' perceptions about it, its reception and its significance. The researcher's aim is to understand the effect, that mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development, has on serving teachers' performance. In relation to the applied theories, the study focuses on how individuals learn within the constructivist learning environments. The researcher used the socio-cultural theories of Vygotsky and Piaget because they are well positioned to direct the study based on their position that the more knowledgeable other would always direct and facilitate the development of the less knowledgeable – the learner. The researcher explored how the more knowledgeable other, collaboration, social interaction, discovery and the use of sociocultural tools in learning help mentees to develop professionally and improve on their instructional practices.

3.4 THE USE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORIES OF VYGOTSKY, PIAGET AND BANDURA IN THE STUDY

3.4.1 Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky and Piaget's approaches to teacher professional development are located in socio-cultural theory that looks at the crucial contributions that society makes to individual development. The focus is on how the society shapes the individual, the importance of social interaction between developing people and the role of culture and environment on the development of the individual. Socio-cultural theory suggests that human learning is largely and inherently a social process (Shaffer, 2009:12). The theory stresses the interconnectedness of society, culture and environment in the cognitive development of an individual. Vygotsky (1981:72), states that parents, caregivers, peers and the culture

at large are responsible for developing the individual's higher order functions. It is on the basis of social context that learning has its foundation in interacting with other people. Once social-contextual learning has occurred through interaction and collaboration, the information in the individual is integrated at the individual's level and that is, internalization.

In socio-cultural theory, society and culture provide the individual with tools for intellectual adaptations (McCafferty, Jacobs & Da Silvalddings, 2006:31). Socio-cultural development of the individual with the help of those tools promotes the individual's intelligence and cognition. The theory looks at the way in which peers and he mentor mediates individual learning as well as the manner in which attitudes and beliefs impact the implementation of instruction for learning. Vygotsky (1981:13), posits that culture avails "tools for intellectual adaptation". The tools enable individuals to employ mental capabilities in a manner that is adaptive to the cultural situations in which they live. The social theory positions the social processes as central in their occurrence in given contexts rather than the individual.

The most pivotal area of an individual's psychological growth relates to the manner of intervention that exists between social space and the cultural artefacts. The socio-cultural theory implies that development emerges from interactions that occur between historical and cultural contexts. Therefore, development is understood as a consequence of social and cultural contexts. The socio-cultural theories endeavour to account for the way in which learning and development occur. Cognitive development is viewed as the product of interactions of a social, cultural and historical considerations (Valsiner, 2009:87). According to Kumaravadivelu (2001:540), the very important part of an individual's cognitive development hinges on the interaction that exists between cultural artefacts and social interactions. The tools and artefacts encompass everything that people use such as arts, language, beliefs and traditions. Therefore, social cultural theories emphasise the significance of social mediation in regard to the internalization of information.

3.4.2 Application of the Theories

The researcher employed the two theories in the study, because of their potential to guide and direct the process as well as assisting the researcher in determining what things to measure and examine. The theories focus on the interconnectedness of human beings and their socio-cultural tools in a constructivist learning environment. Piaget and Vygotsky are at all times regarded as the advocates of constructivism and they share the common belief that classrooms must reflect and portray constructivist learning environments. They both agree that the individual's development is influenced through social interaction, collaboration and by sociocultural tools under the guidance of a more knowledgeable person. Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky have theories that have greatly influenced the approaches and methods of teaching. They have hugely contributed to the education field through the provision of explanation regarding an individual's learning styles, cognitive learning and an individual's ability to learn (Woolfolk, 2004:07). Their approaches to development highlights the primacy of the social nature of the development of human beings (Pass, 2004:74). Learning is about adaptation to reality during which learners actively and collaboratively construct knowledge. The activities include among other things, teamwork, observation and discovery, all happening in a constructivist learning environment under the guidance and assistance of the more knowledgeable other.

In line with these theories, the study assumes that all knowledge is constructed from the learner's previous knowledge. They both hold the idea that, the mentee's cognitive development is about developing or constructing knowledge through social interaction, discovery, collaboration and teamwork and the use of socio-cultural tools (for example, language) in a natural setting. Both theories recognise the significant role played by the more knowledgeable other (MKO) in this study, the mentor-teacher. This is evidenced by their stance that the more knowledgeable person (mentor-teacher) facilitates learning with the intention of moving the mentee from the actual/current level of development to the potential level of understanding.

In the process of learning, serving teachers construct knowledge, ideas and new concepts through social interaction with peers and mentors-teachers; they actively construct their own knowledge by working collaboratively with others. According to Vygotsky, (1978:56) learning in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) awakens a variety of developmental processes that are able to operate only when people are interacting in a learning environment, using sociocultural tools with more experienced people as facilitators. The application of Vygotsky's theory through the lens of ZPD suggests different beneficial learning approaches for teachers such as, collaboration, inter-subjectivity, guided participation and social interaction; all happening under the guidance and assistance of a mentor-teacher, in a real and actual context. Piaget's theory of cognitive development concurs with Vygotsky that individuals learn effectively and efficiently through discovery, collaboration, social interaction and experimenting with socio-cultural tools (for example, language) in a natural setting, with the instructor taking the role of a facilitator. Piaget and Vygotsky might vary on their consideration of cognitive development of individuals but both present teachers with concrete ways of teaching some materials in a manner that is developmental. The next section discusses Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory or constructivist theory with its related concept of the zone of proximal development.

3.5 VYGOTSKY'S 1978 SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY

Vygotsky's theory is one of the foundations of constructivism. It asserts three major interconnected features, namely, social interaction, the more knowledgeable other and the zone of proximal development. In this study, the researcher focused mainly on the seminal notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which embraces the social interaction, collaboration and the more knowledgeable other as partners in an individual's learning. The theory presents teaching and learning as embedded in the cultural situation of the daily life of the learner and in complex linkage with the manner in which the mentee interacts with other people. The theory creates an understanding of the teaching process as it reflects an intricate influence of the social and cultural environments of the student. According to Vygotsky (1978:56), learning is collaborative and his implies that it is difficult to isolate learning from the context in which it is provided. The functions of cognition are

perceived as outcomes of social interactions. Learning does not equate to the accumulation and assimilation of fresh knowledge by new teachers, but these are integrated into a knowledge community. Vygotsky (1978:56) argue that culture and language assume important roles in the development of human intellect as well as the way in which the world is perceived. Culture and language are guides through which individuals experience and conceive reality. The cognitive abilities of human beings are especially constructed socially. It has to be understood that knowledge is not just constructed but is co-constructed during a collaborative learning process. The theory is suitable for this study owing to its insistence on collaborative acquisition of knowledge. Mentoring demands collaborative methods to be used and this requires serving teachers (mentors) to master team work skills as it relates individual success to group success. Collaborative learning as a function of peer integration, is structured and mediated by established teachers (mentors). Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and its role in the development of teachers are discussed hereunder.

3.5.1 The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

The zone of proximal development is the best-known concept of the theory of Vygotsky (Cole & Cole, 2001:74). The ZPD was propagated around the late 1920s and steadily elaborated to his death in 1934. The ZPD is viewed as the difference between the actual level of development arising from problem-solving abilities of an individual and the potential level of development of problem-solving abilities achieved through adult guidance or collaborative effort with peer that are more able. The notion of the ZPD was later on extended to account for the learning of individuals and its implications on the idea of professional development of teachers. The essence of the learner's cultural background was emphasised in the concept and related to the stages of human development. The ZPD is essentially, the degree to which the mentee is able to perform a task independently and that in which the mentee performs similar tasks under the guidance of an adult or with the support of peers.

In assessing the learning of individuals, the focus should not just be on the current level of attainment of a mentee but on the potential abilities also. Human learning suggests the existence of connections with the social cultural environments that provide space for actions and the shared experiences attained through interaction. Individuals employ tools that are culturally based inclusive of writing and speech to reflect their social environment. This approach is akin to social construction which heightens the place of social interaction in learning and development.

The ZPD suggest that individuals learn more as they work with others through collaboration. It is during involvement with others in the learning process that individuals acquire knowledge and internalize emerging concepts, skills and psychological tools. Roosevelt (2008) states that the central objective of education is to allow mentees to exist in their ZPDs through exposing them to problem-solving activities which are interesting and meaningful in terms of culture. The tasks need to slightly difficult compared to those they usually do alone so that they may engage their peers or a more competent other to complete a task as a collective will allow that individual to complete an identical task as an individual in future. This translates into a movement by the mentee from the actual to the potential development level. In teaching, the thrust should on those activities that an individual cannot perform alone but in collaboration with others. The ZPD is understood to describe the two levels of development, that is, the current or actual level of development of the mentee and the potential or expected level (Vygotsky (1978:58). The actual/current level of development of the mentee is discussed in the next topic.

3.5.2 Actual Development Level

The level of actual development refers to the development that the learner (mentee) has already reached. At this level the learner (mentee) is capable of solving certain problems independently, hence, is determined by tasks that a person is capable of solving by themselves. It is also called the '*level of independent performance*' or '*yesterday development*'. This is because the level does not sufficiently describe development and its application in the school situation, is the recognition that beginning teachers have the

knowledge which is not enough for their effective instructional practice. The implication is that the knowledge they acquired during teacher training needs to be continually supplemented if they are to realise their full potentials; it indicates what a person can achieve in the near future, particularly with guidance from a more experienced person. For the serving teacher to move from the actual level of development to the potential level, an experienced expert is needed to guide, direct and give support. The whole process of mentoring comes into the picture when a more knowledgeable mentor-teacher guides the mentees (serving teachers) to move from the actual level of development to potential level of understanding. The serving teacher interacts and works in a collaborative relationship with peers in a real school context, which in this study is the natural setting. The potential level of understanding as an indication of development is outlined hereunder.

3.5.3 The Potential Level of Development

This level of development relates to that which the mentee is able to attain through the assistance of teachers that are experts or with the collaboration of peers. The outcome of collaborative work allows the mentee to address problems they would not have done at the actual level of development. This is largely attributed to the intervention of the mentor-teacher through continuously guiding, supporting and working in collaboration with the mentee. The learning that occurs involves cognitive structures that are progressing towards maturity, but which can mature through the collaborative work of others in real school context. The theory's implications for teaching and learning is that, it promotes collaborative learning which require mentees to develop teamwork skills, peer interaction, discussion of specific concepts, problems and clarification of points and information. What the literature is saying here is that individuals learn best when working together with others, during joint collaboration. It is through such collaborative endeavours with more skilled persons that mentees learn and internalise new concepts, psychological tools and skills.

Therefore, this supports the idea that the ZPD is the difference between that which a person can achieve as an individual and that which can be accomplished out of team

effort or in collaboration with others. A person can employ problem-solving skills attained through experience to tackle problems as an individual. This kind of performance realises low levels of achievement. A collective engagement of people in a defined task effectively allows for effective and efficient delivery of goals (Vygotsky, 1978:58). The word “proximal”, indicates that the assistance given to an individual slightly surpasses the mentee’s current competence to complete a duty. The transition from an individual’s level of performance to group or aided performance indicates a stage of development. The help that a mentor gives to the mentee is not just being an information source but a lever to transform the thoughts with related characteristics from one level to another.

3.5.4 Learning in the ZPD

Vygotsky is prominent for his proposition of the law of cultural development. This law suggests that each function in the process of the development of a person culture-wise emerges twice on the stage. This is on the psychological plane (Berliner, 2004:468). This implies that the learning and development of every individual begins and ends with the individual. This is referred to as inter-mental and intra-mental. Chaiklin (2003:20) suggests that in line with Vygotsky, the attributes of cultural influence embrace memory and cognition. The socio-cultural theory gives prominence to the social rather than the individual in the learning and development process. De Valenzuela (2006:13) contends that cognitive development is influenced by interactions that exist in both historical and cultural contexts.

According to Vygotsky (1962), it is improper to isolate development from its cultural and social contexts. In fact, the development of knowledge construction should not be anchored in the mind but in the co-construction of knowledge involving the less knowledgeable and the more knowledgeable individuals through social interaction (Lantolf, 2008:11). This means that the construction of knowledge is a socio-culturally mediated process that is achieved through relevant artefacts and tools. The mental activity of human beings is activated through the employ of socially constructed tool such

as language to facilitate learning. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider learning as a mediated process which is social in origin.

Social interaction with cultural artefacts, therefore, forms the most important part of an individual's psychological development. In terms of sociocultural theory, mediation plays a very significant role in internalisation of knowledge. Learning and development is done through mediation which is described by Verenikina (2008) as the establishment of shared understandings between the mentee and the mentor. This is in line with Vygotsky's concept of inter-subjectivity which is described as the establishment of a shared perspective between an expert and mentee in a problem-solving task. The mentee's performance is mediated socially, and the shared understanding is achieved through moving the mentee from current capabilities to a higher, culturally-mediated level of development. Learning in the ZPD relates to performing a range of tasks that the person cannot yet handle alone but can accomplish with the help of instructors or more capable peers.

The assistance from a more capable peer translates into social interaction, collaborative learning and the development of teamwork skills at the workplace. Individuals take part in dialogue with others in a cooperative manner, use language as a form of private speech and to structure their performance in a way that estimates their performances. The mentees acquire strategies for collaborative performance and make use of them later on in development engagements. In the ZPD, learning props a number of internal processes of development which become handy in the context of interacting with highly experienced individuals. The employ of Vygotsky's theory through the lens of ZPD suggests different approaches to learning as discussed below:

3.5.5 Scaffolding

The term "scaffolding" relates to the kind of support that new teachers obtain when they interact with colleagues, mentors and peers as they shift towards mastering new concepts, skills and knowledge (Mercer & Littleton, 2007:81). This is a concept which

exposes a temporary but quite critical aspect of the mentor's assistance and support as the mentee develops in understanding and knowledge. That is to say, scaffolding can be used to enhance the instructional performance of mentees because it is a support strategy that is given to mentees with the aim of moving them from their actual degree of conceptualisation towards a new and higher level of understanding. Scaffolding resonates with Vygotsky (1978) socio-cultural theory and particularly the ZPD. This ZPD is addressed through the employ of collaborative interaction which is mediated by adopting language as the main tool.

In education, scaffolding refers to support that is tailored to address mentees' needs and represents quality support (Seidel & Shavelson, 2007:458). Through collaborative interaction, the mentee's actual level of development is moved in the direction of potential understanding. This means that scaffolding is a strategy that is utilised by the mentor teachers to improve the mentee's understanding in ways that overlap into the existent potential. It is a contingent form of support that I meant to transfer responsibility from the mentor to the mentee (Van de Pol, Volman & Beishuizen, 2010:283). Contingent support relates to the kind of support that addresses the particular needs of the individual. The understanding here is that scaffolding offers support and help that will bring mentees closer to a state of competence which will, in the long run enable them to eventually become independent. In its true essence, scaffolding depicts the form and quality of the effective intervention by a more experienced person in the learning of another person.

The appeal of this concept, among mentees emanates from the fact that it directs attention to the quality of their participation in the learning process (Wood, 1988:72). The approach is centered on the mentee as an active participant in the construction of knowledge, in a collaborative interaction with the mentor as the facilitator. When a mentor incorporates scaffolding in the learning of mentees he/she becomes more of a facilitator of knowledge rather than the dominant content expert. This model of learning process is good for professional development because it accommodates the mentee as an active role player rather than a passive recipient of knowledge. It is, therefore, appropriate to regard scaffolding as a learning process that is about internalisation of external

knowledge and converting it into a tool for conscious control. In the professional development of teachers, scaffolding offers help and support that will enable new teachers to accomplish tasks which they would not have been able to manage on their own (Otero & Graesser, 2001:151). This is to say, through scaffolding new teachers are offered help and support that will bring them closer to a state of competence. They are coming to a state of being less dependent; they are full of courage, oozing self-confidence and competent enough to eventually complete any task that lay ahead of them. Scaffolding helps to create a welcoming, safe, and supportive learning environment that encourages new teachers to take risks and try alternatives. The learning environment becomes so conducive that new teachers feel comfortable expressing their thoughts without fear.

Scaffolding of an instructional nature relates to short lived structures of support which different institutions implement to help new teacher to accomplish new duties and tasks they would not have achieved on their own (Nathan & Kim, 2009:97). This implies that scaffolding is a support given in the pursuit of a specific learning activity, with specified goals. To mentors the term “scaffolding” relates to intuitive conceptions to implement interventions to improve the learning of mentees. It describes and explains the role that those individuals who are experienced play in guiding mentees to develop and learn. This emphasises the point that mentoring is concerned with nurturing skills that involve people of varying expertise. The more skilled usually guide and assist the less skilled. Scaffolding is a support system that challenges new teachers through deep learning and discovery and engages them in meaningful and dynamic discussions, in small and large groups, in a collaborative interaction.

Scaffolding affords new teachers the opportunity for peer-teaching and learning which promotes social interaction and collaboration. It is good for teachers’ professional development because it promotes learning through dialogue, feedback and shared responsibility (Kalyuga, 2007:510). Through carefully-planned scaffolding activities, mentors can help mentees become lifelong and independent individuals. In terms of Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (1978), scaffolding denotes teacher development as

occurring within a specific cultural and social context. Teaching is about transforming knowledge that is socially constructed to achieve one that is owned by the teacher as an individual. A specific paradigm is assumed in the concept of scaffolding in which the mentor becomes co-instructor and collaborator in the mentor-mentee relationship. The mentee has to take an active position in the scaffolding process to allow for the advancement of skills for lifelong learning. Once new teachers are able to complete or master certain functions, the scaffolding is gradually removed or fades away implying that the mentee has arrived at a stage where responsibility of learning shifts from the mentor to the mentee who can stand on his/her own.

3.5.6 Collaboration

The zone of proximal development of the mentee is tested through collaboration or interaction with others. This process avails the chance for imitation as a way to identify functions that can mature for independent performance. Chaiklin (2003:19) highlights the fact that evidence for psychological functions that are maturing constitutes the central aim for interventions which collaborative. The mentees needs to make good of the interventions as these functions prop an attempt to understand the primacy of the support being rendered. It is widely accepted that teachers benefit from the support and motivation they get from the coaches and colleagues in the collaborative process of engagement (Wertsch, 1998:109). Individuals learn from engaging in social experiences within a cultural context in a real situation by learning how to work together on a task and engaging in discussion or dialogue to promote deeper learning. Learning takes place in a culturally meaningful context, alongside the learning that occurs in the real world and this promotes the active participation and collaboration of partners. Mentees are made to work together and with more competent mentor-teacher or adult to finish the task.

The idea is that after completing the task, the mentee would be better placed to tackle a similar task as an individual in future. This exposes the crucial role social and cultural interactions play in the learning process. Through social interaction the co-construction of knowledge becomes possible as individuals continue to learn from each other

(Vygotsky, 1978:59). The mentee must be engaged in learning as this takes place with the help of other individuals that contribute to fulfill the social part of the theory. The collaborative relationship between the mentee and the teacher facilitates the construction of meaning by the mentee. This is because collaboration avails the chance for imitation and subsequent maturity.

A serving teacher works in collaboration with instructional role models who provide the chance for new teachers to observe various instructional methods in different contexts. Therefore, learning becomes a reciprocal experience for the mentor-teacher and the mentee. They collaborate with each other to share experiences for problem-solving behaviours. Serving teachers are also assisted in their development by other colleagues or peers. They assist them to adapt to new situations and restructure existent skills for problem solving (Karpov, 2003:71). The zone of proximal development of the mentee is tested in the process of their collaboration with mentor teachers. This is because the process avails an opportunity for imitation, which is the way for identifying maturity and the potential for independent performance (Yelland & Master, 2005:368). The relationship created is such that, the mentor-teacher transmits information to mentee in an environment that promotes contextual learning in which a mentee plays an active role.

The central goal of Vygotsky's assumptions is to make sure mentees remain in the ZPD most often by providing them with learning activities that are culturally meaningful and problem-solving work which is a bit difficult as compared to what they are used to do as individuals (Verenikina, 2010:03). The mentees are made to understand the value of working with others such as a mentor teacher or peers in the accomplishing of tasks. This reflects the interconnectedness of social interaction, collaboration and the more-knowledgeable other and learning in the zone of proximal development. The mentee would rely on the mentor-teacher (the more knowledgeable other) for guidance, support and direction (social interaction and collaboration). In this way, learning is able to propel cognitive growth with the mentor-teacher taking the role of a mediator for the beginning teachers' cognitive development.

The mentor-teacher uses all teacher resources combined, to aid the serving teachers' progress (Kozulin, 2003:22). This would enable the mentor-teacher to measure the beginning teachers' progress as they continue to grow their abilities to solve problems, independently. Through measuring the progress, the mentor-teacher and the mentee would be able to realise that learning is taking place when mentees move from their current/actual level of understanding towards gaining new knowledge and skills (Newman & Holzman, 1993:17). Moving from current or actual level indicates that teacher education is never enough to help the beginning teacher to navigate the complexities of teaching without the assistance and guidance of experienced mentor-teacher.

The mentee is taken from the actual development level to potential developmental level that could only be reached with scaffolding from other developmental levels. Scaffolding relates to the act of adjusting the support offered during mentoring as individuals work together. This is done with the intention of closing the gap that exists between the actual level and potential developmental levels of the beginning teacher. Vygotsky labelled the distance between the actual developmental level and the potential levels that could only be achieved with scaffolding from others, as the zone of proximal development (Taylor, 1980:53). It is about giving the mentee the right amount of assistance, at the right time and if the mentee can perform a task with some assistance, then he/she is close to mastering it. Improving collaboration by allowing mentees to work with colleagues or coaches can motivate teachers in cases where they happen to have run out of self-confidence owing to a shortage of self-efficacy or experience (Taylor, 1980:43). Working together in interactions enables individuals to exchange ideas in the process of co-constructing knowledge.

3.5.7 Inter-subjectivity

Wertsch (1998:92) describes 'inter-subjectivity' as the establishment of shared understanding between the mentor and the mentee in a problem-solving task. As learning progresses, the mentor-teacher and the mentee come to a shared understanding - inter-subjectivity. This serves as an indicator of growth and development because it

leads to the next stage-internalisation. Inter-subjectivity is a crucial stage of internalisation. The mentor slowly withdraws assistance and transfers responsibility to the new teacher. The focus is on the existent level of development of the mentee as well as the potential level which is allowed through the process of mediation, an able mentor and environmental tools. What is internalised as part of the mentee's independent achievement which becomes now the intra-mental (within one mind). Internalisation is the process of changing inter-mental processes to intra-mental. This basically presents a shift from external to internal processes of transformation. This implies that individuals produce best outcomes when they work in collaboration with others than as individuals. Mentees benefit immensely from working with more skilled persons to internalize skills, psychological tools and new concepts. The mentee's performance is mediated socially. That is transiting the mentee from real abilities to higher levels of development through cultural provisions. Vygotsky (1978:61) contends that learning is a universal aspect of the development of human beings. It is socially and culturally determined and systematically controlled in the society. The learning by human beings entails a social process that is specific to allow mentees to acquire similar intellectual life, like those around them

3.5.8 Guided Participation

Observing an exemplary teacher's model of teaching can be enlightening and it is more fruitful when the exemplary mentor does it in the mentee's own classes so that she/he can observe how the mentor-teachers cope with their context-development teaching problems (Nielsen, Barry & Staab, 2007:1290). The mentee is putting into practice and implementing the teachings of the mentor-teachers with their assistance or that of an expert. There are shared endeavours between the expert and less skilled, with the former monitoring, guiding and directing the performance of the mentee (the latter). Learning occurs under the supervision of the mentor-teacher, with both the mentor and mentee embedded in a socio-cultural context which shapes their behaviour for people are not just surrounded by the context of their activities but actively interact with it and change it.

The complex interaction between the mentor-teacher, the mentee and their surroundings is a way of constructing meaning out of every activity because each activity is indigenous and social. This implies that every social activity is advanced through the sharing and cooperative work of others. The learning process is mediated through artefacts such as worksheets, handouts, videos as well as the layout of classrooms (Tharp & Gallimore, 1998:13). In a guided participation, Vygotsky states that mediators (mentors) help the beginning teachers to alter their environment through interacting with nature. Mediation in this study is defined as the use of certain tools within socially-organised activity; mediated learning is about the construction of knowledge through the influence of social tools, like language and artefacts which include, technology. Recently, technology has proved to be the most advanced tool for mediating learning. This kind of learning rests on tool mediation which hinges on the work of Vygotsky and includes physical and symbolic mediation (Lantlof, 2004:109). Therefore, technology has proved as one instrument for scaffolding which breeds positive conditions for professional development. Social interaction, as part of human learning and development is discussed hereunder.

3.5.9 Social Interaction

The construction of knowledge which takes place in a social context entails the mentor-mentee collaboration in regard to real problems in the world. This involves activities that accrue on each individual's language, experience and skills, and moulded by the culture of the individual (Vygotsky, 1978:102). Vygotsky (1978:102) explains that individuals learn through sharing space and interacting with others, hence, social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognitive abilities. Vygotsky was convinced that social learning comes before development. The function in the practicing teacher's development culturally is presented twice, this is on the social and individual level (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2002:13). The growth at individual level cannot be understood independent of the socio-cultural context, causing Vygotsky to argue that knowledge is the internalisation of social activity that emanates from social interaction. The social learning theory helps people conceive the way people learn in social environments and teaches the manner in which active learning communities are constructed by teachers.

Individuals acquire knowledge through communications and interacting with other people in social environments which influence that process. Learning occurs when beginning teachers (mentees) interact with mentors, peers and other people that are experts in the field. Vygotsky (1978:102) posits that the construction of human mind happens as the mentee, the subject interacts with the world. It is the type of learning that recognises teaching as engaging in social dialogues and practical activity as the corner stones of social interaction in development and learning. Mentor-teachers are capable of creating environments for learning that maximises the ability of learners to interact with one another in the form of collaboration, feedback and discussion. It is necessary for the mentor to intervene in the learning of the mentee. However, it is the quality of the interaction between the mentor and mentee that is crucial in the learning process (Tharp & Gallimore, 1998:73). In social interaction, there is a lot of collaborative learning and group work which could facilitate quick internalisation of social activity. Social interaction creates space for discussion-based learning, and the mentors use these discussions and dialogue to promote deeper learning while the beginning teachers learn to work together in clarification of specific concepts, information and problems.

3.5.10 The More Knowledgeable Other (MKO)

Vygotsky (1978:104) emphasises the importance of mediated activity in the development of higher mental functions. In the mentoring relationship, the mentor-teacher is regarded as having superior knowledge, hence, is expected to lead the way. The more knowledgeable other concerns a person that better understands or whose ability is higher than that of the student (mentee) in regard to certain tasks, processes and concepts (Vygotsky, 1978:106). The more knowledgeable individual is perceived as a coach, teacher, peer or even an adult. Learning from the more knowledgeable other implies that the mentee is acquiring knowledge and skills from a more skilled individual with the much-needed expertise to enhance the competence of the mentee.

Acquiring knowledge, skills, expertise and the competence in solving problems independently, is an indication that learning has occurred since the mentee is moving

from the actual level of development to the potential level (Jacobs, 2001:127). This is the type of learning that embraces social interaction, collaboration and teamwork, as well as shared understanding of problem-solving activities; all of which are happening in a real and actual context. The more knowledgeable other (mentor) uses a lot of tools to increase the progress of a mentee such as lesson plans, material resources, rubrics and worksheets. The mentor has to assess the progress of the mentee in the progress of advancing in the way of solving problems as an independent.

3.5.11 Distributed Cognition

Vygotsky stressed that culture is the principal determinant of cognitive progress, and knowledge leads to further cognitive development. In his theory, Vygotsky recognises that cognitive development is the result of interactions within cultural and historical contexts. In terms of distributed cognition, the mentor-teacher exposes the mentee to the cultural way of doing things. Information gathered throughout is processed by the individual making use of the artifacts and tools which are culturally provided. The culture develops tools which individuals employ to create their social environment, and these include speech and writing. The internalisation of tools that are available for use by individuals develops high-thinking skills. The achievements and abilities of individuals cannot be conceived beside the realm of cultural and social connections in which they exist (Karim, Mohamad & Saman, 2010:237). Situated cognition naturally works to complement distributed cognition. This perceives learning as an engagement in problem solving activities that are occurrent in daily living. There is emphasis also on the significance of the learning of individuals in real life situations in communities. Development of cognition in social, cultural and historical contexts is related as they complement each other. Next the researcher discusses Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development (1970).

3.7 PIAGET'S THEORY OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Piaget's theory places much focus on the development of learning of individuals. The development focuses on the learner's capabilities. Cognitive development is viewed as resulting from a rearrangement of the processes in the mental makeup of an individual as a result of experiences in the environment and human maturation. Learners create an understanding of the world and then encounter discrepancies in what they know and that which is discovered in the social context (Arends & Kilcher, 2010:33). Piaget, as a constructivist was of the opinion that the process of acquiring information is broader than simple assimilation of facts that involve the integration of learners into the learning community. For Piaget (1970:86), learning is not the passive assimilation of given knowledge, instead, is a fluid process that entail development stages of adapting to reality. In the process of constructing knowledge, learners create and test own theories about the world. In an education setting, the learning process has to be supported and guided by instructors that are knowledgeable in the field.

Piaget continues that knowledge can also be built by building on simpler operations and structures that have already been learned or formed. The same, if explained through Vygotskian thinking is a confirmation that individual's development starts from the actual/current level, moving towards a potential level. Good teaching is built around the operational abilities of the mentees, such that they can excel in their operational stage, build on pre-existing structures and abilities and thereby build learning (Lidz & Gindis, 2003:31). The theory supports the idea that in learning, mentor-teachers should never tell learners anything directly but, instead, should always allow them to construct knowledge for themselves. By using Piaget's theory, mentors nourish and support mentee's curiosity. This means that mentors involve mentees' emotions and create a learning environment in which they feel safe following from the assumption that all knowledge is constructed from the learner's previous knowledge. Piaget's theory is found to be in agreement with Vygotsky's believing that under the ZPD, learning starts from a certain level of development.

In 1970, Piaget propounded that learners advance through a series of steps which are assumed to portray disparities in the cognitive abilities of students. This relates to the existence of particular structures which detect that certain aspects cannot be taught an individual that has not attained noted stages of development. Recognition of this supports Vygotsky's position that learners, through the assistance of MKO would move from the current/actual level to potential level of development which is an indication that learning has occurred. Piaget perceived growth intellectually as an outcome of adaptation. The process of learning is explained in terms of schemes. This entails information being organised according to the nature of the functioning of things. In his theory, Piaget proposed three major concepts as the cornerstones or schemes of the cognitive process. He identified these as assimilation, accommodation and equilibration. These schemes are discussed as repeatable, segmental, cohesive and containing actions which are closely connected and managed through the existence of core meaning.

3.7.1 Assimilation

At this level of development, learning occurs when a learner perceives new objects or events in terms of existing knowledge or operations. The theory supports the idea that knowledge must be assimilated in an active process by the mentee with the skilled person as the facilitator. Learning is basically grounded on observation and discovery activities, with the mentor-teacher taking the role of facilitator. The learner, through facilitation of the mentor-teacher transforms new information into knowledge (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013:70). In other words, the learner uses an existing unit of knowledge to deal with a new object or situation. This is supported by Vygotsky through his concept of inter-subjectivity which is the idea that, the learner's performance is mediated socially - moving the mentee from actual capabilities to a higher, culturally mediated level of development. For Piaget (1970), this level of development is about assimilating new object into an existing knowledge while for Vygotsky's inter-subjectivity concept, assimilation is the process of internalising new knowledge.

3.7.2 Accommodation

At the level of accommodation, learning occurs when existing knowledge or operations, through facilitation of mentor-teacher, are mediated to account for a new experience. Accommodation, as elucidated by Piaget (1970), is the transformation of existing knowledge or the creating of new ones. Under the concept of guided participation, Vygotsky (1978) states that learning occurs under the supervision of the mentor-teacher, with both the mentor and mentee embedded in a sociocultural content which shapes their behaviour, thus, both Piaget and Vygotsky agree that individuals learn through social interaction and collaboration in natural settings.

3.7.3 Equilibration

It is the comprehensive developmental process, encompassing both assimilation and accommodation. It is the process of bringing equilibrium between knowledge, operations and the environment. Continuous interactions among existing knowledge, assimilation, accommodation and equilibrium create new learning; this is the developmental level when the learner's existing knowledge is capable of explaining what it can perceive around it - the state of cognitive balance (Piaget (1970). In Vygotsky's theory, this would imply that the learner has moved from the actual level to the potential level of development and that is scaffolding. The learner has gained enough knowledge to deal with most new information and can handle difficult tasks on his/her own (Blank & Kershaw, 2009:43). Piaget contends that intellectual development is a lifelong process, but when formal operational thought is attained, no new structures were needed since intellectual development in adults involves developing more complex schemes through the addition of knowledge.

3.8 PIAGET'S ENVISAGED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Piaget believed in a dual existence regarding the social and the individual. The concept of dualism describes the society in terms of the environment within which individual

activity takes place. It also avails inherent perspectives in relation to the individual. Dualism to Vygotsky, concerns the internalisation of the social plane which then becomes the individual's plane. The "social" as viewed from a social-cultural perspective is not just about a place of actions or an environment of the individual but concerns the totality of the human, cultural and human aspects (Duveen & Psaltis, 2008:48). In this theory, Piaget contends that an individual's environment and world are structured by both the social and cultural worlds. The social dimension of learning is noted to form an essential part of human development (Mayer, 2005:368). The idea here is that the theory promotes learning and development that are socio-culturally meaningful and relevant.

Social interactions and collaboration with the surrounding transform the individual's thinking and influence him/her to behave and act in a way that is congruent to the setting. The social nature of the individual's surroundings and the cultural world continue shaping the individual's thinking but only by giving possibilities for the individual to exercise solo thinking (Psaltis & Duveen, 2006:417). Piaget acknowledged that the imposition of the views of the mentor takes place in a situation where an individual participates in an activity that he is not conversant with but surviving on the guidance of more knowledgeable individuals. However, this does not alter the structures which form the basis of an individual's actions. On the other hand, Vygotsky states that the development of a socio-cultural nature, takes place in the ZPD as the individual interacts with an experienced individual or operates in an activity that is advanced. In the main, Piaget and Vygotsky agree that the individual is socialised and educated through interactions with his/her contemporaries as well.

Piaget and Vygotsky highlighted the importance of culture, institutions and society in the development of an individual. From a socio-cultural perspective, these agree that development entails a shift in the way in which an individual participates in an activity of a socio-cultural nature instead of a transformation in the structure of actions of the individual or a better understanding of speech or tools (Muller, Burman & Hutchison, 2013:54). As regard the development of an individual, there is consensus in terms of the existence of a gap in the way in which a mentor and mentee understand the situation in

which they are both engaged. It becomes apparent for the mentor, therefore to take initiatives for closing the gap through properly-arranged mentoring programmes that are unfolding in a socially, collaborative and culturally meaningful environment and with the sociocultural approach, development occurs when participation transforms (Oxford, 2001:247). In Vygotsky's thinking this would imply the movement of the mentee from the actual level of understanding to a potential level of development.

The developmental theory by Piaget, pertaining learning and the construction of knowledge is hinged on the concept of discovery activity. This implies that learners need to be permitted to structure knowledge which is meaningful in their view as a way of providing an ideal learning environment. Piaget (1970) argues that a constructivist learning environment should avail various activities which enable learners to increase their propensity to learn, acknowledge differences of individuals, build their own world views and discover fresh ideas. His theory of cognitive development is a relevant tool in a teacher's professional development, because Piaget's position is that individuals developed best in an environment characterised by social interaction. Mentees have the latitude to be presented with ideas, cultures and fora regarding global issues which associate acquisition of information with social interactions. The learning environment, thus, must create possibilities for learners with various levels of cognition to work together and for those of immature levels of understanding to progress to increased maturity, which Vygotsky identifies as scaffolding. Learning is centred on social interaction, collaboration and the use of concrete "hands-on" experience to help develop the learner.

3.9 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Piaget's theory advocates for the adaptation of teaching methods to the level of a learner's development. The instructional content has to be matched with the level of development of the learner. The role of teacher must be to facilitate learning through the provision of a number of experiences. This promotes understanding and advancing the notion that the best way to learn is through active engagement. Active learning aids the mastery of

problem-solving skills which is a pre-requisite for accommodation and assimilation. Problem-solving skills are not learnt but discovered, as such the learner has to be at the centre of the learning process (Piaget, 1970). Teachers should just direct learning experiences which calls for the reconstruction and rediscovery of truths. Collaborative and team work approaches should be used to conduct teaching and learning discourses.

3.10 BANDURA'S SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY 1977

Albert Bandura (1977:81) posits that behaviour is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning. In other words, individuals learn through observing the people around them, thereby, people with experience, expertise, skills and knowledge are observed as models. In terms of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978), people with expertise are The More Knowledgeable Others (MKO) who are individuals in every society or influential mentors from whom learners/mentees can shape their behaviour, imitate their performance then internalise that; in the Social Learning Theory, mentors are an important source of learning (McLeod, 2016:01). Foundations of human learning are embedded in the willingness of individuals to imitate behaviour observed in others, hence, Bandura's Social Learning Theory puts much emphasis on the role of social modelling in human motivation, thought and action. The theory implies that for us to understand the individual's personality, we first need to know the social environment in which the person exists.

In terms of the Social Learning Theory, thinking, personality, the environment and behaviour all interact towards the shaping of an individual for people are active participants in their environments. Individuals do not just react to issues in the social environment. The functioning of human beings occurs through triadic reciprocity which entails the cognitive, behaviour and environmental factors. This implies that in social learning, social interactions and context are contributors to learning processes. Haggbloom (2002:140) confirms that much human behaviour is learned from other humans. Bandura suggests the existence of three components of the social learning theory which include observational learning, reciprocal determinism and self-efficacy.

3.10.1 Self-efficacy

Bandura (1986:87) defines 'self-efficacy' as the belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute actions that are required. The Social Learning Theory can be applied to motivation and learning of teachers to enhance and develop their instructional practices. In an educational setting, self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence to participate in certain actions that will help them achieve goals; it is when learning relies on self-confidence in the individual, which is in line with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. That is when the individuals are moving from their actual level to the potential level of development.

The individual is learning through social interaction in a social context with guidance coming from the mentor, implying getting assistance from anyone who has better understanding or a higher ability level. Vygotsky (1978:56) categories a mentor as The More Knowledgeable Other (MKO). The MKO is normally thought of as being a teacher, coach or older adult with experience, skills and expertise, similar to the relationship between a mentor and mentee in a mentoring activity.

3.10.2 Observational Learning

Another important element of the social learning theory is the assumption that significant learning takes place through the process of imitation and modelling. In observational learning, individuals acquire self-regulative functions from observing mentors, thereby, observational learning occurs when individuals observe a well-trained mentor and experience increase in their knowledge and understanding; the well-trained mentor in this case, Vygotsky would be referring to MKO.

3.10.3 Reciprocal Determinism

Bandura (1977) explains learning as a result of an interaction between predetermined potentialities and a supportive and properly programmed environment, while an individual

is viewed as an active mediator who operates on the environment. In Social Learning Theory, social milieu or the social context setting has impact on the developmental process of an individual, since the impetus for behaviour is environmental in nature. This stands to reason that the development process of an individual is bidirectional, characterised by reciprocity between the individual and the environment; reciprocal determinism, therefore, is the understanding between the individual and the environment (Schunk, 2012:118). The individual processes information from the mentor and develops a set of functions through trial and error which continues until his/her behaviour is on target. The mentee perceives the mentor and then imitates the behaviour which is later internalized. It is logical to suggest that reciprocal determinism breeds self-efficacy which is defined as the belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute an action. The implication is that behaviour, internal personal and environmental factors all influence and operate as interlocking determinants of each other. Reciprocal determinism suggests that learning is controlled by situational influences and there is interdependence between people and their environment. In other words, behaviour and environmental conditions function as reciprocally determinants.

3.11 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study were discussed. Vygotsky, Piaget and Bandura's theories of learning and development of new teachers (mentees) were discussed and served as the basis for the study. These theories were used to understand the learning development of individuals, in real social contexts. Vygotsky, Piaget and Bandura appreciate the importance of constructs building and the internalisation of knowledge instead of accepting information provided in the form of rote learning. Environments for constructive learning motivate learners to gather data, reflect, filter and analyse information to enhance private study and comprehension of facts that is individualized. Learning is viewed as a core activity for individuals who are interested in grasping the causes and impacts of situations, human progress and life meanings.

The theoretical foundations of Vygotsky, Piaget and Bandura regarding mentoring and continuous professional development of teachers were used to develop an understanding of the effect that mentoring has on serving teachers, its importance and how teachers perceive it. The three theorists, as well as the literature recognise that in mentoring, more knowledgeable individual (mentor-teacher) provide guidance, support and lead the serving teachers(mentees) to higher levels of mental functions. Both the literature and theories, thereby are in agreement that learning is an activity that occurs through social interactions, collaboration and teamwork in a real context using cultural tools like norms, writing and language. These cultural tools, social interaction, collaboration and teamwork are effective for co-construction of knowledge.

The concepts and constructs of Vygotsky, Piaget and Bandura's theoretical frameworks were used to understand the direction and focus of the study with regard to the effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher development.

In the next chapter, the research methodology, including the research design and data collection methods used to explore the impact of mentoring as a form of professional development on teachers are discussed.

CHAPTER 4

“Qualitative research starts from and returns to words, talk and texts as meaningful representations of concepts” (Gephardt, cited in Prat, 2009:856).

RESEARCH PARADIGM, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, the researcher discussed the theoretical framework that underpins the study which is investigating the effect of mentoring on serving teachers. The researcher also discussed how the theories relate to the study. This chapter focused on the research paradigm, research design and methodology employed in the study. Sampling techniques, ethical consideration as well as trustworthiness of qualitative data were outlined. The chapter also accounted for the procedures used to collect data, analyse and interpret data collected and concludes by discussing measures which ensured the quality of the research.

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Morgan (2007:71) states that research paradigms are crucial to the verification of theoretical propositions. Similarly, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:71) suggest that any study should be interconnected to a research paradigm or approach. This study is anchored on the interpretivist or constructive approach which enable the investigator to deconstruct the realities of the experiences of practicing teachers during the mentoring process. The interpretivist or constructivist paradigm allows for the creation of meaning from the lived experiences of participants which is unique in its own right (Crotty, 1998:12). Teachers have unique experiences and established realities that emerge from their multiple faceted knowledge. Interpretivists and constructivists are convinced that reality is constructed from personal experiences that are cultural and socially mediated

(Crotty, 1998; Charmaz, 2000; Trochim, 2002; Terre Blanch & Durrheim, 2002; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

Crotty (2003:10) identifies paradigms as systems of thinking which guide a study by defining its nature along three philosophical dimensions: ontology, epistemology and methodology. Lincoln (2000:18) views ontology as a philosophical study that specifies the nature of reality to be studied; it is concerned with the order of reality and how human beings experience it. Epistemology specifies the nature of the relationship between the researcher and what can be known, thus, researchers are concerned with the meaning that participants can have knowledge of (Crotty, 2003:8). From the above definitions, a paradigm can be viewed as a perspective or worldview based on a set of assumptions, concepts, values and practices that constitute a way people view reality in the communities they live.

Constructivist or interpretive paradigm guided this study. This influenced the process of the investigation in terms of framing the research, selecting participants, data collection, presentation and so on. Interpretive approach assisted in the establishment of a relationship of trust between the researcher and participants. The mutual relations enabled the rich experiences of participants to be explored. In-depth information was collected to provide significant influences as informed by the gathered data, interpretation and analysis. An excellent relationship was established prior to data collection through sound communication with participants and this continued throughout the process of the study.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:136) present a research design as a plan or a structure to investigate and obtain responses to research questions. In essence, it is a blue print for selecting participants, research sites and collecting data to address the research objectives. The design determines the individuals to be studied, where, under what situations and at what time (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:102). Additionally, the details

concerning the methods to be employed to collect relevant information for the study are spelt out in the design of the research.

This study adopted a case study design. Simmons (2009:23) states that a qualitative case study design enables complex programmes, experiences and policies to be studied in detail. The interpretation recognizes the socio-cultural context in which the programmes exist. A case study has the advantage of being flexible, implying that it is neither limited by time or methods used. Case studies have the potential to extensively engage participants in their natural settings in the research process. It emphasises that humans actively construct their own meanings of situations and that meanings arise out of social situations and can be handled, through an interpretive process. The study adopted a case study design because it is a substantial description, analysis and explanation of one or several units, in their natural settings, investigates a temporary phenomenon in depth, within its real-life context and for a specific purpose (Yin, 2011:18). Cohen and Manion (2011:289) maintain that a case study is an excellent example of people in real circumstance and allows readers to comprehend ideas better than just by presenting them with abstract theories and principles. In this study, the researcher employed a qualitative research approach.

A case study design was more suitable for this study because it enables a researcher to describe and analyse serving teachers' collective experiences in their natural settings, in the mentoring process; meanings were constructed from participants' revelations. Cohen and Manion (2007:252) describe a case study as a specific instance that is designed to illustrate a more general principle, 'it is the study of instance in action'.

4.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

MacMillan and Schumacher (2010:20) describe methodology as the procedures followed for the planning and execution of a research study. In essence, it is the plan for providing empirical evidence which may lead to the most usable and reliable responses to the research question and it determines how the data will be analysed. A research

methodology is a framework of procedures, techniques and models that are used in a number of approaches to collect data for interpretation. It is a system which is employed to arrive at the desired results of the research endeavour.

4.4.1 Research Approach

This study is basically qualitative. Qualitative research is driven by a naturalistic philosophy which perceives reality as multi layered, composed of shared experiences of individuals and interactive (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:315). Qualitative approach is a strategy that allows researchers to investigate collective and individual beliefs, actions, perceptions and thoughts. Qualitative researchers are able to collect data that relates to human senses, inclusive of how they feel, see, taste, smell and hear. Qualitative approach fosters the collection of detailed and rich data from participants which encompass thought processes, feelings as well as emotions which may be difficult to acquire using other approaches (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Merriam, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). This is in line with Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2002:137) who state that a qualitative approach enables people to be constructors of their own meanings of situations and to allow meanings to emerge from social situations through the utilisation of an interpretive process. The qualitative case study approach was selected to allow the researcher to describe the practicing teachers' collective experience in the practice of mentoring.

In qualitative research, researchers interact face-to-face with actual participants during field work. There is a deliberate quest for researchers to understand the experiences of participants through the use of multiple methods that are humanistic and interactive. Researchers listen to people, watch as well as talk with them to obtain data. Researchers read records and documents, and also observe cues and physical spaces. Working with participants in their own natural settings provides a holistic understanding of the mentoring process (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:17). Multiple methods were used in this study as advised by Rallis in 1998. These, amongst others, included analyses of documents, interviews and observation of chosen sites. The qualitative approach focuses

on natural settings, direct collection of data, rich descriptions and context sensitivity. Also, of concern in the study is indulgent analysis of data, process orientation, and complex explanations and understanding (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:321). Therefore, this approach was found to be suitable for data collection on mentoring as a strategy for professional development.

Advocates of qualitative research maintain that life is context determined. This pertains to the natural settings in which individuals study work, live and play. Researchers exhibit increased interest in the interactions that occur between individuals as they pursue depth rather than breadth of information. There is also a quest to derive sense in the content learned in a manner that is politically right, thoughtful and ethical. In the study, the researcher sought to understand the perceptions of mentors within the context of their operations. In this approach, it is possible for participants to tell their own stories and lived experiences.

4.5 RESEARCH PROCESS

The sampling process relates to the target population, sampling and the determination of the sample.

4.5.1 Population

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:119), a population relates to a group of cases or elements, inclusive of events or individuals that suit a definite criteria and to which the researcher might generate the findings of the study. It may refer to individuals that fit into a certain parameter such as gender and location (Charles & Mertler, 2002:45). In line with Charles and Mertler, Neumann (2008:216) mentions that a target population addresses a group of individuals that are the object of study. The target population for this study was made up of high school teachers in the Mopani District, Limpopo Province. The study was located in the Thabina Cluster to save time and minimise costs as the

researcher is involved with that site. In the next topic the researcher presents the notion of sampling.

4.5.2 Sampling

Sampling is a technique that is used to select a small number of people from a population to allow researchers to make inferences about that population. Walker (1996:73) indicates that a sample is comprised of individuals that are chosen from the entire group. Participants can be selected on the basis of their possession of experience or knowledge in regard to the phenomenon under study. The sites and individuals can also be chosen because of their ability to purposefully expose the research problem or the core of the entity of the investigation. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:138) contends that a sample can be chosen on the basis of being information rich. Sampling involves the researcher selecting individuals, events or situations that have a high likelihood of achieving fruitful data about the research problem through employed procedures of data collection (Teddlie & Yu, 2007:79).

In other words, a sample is made up of parts of the population which have typical attributes. Bubb and Earley (2007:7) view a sample as a small proportion of the population that has characteristics which resemble those of the entire group. Therefore, a sample is a group of subjects or participants from whom data is collected and is selected from the whole group of individuals called the population (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:119). In this study, the population comprised of high school teachers in the Thabina Cluster, while the sample is the beginning teachers from the same cluster. The researcher outlines purposeful sampling in the next section.

4.5.2.1 Purposeful sampling

The research was conducted in six (6) high schools in Thabina Circuit. A purposeful sampling technique was used in this study to select the participants as it would be difficult to study a complete population, such as all high school teachers in Thabina Circuit. Creswell (2007:125) describes purposeful sampling as a strategy to select participants

with the intention that they are experienced in the topic under study. The inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study. Purposive sampling relates to the method of selecting situations, events and individuals that would produce the most fruitful data in regard to the research problem and the procedures for data collection (Teddlie & Yu, 2007:79). In this study, purposive sampling was employed to gather relevant and specific data for the study participants. Creswell (2009:178) argues that participants are purposefully selected in qualitative research in order to help the researcher to grasp the problem as well as the research questions.

4.5.2.2 Selection of participants and site

The aim of the study was to investigate the effect of mentoring as a form of professional development for serving teachers, at high schools in the Mopani District, Limpopo Province. Before the commencement of collection, permission was sought from the Provincial Head of Department, in Limpopo to conduct the research. After the approval had been granted, a list of serving teachers in the Thabina Cluster and their contact details were obtained, together with their years of teaching experiences, thereafter, telephone calls and personal contacts were made to create a rapport with the beginning teachers. Follow-ups were made to see which beginning teachers were willing and who were not willing to participate in the study. A total of twelve beginning teachers responded positively to participate in the study.

Table 4.1: Participants in the Study

School	Participant	Gender	Experience	Language	Participated in
School : A	Teacher 1	M	1 1/2 years	SEPEDI	Interview and classroom observation
	Teacher 2	M	4 years	SEPEDI	Interview and classroom observation
School : B	Teacher 1	M	06 months	SEPEDI	Interview and classroom observation
	Teacher 2	F	3 years	SEPEDI	Interview and classroom observation
School : C	Teacher 1	M	08 months	SEPEDI	Interview and classroom observation
	Teacher 2	M	4 years	SEPEDI	Interview and classroom observation
School : D	Teacher 1	F	1 1/2 years	XITSONGA	Interview and classroom observation
	Teacher 2	M	2 years	XITSONGA	Interview and classroom observation
School : E	Teacher 1	F	5 years	SEPEDI	Interview and classroom observation

	Teacher 2	M	5 years	SEPEDI	Interview and classroom observation
School : F	Teacher 1	F	2 years	XITSONGA	Interview and classroom observation
	Teacher 2	M	06 months	XITSONGA	Interview and classroom observation

4.5.2.3 Size of the group

For this study, the interviews were with twelve participants (serving teachers) from the six high schools selected for this study. The participants in this study were purposefully chosen because they are involved with the phenomenon under investigation; the participants in the study were all employees of the Limpopo Department of Education. The selected participants were interviewed to get meaningful data around the phenomenon under investigation - mentoring. In the next topic the researcher discusses the data collection instruments used in the study.

4.5.2.4 Research sites

This study investigated six schools (A, B, C, D, E and F) situated in Mopani district under Thabina Circuit; six schools were selected in order to have a wide range of choice. The six selected schools were located within 18 - 20 kilometers of each other and two teachers were selected from which gave a total of twelve teachers who participated in the study. The reason was to ensure that the data generated by such a number of participants would be manageable given the limited time in which I had to conduct that research. Pseudonyms were used to protect the schools' and teachers' privacy and to maintain confidentiality.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data relates to any form of information that the investigator can employ to address the research questions. Qualitative research demands that the methods used to gather data be able to yield appropriate data for analysis. This data has to be in the form of narratives (words) instead of numbers or figures (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:347). Three data collection instruments that were used in this study included face-to-face interviews, participant observation and document analysis. The data collection therefore was through these methods with the serving teachers to find out their experiences of mentoring and how it had benefitted them.

Table 4.2: Summary of Data Collection and Data Capturing Methods

Method of Data Collection	Instruments Assisting Data Collection	Prompt	Data Capturing Method
Interview	Researcher involving teachers in answering semi-structured interview questions	Answering about the investigation that effect of mentoring as a form of professional development for serving teachers at high schools	Transcription of interview.
Observation	Participant observer	observing teachers in their natural settings	document analysis Analysed data
Document analysis		observing teachers in their natural settings	Document analysis Analysed data

4.6.1 Interviews

The researcher chose to employ interviews. According to Johnson and Christensen (2011:178), an interview is a data collection which allows the researcher to collect data from participants through interviews in order to understand their beliefs, ideas, opinions, behaviour and pertinent ideas. An interview is an exchange of information involving two or more individuals based on a phenomenon of common interest (Cohen & Manion, 2007:345). Interviews are flexible tools for the collection of data through multiple channels such as non-verbal and verbal forms. Interviews are suitable for qualitative studies because they permit the researcher and participants to hold interactive dialogues. (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006:38). In this study, the aim of the interview was to draw information from participants about the development initiative from their respective schools, pertaining to mentoring as a form of professional development for serving teachers, at high schools.

Teachers were interviewed at their schools as agreed. The interviews took about 30 minutes, for both teachers and were held in their respective institutions: all interviews were conducted in English. A tape recorder was used to record the data and no participant objected to the use of a recording device. The participants were asked the same questions, in the same sequence so as to reduce the interviewer's effects and bias, however, this did not prevent the researcher from probing, asking for clarification where he felt the participant needed to expand and shed more light on what is being investigated (McMillan, 1993:426).

4.6.1.1 Semi-structured Interviews

The interview was semi-structured, enabling the researcher to make follow-up through probing questions for depth and clarity. Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews merely extend and formalise conversations; which are furthermore described as a 'conversation with a purpose'. Semi-structured, face-to-face, interviews are prepared in advance along with an interview guide. Objectives are translated into questions that make up the main

structure of the schedule for interviewing. This technique was chosen to assist the investigator to comprehend the experiences of serving teachers. This demanded the conduction of interactive field work. Interviews assume face-to-face interaction involving the participants and the researcher, making it possible for the researcher to gather data reflecting the way participants construct their world (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:36). Open ended questions were employed to attract meaningful answers while encouraging unobstructed cooperation of participants. This technique was used to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation on the effect of mentoring as a form of professional development for serving teachers at high schools.

The flexibility of open-ended questions is paramount. They enable the researcher to probe responses to allow the gathering of in-depth information and to clear misunderstanding (Cohen & Manion, 2007:357). Open ended interviews assist in the establishment of rapport between the interviewer and participants, to assess the beliefs of participants and the amount of knowledge that participants possess. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:361) argue that an interview is not just an exercise for data collection but a socio-personal encounter. It is crucial that an interviewer be well versed with communication and interaction skills as well as in the subject matter. The researcher created a healthy rapport with the participants and established a conducive atmosphere for them to feel secure and express themselves freely. On a regular basis the participants were convinced about the confidentiality of the process as well as the primacy of informed consent (Creswell, 2009:190). In the main, the researcher caved a healthy rapport through being polite, respectful and friendly without losing the purpose of the interview. The researcher was able to visit the participants individually and to collect information directly on social and personal matters. The researcher introduced and offered a brief background about the study to ensure participants are both related and comfortable in the provision of data. Participants were also allowed to introduce themselves prior to contributing data as a strategy to ease tension.

These face-to-face interview sessions were recorded on tapes after consent was obtained from participants. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) contend that in qualitative research,

data is collected through face-to-face interviews with participants in their settings. The researcher has to describe and analyse social actions of both individuals and the collective as well as their perceptions, thoughts and beliefs (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:315). The researcher used the voice recorder to capture data as these make sure that the interactions are complete and provide materials for checking the reliability of information (Hannan, 2007:72). The recording of data was to make sure data was collected and stored in the same state as it was availed by participants (Blaxter, 2004:172). There were open dialogues with the participants and they revealed their lived experiences as serving teachers. The researcher exercised empathy with interviewees and this won their confidence and as a result the conversation with the participants was open and free. The researcher refrained from being obstructive and also from imposing his own influence on the interviews by allowing free-flowing conversation.

The semi-structured interviews held had some pre-set questions but allowed more scope for open-ended answers; these enabled the researcher to make follow ups through probing questions for depth and clarity (Hannan, 2007:72). Through the semi-structured interviews, most participants were able to reveal their intentions, beliefs, values and reasons for how they experienced the mentoring programme. The interviews were conducted after school hours so that there was no disruption of teaching time or the daily management of the schools.

4.6.2 Observation

Observation is a research process that offers the researcher an opportunity to gather data from occurrences in the social settings. The observations were conducted in the natural settings, using an observation schedule. The researcher adopted the observational role through which he took part in activities in the setting under observation. All the observations took place at the participants' workplaces with the aim of getting a better understanding of the school atmosphere and culture through observation. Observation is a powerful method of gaining insight into different situations; the researcher observed the participants in their own natural setting to gain first-hand information. This method

depends on the sense of hearing and sight as well as the recording of what is observed instead of relying on the reports that participants provide in response to written questions. The strategy was suitable for the researcher as it is devoid of the short comings owing to the bias of self-reports and the provision of information that is socially desirable (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:256). This method takes into account the fact that behaviour can be observed and recorded as it occurs naturally.

This technique allows the researcher to really observe the actions that people engage in instead of depending on the accounts of people regarding their behaviours. The researcher is not hugely dependent on the ability or willingness of the participants to contribute information. The researcher as participant observer visualized serving teachers in their interactions with people outside the space for observation and while engaged in activities under controlled conditions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:42). The researched events even after school hours and in some cases the participants were not aware that they were being observed. The researcher created time to visit selected schools for the purpose of observing participants in action in their natural settings. The researcher discussed those observations which required to be clarified by participants to foster congruence between observations and accounts of participants (Creswell, 2009:178). In the next topic, the researcher discusses document analysis as one of the data collection methods.

4.6.3 Document Analysis

Documents have always been a significant source of data in qualitative research. Bogdan and Biklen (2007:136) argue that organisations such as schools have documents which are produced for particular forms of consumption. Merriam (2002:13) admits that the power of documents as a source of data exist in the reality that these already occur in the context such that they hardly alter the setting as does the researcher on entry into the research settings. The researcher explored official documents (for example, Developmental Appraisal System) relating to mentoring programmes at school level. Yanow (2007:411) posits that the reading of documents offers the background knowledge

which may be pivotal in influencing the crafting of research instruments and the carting out of interviews. This may also assist in the corroboration of interviews and observational data (Hannan, 2007:72). In this study, brief discussions of official documents relating to mentoring were held between the researcher and relevant personnel inclusive of school principals and other senior members at the schools. Best and Kahn (2006:257) states that, analyses of official documents serve to add knowledge to research and explains certain social events. The next topic deals with the concept of ethical principles.

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section focuses on ethical issues, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality.

4.7.1 Ethical Issues

This aspect deals with getting permission to conduct research in selected schools from various stakeholders. The researcher received ethical clearance from the University's Ethics Committee which allowed him to seek permission to conduct research from the Provincial Education Department, District Office Circuit Offices involved and lastly the SGBs of the affected schools. Twelve beginning teachers were contacted telephonically and personally requesting their assistance. This process enabled the researcher to issue out invitations to the teachers to participate in the study. All the twelve (12) serving teachers accepted the request and before the commencement of the interviews, the researcher again explained to them that it is not compulsory for them to take part in the study and that they are free to withdraw at any time if they feel like. Those who were interested were assured on matters of their concerns such as assurance that no harm (for example, bodily harm) whatsoever would befall them.

In this study, certain ethical issues were taken into consideration based on the University policy on research ethics. The researcher obtained permission from the Department of Education in Mopani District. Participation was voluntarily, and the researcher ensured that participants had a good understanding concerning the reliability of the findings of the

study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:104; Maree, 2007:76). Therefore, investigations need to be carried out with integrity and honesty. Consent forms were given to all participants to sign. The participants were also informed about the right to withdraw participation at any time they so wish. Basically, the researcher ensured that the three most important elements of ethics were well catered for - privacy, confidentiality and anonymity - were maintained throughout the study. This was done by way of not disclosing participants' workstations and personal identities or anything that can lead to their identification. Participants were given numbers to hide their identity (Cohen & Manion, 2007:367). Assurance was given to all stakeholders that no disruption of classes would occur during the study.

4.7.2 Informed Consent

Informed consent relates to the decision to participate in a study based on knowledge of what the study involves, what is demanded in terms of time, activities and topics to be covered, what risks are involved, and where to lodge a complaint should that become necessary (Bouma, 2009:170). The consent form which explained details to everyone was drafted and given to them. This was done to enable the researcher to immediately provide answers where there were questions. The participants were requested to acknowledge their participation in writing. The form clearly indicated that participants were free not to answer questions they found uncomfortable, and that taking part in the research was purely on a voluntary basis. The researcher explained to the participants that it was important for them to take part in the study because their responses, views and ideas might help in the development of policies for professional development of teachers. The researcher reminded the participants that they were free to withdraw, at any time, without penalty and that they did not need to offer any reason for doing so.

4.7.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality

The essence of anonymity and confidentiality is that information provided by the participants should in no way reveal their identity. Anonymity and confidentiality were

maintained throughout the study: this was a way of protecting the participants' right to privacy (Cohen & Manion, 2007:252). It is the obligation of the researcher to make sure that guarantees of confidentiality are carried out in spirit and through letters. The researcher promised all the participants that the information they provide would not be publicly reported in a way that would identify them; the right to privacy helps to ensure both confidentiality and anonymity. From the discussions on ethical considerations, the researcher now details the data analysis process.

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis of this study forms the major part of the research project. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:364) contend that the analyses of qualitative data is, most importantly, an inductive exercise of arranging data into patterns and categories. It pertains to the establishment of relationships from patterns as a way of obtaining explanations that are convincing. The collected data was broken into patterns, trends, themes, trends and relationships that are manageable in order to established sense from it. The researcher used a thematic analysis to analyse data. With reference to the works of Kvale (2014); Braund and Clarke (2013) thematic is understood as a process of analyses requiring a researcher to work through systematic stages, beginning with familiarisation with the collected data and moving to codes generating; this should be linked to the research questions. Thereafter, similar ideas were grouped in order to develop themes. Qualitative data analysis is a systematic process of coding, categorising, and interpreting questions. Qualitative data analysis is the mass of words generated by interviews or observational data to be described and summarised. The researcher transcribed the audio-taped data and after reading and re-reading of the transcribed data, the researcher divided them into categories in order to easily work with them.

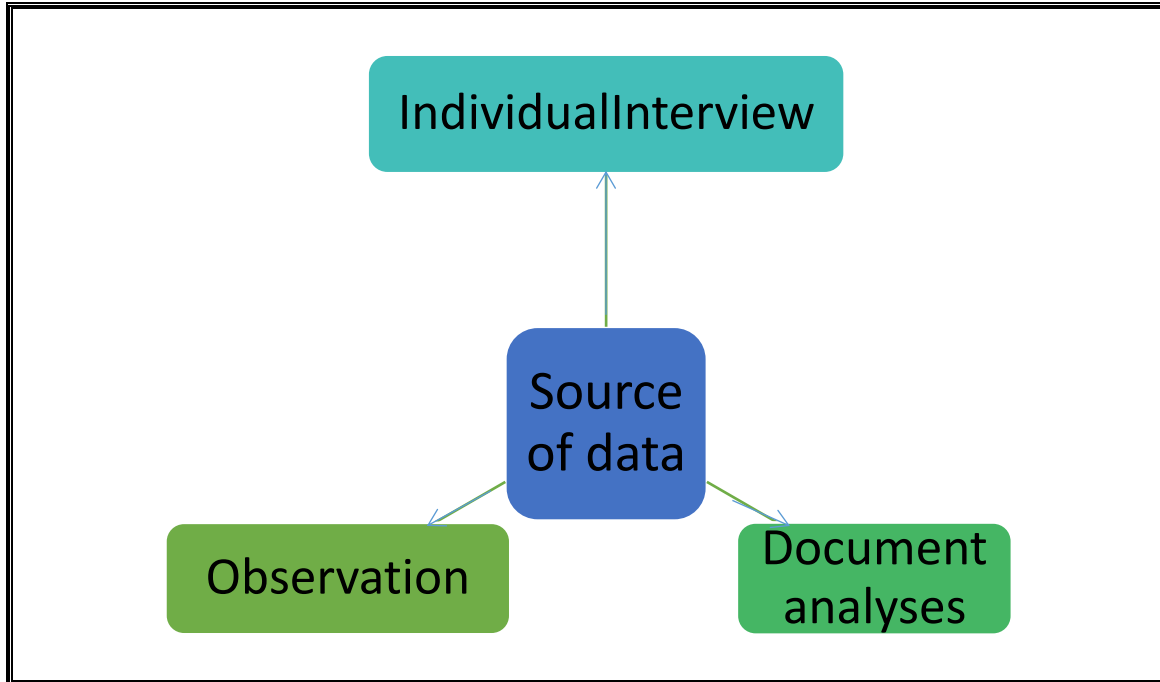


Figure 4.1: Source of Data Analysis

The analysed interviews, document analysis and observation transcripts helped in identifying common themes (Seale, 2000:46). This enabled the researcher to arrive at themes, meaning, to analyse qualitative data, the thematic approach was used.

4.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

Trustworthiness is judged through credibility, conformability and data dependability (Yin, 2009). Maree (2007:297) maintains that trustworthiness refers to the way in which the researcher is able to convince the reader that the findings in the study are worth paying attention to and that they are quality. In this study trustworthiness is revealed through the quality of the participants' responses given during data collection and the research results obtained through interviews, observation and the documents analysed in the process. The researcher had to be as objective as possible, although also sensitive to personal bias and how it shapes the study. For a researcher it is not always easy to avoid filtering data through a personal lens shaped by specific socio-political and historical backgrounds because they shape personal interpretations while acknowledging that it is intrinsic to

qualitative data analysis. Briggs (2007:115) emphasises the importance of retaining the records of conversation to check their veracity with participants.

4.9.1 Credibility

Credibility is defined as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002:276). Credibility is there to establish whether or not the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' original views. Credibility refers to the trustworthiness, verisimilitude and plausibility of the research findings. A study is trustworthy if and only if the reader of the research judges it to be so (Gunawan, 2015:4). The credibility of a qualitative research paradigm depends upon the ability and effort of the researcher. Whenever the researcher addresses the concepts of reliability and validity in qualitative research they refer to credibility. The value attached to credibility is that it deals with the focus of the research and has the ability to really capture the multiple realities of those we study. The trustworthiness of a research is essential to evaluating its worth. Golafshani (2003:66) suggests that if the trustworthiness can be maximised then more credible and defensible results for generalizability would emerge. The quality of a research is, therefore, related to generalizability of the result and thereby to the testing and increasing the trustworthiness of the research. Trustworthiness has been further divided into credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability. A qualitative researcher establishes rigour of the study by adopting the following credibility strategies:

4.9.1.1 Extended engagement in the field

The collection qualitative data demands that the researcher be immersed in the world of the participants (Li, 2004:321). This entails expending enough time observing different aspects in the research site, establishing relationships and rapport with organisation members and conversing widely with them. Prolonged time in the field during data collection include communicating with the participants, telephonic conversations, observation of participants through informal visits before and after data collection and analysing documents related to the study. Prolonged engagement between the

participants and the researcher helped to obtain increased understanding regarding the organisation and establishing trusting relationship between the researcher and participants. It is a strategy that helps the investigator to afford insight into the study context. This minimises distortions in information which occurs as a result of the entry of the researcher in the setting. The increased presence of the researcher in the context of study improved the level of trust and understanding of the culture of participants (Macnee & McCabe, 2008:61). Extended engagement raised the understanding of participants as regard the study and their willingness to provide needed data. This engagement also made it easy for the researcher to understand the quality of data that was obtained.

4.9.1.2 Triangulation

Triangulation concerns the employ of multiple researchers, methods, theories and sources as a strategy to corroborate evidence (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:14). It involved the use of individual interviews, document analysis and observations. These constituted major strategies of data collection. Triangulation helped to cross-examine participants' integrity and to reduce bias and prejudice.

4.9.1.3 Member checks

To enhance the credibility of the study, the researcher employed member checking. The data collected was transcribed and then taken back to the participants so that they could read and make comments as a way of verifying the accuracy of the interpretations. The participants were provided with the opportunity to correct or acknowledge the appropriateness of meanings as derived from the original data. Patton (2002:12) states that those who participate in the study have to reflect on the data and be able to indicate to the researcher the views that should not be published. Information has to be continuously tested as it would be obtained from a number of sources and using varied methods (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:54).

4.9.2 Confirmability

Confirmability is viewed as the level of neutrality or the degree to which the results of a study are dependent on the contributions of the participants and not the interests, biases and motivations of the researcher (Brymann, 2008:21). This means that due steps were taken by the researcher to make sure that the findings reflected the bias and lived experiences of the researched. An effort was undertaken to ensure the preferences and characteristics of the researcher did not influence the outcomes of the study Tobin and Begley (2004:392) add that confirmability ensures that the findings of the study are not imaginations of the researcher but derived from the data.

4.9.3 Dependability

This relates to an evaluation of the results, interpretations and recommendations of the study to ensure they are influenced by the data drawn from the participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:89). Dependability is synonymous with reliability in qualitative research. This works to show the consistency and repeatability of the findings. This seeks to show if the study can be repeated in a similar setting, with similar participants and under the same conditions (Creswell, 2012:77). In the study, the processes engaged in were discussed in detail to foster repeatability and the possibility for attain similar results when the study is conducted by others. Dependability deals with the use of overlapping methods and detailed description of methods to ensure the study is repeatable (Bernard, 2000:17).

4.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher presented a detailed discussion of the qualitative research design and methodology used to collect data for this study. Data collection methods included face-to-face semi-structured interviews, participant observation and document analysis. The researcher provided details on the population, sample and sampling, data collection, analysis procedures, ethical consideration as well as trustworthiness, validity

and credibility of the study. In the next chapter the researcher discusses data analysis, findings and interpretations.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

“Mentoring is that distinctive human endeavour in which some take it upon themselves to closely attend to the growth and development of others and take responsibility for seeing them succeed at a higher level of human accomplishment and maturity”
(Shenkman, 2008:50).

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined how the research was conducted. In this chapter, qualitative data from the empirical study are inductively analysed and interpreted. Creswell (2007:163), describes inductive analysis as working from particulars (raw data) to more general perspectives, which are - themes, dimensions, categories, or codes. The research design and methodology used for selecting subjects, research site and data collection procedures to answer the research questions are described (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:166). Accounts on the issue of research quality and researcher role through ethical considerations are given. In this chapter also, the researcher presents the themes that emerged from the participants’ responses and verbatim quotations. As mentioned in the previous chapter, face-to-face interviews, document analysis and observations were the instruments of data collection. These interviews were conducted in different places to accommodate the schedules of the participants. In Chapter 4 the researcher indicated that this study employed a thematic analysis of data whereby the researcher examined and record themes within the collected data. Rich data was collected through the face-to-face interviews, document analysis and observation at the sampled schools.

The aim of the study was to explore the effect of mentoring as a strategy for professional development of teachers.

Main Research question

- What are the effects of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development?

The sub-questions

- What are the strategies used in mentoring to develop teachers professionally?
- To what extent do serving teachers require mentoring?
- What are the perceptions of teachers towards mentoring as a professional development programme?

The aim of this chapter is to answer the main and sub-questions indicated in 5.1.

5.2 SETTING OF THE STUDY

Research for the study was conducted in six (6) secondary schools located in the Mopani District in Limpopo Province. In the following section each school is briefly described.

School A: The school is located in a rural village, next to a public road. The school has got three blocks of three classrooms each and the infrastructure except for the toilets is in a bad condition.

School B: The school is based in a rural area, not easy to access because of the road. There are two blocks of three and four classrooms each. The school is largely populated with mobile classrooms; toilets are available and in very good condition.

School C: A very big school in terms of buildings although very old and dilapidated. The school is situated in a rural but lively village, toilets are available and in good condition. There is furniture, water and electricity and the school grounds are well maintained.

School D: The most beautiful and well-furnished school. A state of the art school with everything that you can think of. Although in a rural village, the school is easily accessible.

School E: One of the biggest schools in the cluster with six blocks of classrooms of different sizes. The school has an administration block which is rare in many schools. There are enough toilets, sufficient but old furniture, water supply and electricity.

School F: One of the smallest schools in the cluster, with only two blocks of three classrooms each. There is no administration block, the furniture is not adequate, but water and electricity are available. The school is located next to a public road which makes it accessible.

5.3 PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

In this section, participants' profiles are presented.

5.3.1 Participant in the Study

The table 5.1 represent the profiles of the participants in the study.

Table 5.1: Profile of Participants

Teacher No.	Sex		Teaching Experience	Qualifications
1	M	41	1½ Years	BED FED
2	M	34	4 Years	BCOM & PGC
3	M	25	6 Months	BED SPF
4	F	35	3 Years	BED SPF
5	M	26	8 Months	BED FED
6	M	34	4 Years	BED FED
7	F	35	1½ Years	BED SPF
8	M	26	2 Years	BED FED
9	F	35	5 Years	BED FED
10	M	30	5 Years	BA & PGC

11	F	25	2 Years	BA & PGC
12	M	30	6 Months	BA & PGC

BED FET: Bachelor of Education Further Education and Training

BA PGC: Bachelor of Arts Post graduate certificate

BED SPF: Bachelor of Education Senior Phase and Further Education and Training

The sampled teachers' qualifications indicated that all have university degrees in education and a teaching experience of less than three years at a secondary school with the exception of four whose teaching experience range between four and five years. The selected school generally had poor infrastructure in terms of resources except for one school which had state of the art equipment. The schools were located in poverty stricken areas as reflected through data obtained through observations and interviews.

Table 5.2: Profile of the Schools

Schools	Infrastructure	Furniture	Electricity	Water	Learner Enrolment	Teachers
A	3 blocks of 3 classrooms each. 2 blocks in good condition. Toilets available.	Sufficient	Available	Available	216	10
B	2 blocks of 3 and 4 classrooms respectively. 4 mobile classrooms. Toilets available.	Not adequate	Available	Available	290	6
C	5 blocks of 3 classrooms each. Toilets available	Sufficient	Available	Available	451	18
D	State of the art school & Administration block. Toilets available.	Sufficient with surplus chairs	Available	Available	563	21
E	6 blocks of different sizes & Administration block. Toilets available.	Sufficient but old	Available	Available	873	32
F	2 blocks of 3 classrooms each. No administration block. Toilets available	Not adequate	Available	Available	209	7

The key policy documents used for analysis in this study are listed in Table 3.

Table 5.3: Key Policy Documents

Policy Document	Focus Area
1. Whole School Evaluation (WSE)	Government Gazette vol.433, no 2212 of January 2001 -Looking at the basic functionality of the school with special focus on: management, leadership, the quality of teaching and teacher development *curriculum provision and resources.
2. Developmental Appraisal System (DAS)	Proclamations of 2002 -To facilitate the personal and professional development of teachers. -To improve the quality of teaching practice and education management.
3. Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)	Collective Agreement Number 8 of 2003 focusing on the following aspects: -To assess strengths and areas for development. -Provide support and opportunities for development to assure continued growth. -To determine competency and promote accountability.

5.4 DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

As a point of departure, the researcher firstly focused on analysing the empirical research data generated through the data collection. The participants' voices were recorded during the interviews using an audio tape. The recorded voices were played over and over again as the researcher was transcribing the data line by line. The participants' responses were transferred to a large sheet of paper and this assisted the researcher to group the responses to each question together.

Grouping the responses of each question together helped the researcher to identify the ideas that were emerging. The responses that appeared to be repetitive were classified as 'emerging themes' and 'categories'. During analysis, the researcher compared all the data and that helped to pay attention to the identified themes. Analysis and comparison continued until saturation was reached with regard to emerging themes. Repetitive themes were identified during the data collection and the analysis phases of this study. Each theme was discussed, and the researcher used quotes from the interviews to substantiate the discussion. Comparisons were made between the data collected and the relevant literature on mentoring and linked with the theoretical models discussed in Chapter 3.

5.5 MAJOR THEMES AND SUB-THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE DATA

The data was analysed to identify any broad themes that had emerged from interviews, observations and document analysis. From the data six (6) themes emerged, namely, *development areas covered during mentoring, the need for mentoring, the departmental role, teacher's perception about mentoring, the effect of mentoring and the reception of mentoring*. These themes were clarified to gain greater understanding of the views of the participants. The data was derived from the different instruments used to collect the empirical data. In the following sections, the researcher presents the themes and their related categories which emerged from the data analysis.

Six themes helped the researcher to answer the central research questions:

- What are the effects of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development?

The sub-questions that emanated from the central question were:

- What are the strategies used in mentoring to develop teachers professionally?
- To what extent do serving teachers require mentoring?
- What are the perceptions of teachers towards mentoring as a professional development programme?

Through the qualitative analysis of the data six themes were identified as helping to answer the research questions. The identified themes were as follows:

- Developmental areas covered during mentoring.
- The need for mentoring
- The departmental role in the mentoring process
- Teachers' perceptions about mentoring
- The effect of mentoring
- The reception of mentoring

Figure 5.1 presents the themes and the various sub-themes that were derived from the face-to-face interviews, document analysis and observations.

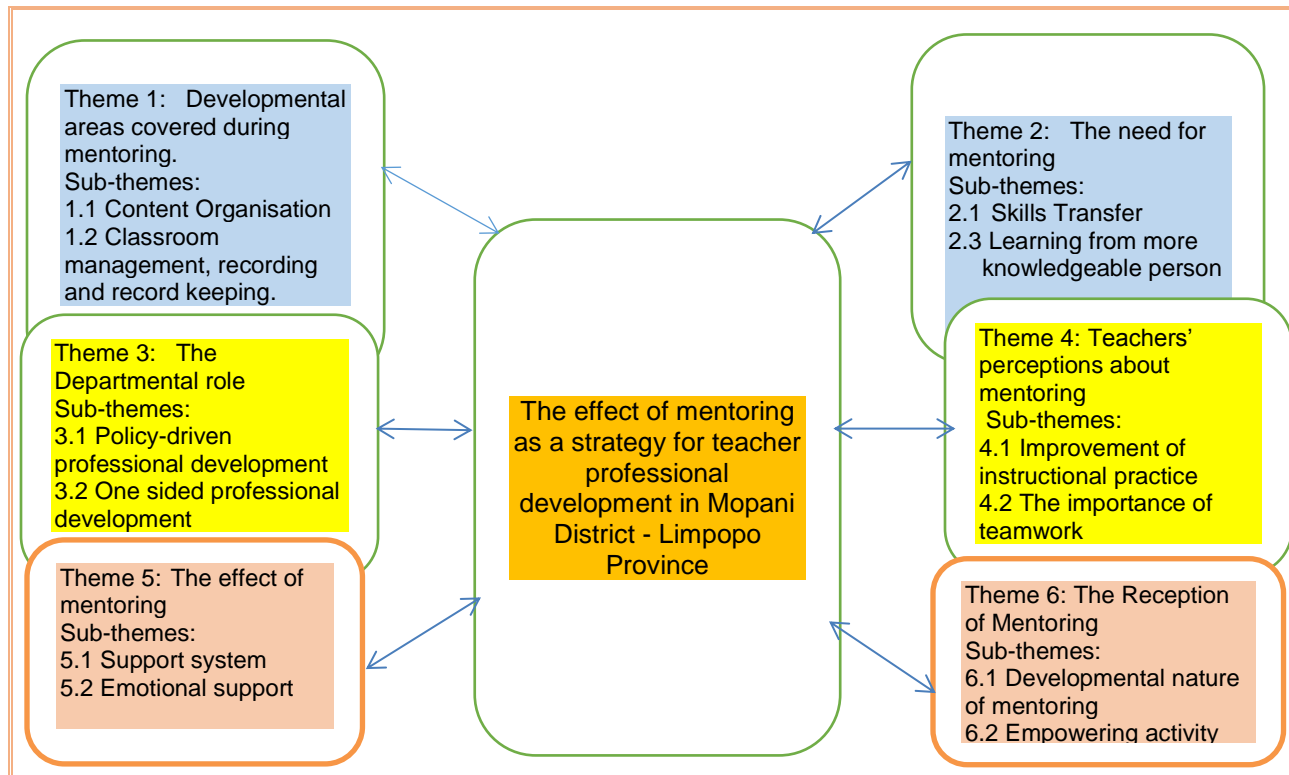


Figure 5.1: Graphic Depiction of Themes and Sub-themes

In the following sections, the researcher discusses each major theme and its sub-themes in the order in which they appear in Figure 5.1. In the discussion of each finding, the

researcher used quotes from the face-to-face interviews to substantiate the discussion as well as to compare it with the relevant literature on mentoring and learning experiences.

5.5.1 Theme 1: Developmental Areas Covered during Mentoring

This theme covered essential areas that shape the professional path of each individual teacher. Teachers regard mentoring as a process that brings smooth transition from being a student teacher to a fully-fledged teacher. This implies that in mentoring, theory is turned into practice. It is evident that well-structured and meaningful mentoring will always assist in easing the trauma that the beginning teachers experience upon entering the teaching profession. This is further supported by Tomlinson (1995:7) who states that mentoring assists new teachers to learn how to teach in a school-based setting.

The teachers regard mentoring as an activity through which they can learn the dynamics of effect teaching including learners' behaviour, recording and record keeping. In support of the above statement, Daresh (2003:7), maintains that mentoring has the specific characteristics. Firstly, mentoring is a powerful mechanism to assist teachers in the development of fresh insights in the teaching profession. This applies to both new and experienced teachers. Again, mentoring frees teachers from isolation and to forge a network of collegial relationships among colleagues in a profession. The strategy helps to change teachers from the stage of survival to that of initial success in the profession. Mentoring for experienced teachers renews a sense of enthusiasm and commitment to professional activities. What appeared to be of significance to the study is that all the respondents, although differently expressed, consider mentoring as a tool that enables them to handle classroom situation, manage curriculum and interpret policy documents. In this theme two sub-themes emerged, namely, content organisation, classroom management and record keeping. Each will be discussed below.

5.5.1.1 Content organisation

During the data collection process, teachers expressed their high regard for mentoring because it taught them the dynamics of classroom situation. Teacher1 from school A has this to say:

“It was because of mentoring that I was taught about content arrangement, recording and record keeping, getting to know the basics of lesson plan and preparation. My mentor introduced me to the most important basics of teaching like lesson preparation, organising the learning content, how to go about teaching and putting things in order.”

According to Peters (2010:110), mentoring plays an important role in enhancing new teachers' opportunities to learn within the context of teaching. The participants consider mentoring as an activity that helps them to learn the ropes of the workplace. Teacher 1 from school F further responded as follows:

“Mentoring is an activity that helps to shape the psychological thinking of the teacher by closing the gap between teacher training and the practical teaching”.

Based on the above, teachers regard mentoring as an activity that involves the mind or thinking. Teacher 2 from school F further explained it thus:

“The most important things I learnt from mentoring include areas like lesson preparation, assessment techniques and handling the classroom situation.”

This implies that mentoring as a way of empowering teachers has the potential of complementing the theoretical knowledge that teachers obtained during teacher training, with practical ways of doing things in a natural setting. Professional development, teacher efficiency and competence are the goals of mentoring, and if newly-appointed teacher are properly mentored, they will be sufficiently equipped for their future leadership roles. Mentoring helps in aiding the acquisition of task-specific skills and job-relevant

knowledge, and a functionalist approach to mentoring is arranged, it assumes conformity (Darwin, 2000:103). Mentoring programmes will always help and guide new teachers on how to set tests, how to teach, handle the classroom situation, learners as well as, how to prepare and deal with lesson planning.

From the above statements, it is clear that mentoring plays a very significant role in the professional development and growth of teachers. The respondents understand mentoring as an activity that is available to provide new teachers with a smooth and efficient transition into the teaching culture. This implies that the participants as well, hold and support the notion that mentoring is aimed at supporting new teachers' instructional practice and transforming the culture and profession of teaching.

The second sub-theme will be discussed below.

5.5.1.2 Classroom management, recording and record keeping

Effective continuing professional development is intended, first and foremost, to enhance pupil outcomes and also to help to bring about changes in practice thereby improving teaching (Bubb & Earley, 2007:04). It is clear that the teachers recognise and understand the importance of mentoring as supporting successful and smooth introduction, acculturation and shapes the individuals' level of motivation. It is therefore obvious that, the participants associate good classroom management with advanced subject matter knowledge.

High-quality professional development programmes can help teachers deepen their knowledge and transform their teaching and instructional practices to suit the needs of the learners, ensuring effective teaching and learning. From the responses, it was evident that participants agree that to improve their instructional practices and classroom control and management, they must learn to observe others. Teacher 2 from school A said:

“Being involved in mentoring was a great feeling because I learnt how to handle classroom situation, developed skills of interacting with learners of different behaviours from different social backgrounds.”

The participants have full understanding that an extended knowledge of the subject matter helps the serving teachers to understand the central facts and concepts of the subject which makes teaching easy and a pleasure.

“Mentoring is a dyadic relationship in which an older, more experienced member of the organisation fosters the growth and development of a junior employee to a point where he or she becomes a competent professional. Mentoring is also viewed as a dynamic, developmental relationship between two individuals based on trust and reciprocity, leading toward the enhancement of the junior member’s psychological growth and career advancement and toward achieving mutual benefits for the mentor, mentee and organisation” (Pinho et al., 2005:20).

The statement is an indication that professional development programmes are designed to help serving teachers have knowledge of how facts and concepts are connected and know the processes used to establish new knowledge. Teacher 2 from school E said:

“Increased subject matter knowledge improves serving teachers’ understanding of student thinking which is crucial for effective teaching and learning and properly managed classroom atmosphere.”

This is supported by Ehrich, Tennet and Hansford (2004:521) who list the benefits of mentoring as improved instructional practices, increased confidence, networking, developing collegiality and reflection.

Durfour (2002:12) notes that the improvement of classroom teaching is the main purpose for the enhancement of the knowledge of teachers in particular subject content as well as sharpening the thinking of students. The responses indicated that teachers seemed to

understand that they need the kind of professional grooming which is intended to improve their teaching and assessment skills for clearer understanding and effective classroom management. This implies that, mentoring through collaboration and guidance with the more knowledgeable person, happening in a natural setting helps teachers to acquire and sharpen their teaching, recording and problem-solving skills - the basics of classroom management and control. The following remarks from the respondents during the interviews bear testimony to that. The comments complement each other by emphasizing the importance of mentoring in advancing teacher's classroom management and curriculum delivery.

“Mentoring taught me the dynamics of the classroom, the kind of learners to expect in the classroom, getting to know policy documents and the classroom culture.” Teacher 1 from school D.

From this response, it is clear that mentoring exposed teachers to improved ways of handling classroom situation. The response is supported by teacher 2 from school A, who had this to say:

“My mentor guided me how to handle curriculum delivery, what to record and keeping official records and that lifted my confidence. To me mentoring closes the gap between teacher training and the practical teaching in a real classroom situation.” Teacher 2 from school A.

Mentoring facilitates, guides, and encourages continuous innovation, learning and growth (Johnson, 2002:41). Therefore, it is clear from the above comments that, mentoring is highly valued and recognised by the participants as it is seen as a vehicle that provides on-going opportunities for teachers to improve their knowledge and skills, so they can help students achieve success. It is, therefore, very important for professional development programmes to take into account professional learning activities that enable teachers to tackle rapid changes, keep updated, improve instructional practices and handle the classroom situation.

5.5.2 Theme 2: The Need for Mentoring

The participants agree that serving teachers need mentoring for their professional development and growth. The newly-qualified teacher needs to be provided with support that will help him/her to build confidence which will, in turn, lead to competency. This is further supported by Duarte and Miller (2013:32) who state that mentoring accelerates professional development of the beginning teachers and strengthens their autonomy and independence. From the participants' responses, although differently expressed, they agree that mentoring is a strategy to improve workplace learning, capacitate newcomers with techniques to survive and that leads to career advancement. This, therefore, implies that newly-appointed teachers consider mentoring as a device that helps in building a firm culture of the teaching profession in schools and a dedication for enhancing teaching and learning.

Participants reflected an understanding of mentoring as a process of interaction between individuals of different levels of expertise and experience. The less experienced individual is usually assisted to develop a career in education. Zepeda (1999:97) states that mentoring is a technique in which a better experienced individual is required to help the less experienced one to develop. The implication is that mentoring is a nurturing programme which involves a person that is skilled in teaching, guiding, modelling, befriending and directing the less skilled towards professional advancement. Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (1978) with its related ZPD emphasise that learning is a process in which the more able assist others to grow in a natural setting. From theme 2, skills transfer, and the role of the more knowledgeable person emerged as categories.

5.5.2.1 Skills transfer

For Cull (2008:18) mentoring is a key to the health of an organisation. Mentoring is seen by the participants as an appropriate strategy of helping new teachers to acquire necessary skills, knowledge and expertise which are very crucial and essential for the development of any organisation. From all participants, mentoring is valued because it provides an access that is open to a number of peers and experts that are intended to

contribute skills and knowledge in conditions that encourage quick learning. Mentoring was recognised as a strategy that is effective in organising, creating, capturing and distributing knowledge. Teacher 2 from school A said:

“Yes, as teachers we need mentoring. It is a necessity. Mentoring closes the gap between being a university student and the practical reality of classroom situation. Experienced teachers help in classroom management and guide new teachers how to handle learners. Teachers need mentoring for it helps to reduce mistakes and give guidance with regard to classroom situation should be handled. I felt safe and free to venture, not afraid to make mistakes. Mentoring will lift teachers’ work ethics.”

Mentoring is concerned with the transfer of thoughts, wisdom and knowledge from an individual that is experienced to the one of lesser experience. This is done utilizing a relationship which is based on equality and involving active engagement of the two parties in the process of finding solutions to problems (Sarri, 2011:722).

From the above statement, a conclusion can be drawn that through mentoring new teachers are empowered with skills, new behaviours and knowledge which allow them to respond to the needs of efficiency in a successful manner. This supports the idea that mentoring contributes to the acquisition of skills, disposition and knowledge for efficiency of the profession and organisations they work for. Teachers 1 and 2 from schools D and E respectively, responded:

“Serving teacher who is under the supervision of a more experienced mentor is able to venture into the unknown without fear of failure.”

In addition teacher 2 from school E stated the following:

“When guided by someone with vast expertise you become confident such that you are not afraid to take risks.”

This response is corroborated by the sociocultural stances of Piaget and Vygotsky which emphasize that learning is more meaningful under the guidance of more knowledgeable

other. Vygotsky (1978:49) stresses that the learning process should be based on the mentee's engagement in an activity where the mentor is the director of the social environment in the learning as well as the governor and guide of the interactions between the educational process and the mentee. Teacher 2 from school B said:

“Yes, as teachers we need mentoring for it gives guidance to new teachers as they learn under the supervision of experienced teachers. Mentoring leads to efficiency as new teachers learn to do things on their own. Mentoring is a necessity and should be part of teaching because it shapes the individual.”

The participants hold the belief that, professional development programmes have the potential to help the serving teachers have an accelerated subject knowledge, become versatile, competent and able to handle sophisticated and complex issues. This implies that, teachers will continue to acquire and use skills and knowledge if they are operating in organisational arrangements that support on-going learning and the application of new learning. This is corroborated by Goble and Horm (2014:21) who state that effective professional knowledge acquired is aimed to provide teachers with aptitudes to teach and assess the work of students and their metacognitive skills. Teacher 2 from school C who said:

“Mentoring programmes are developmental and designed to help teachers in lesson planning, managing class register and developing a bond with learners. We are taught elements of parenthood. Mentoring help teachers to become versatile and is highly beneficial in terms of content arrangement.”

The responses of the participants confirmed that professional development leads teachers to improved personal capacity which includes improved confidence, skills, self-reflection motivation and increased capacity to participate and lead in developmental initiatives. This is in line with Roland (2006:22) who contends that mentoring is an innovative strategy used to promote professional advancement for the realisation of

personal growth and self-actualisation. This implies that teachers acquire more skills for reflective practice through the support of mentors.

5.5.2.2 Learning from a more knowledgeable person

All the respondents agree that mentoring involves the interaction of two people with varying levels of expertise and experience for the purpose of helping the other for career development. It is a system in which the experienced person helps the novice to grow in practice (Zepeda, 1999:97). This is further supported by the notion of zone of proximal development (ZPD) which states that a more experienced individual helps the beginning teacher to move from their actual developmental levels to their potential levels. The main focus and emphasis is on helping the beginning teacher to establish himself/herself, build confidence, develop strong self-esteem and have improved instructional skills. Teacher 1 from school E had this to say:

“It is so important such that I think everybody needs mentoring, we learn from our seniors. We are guided by the more experienced and knowledgeable people with expertise, showing us how things are done and that help to reduce common mistakes because things are done practically.”

Mentoring is just one way of helping someone else, but it can be a very powerful and rewarding way, particularly in the learning process of beginning teachers (McKimm, Jolie & Hatter, 2007:1). Participants’ responses indicate they view mentoring as an in-service training for teachers undertaken by a knowledgeable mentor-teachers whose support and advice may be sought or whose teaching and interactions with pupils may be witnessed by new teachers. The above statement brings to the fore the importance of learning from others, through observing how more experienced experts go about their teaching. The following quote from teacher 2 from school B is evidence of how participants value the assistance from the more knowledgeable person.

“We are not reluctant to take risks because experienced mentor-teachers are available to give guidance and assistance.”

In addition, teacher 1 from school D stated the following:

“Learning at workplace becomes easy knowing that senior person with experience provides information, advice and emotional support to a less experienced person,”

This implies that in mentoring, teachers learn in a natural setting through the guidance of the more experienced mentor-teacher, using natural tools like language. This strategy reduces the fear of committing mistakes and therefore teachers feel free to express themselves. According to Shulman-Sato (2006:110), mentoring is a complementary relationship - built on both the mentor’s and mentee’s needs. It is complementary in the sense that the beginning teacher is not left to himself/herself but there is somebody knowledgeable willing and prepared to give a helping hand. The participants, therefore, have an understanding that it is essential for a new teacher to learn from the more knowledgeable and experienced mentors. This is further supported by Jeffrey Glanz, as cited by Yendol-Hoppey (2007:6) in saying that mentoring is a process that facilitates instructional improvement wherein an experienced and specially-prepared teacher works with the beginning or less experienced teacher, collaboratively and non-judgmentally to study and deliberate on ways instruction in the classroom may be improved.

5.5.3 Theme 3: The Departmental Role

The participants expressed mixed opinions about the role played by the department with regard to the application and implementation of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development. They all agree and support the idea that teachers should be adequately equipped to meet the changing needs and challenges of the profession in order to transform the South African system. The NPFTED is an endeavour by the Department to address the professional needs of teachers that are qualified in South Africa. In regard to the policy, the focus should be placed on improving the conceptual knowledge and skills of teachers through professional development programmes. From the participants’ responses, it is clear that some teachers attach value to the departmental intervention strategies while others have reservations. The diverging responses from the participants led to the emergence of the following categories.

5.5.3.1 Policy-driven professional development

Information gathered from the respondents suggests that departmental intervention, with regard to teacher professional development is mainly focused on the application and implementation of policies and curriculum delivery. Employer-driven activities are normally taken care of by provinces in collaboration with districts and circuit offices. According to respondents, professional development of teachers by the department is not holistic because it concentrates only on instructional practices without taking into consideration the social and emotional aspects of individual teachers. This was evidenced by the following response given by teacher 2 from school E.

“The departmental workshops are very helpful because they are content related, and we are guided by the curriculum advisors showing us how to organise content knowledge. They introduce us to a lot of information from Caps documents, recording and record keeping and interpretation of pace setters. In these workshops we receive carefully arranged resource materials like previous question papers, work sheets, teachers’ guides and examples of other text books.”

“They are organised, arranged and facilitated by the curriculum advisors who provide us with resource materials like soft-wares, memorandum, teachers’ guides and other related materials.”

This comment indicates that the quest for quality education to learners is high on the agenda of the Department of Education. On this point Dimmock (2005:79) concurs that the quality of a school is determined by the teacher performance in the classroom, more than by any other factor.

5.5.3.2 One-sided professional development

From the responses, it is clear that the departmental role in teacher professional development is one dimensional. The focus is mainly on curriculum delivery without any attention to the individual’s psychological, social and emotional well-being. Some of the respondents expressed their displeasure with regard to the role the department is playing in teacher professional development. Apart from the fact that the departmental workshops are one dimensional, they also lack sense of human respect. This is based

on the fact that, the respondents seemed not to appreciate the conditions under which departmental workshops are conducted. Teachers 2 and 1 from schools B and C commented as follows:

“The Departmental efforts appeared to be good, but the facilitators are giving us belated information, getting pace setters late in the year and resource materials that are not even sufficient for all in attendance. The workshops are conducted in packed venues with little or no ventilation and they are short with no follow ups to check progress.”

“Departmental workshops are neither resourceful nor beneficial as they are conducted in congested halls, the information we receive is too general, summarised and presented in a very short space of time. There are no follow ups unless it is time for Cass moderation.”

This implies that the department has got a lot to do in terms of improving the facilitation of workshops, the relevancy of the resource materials supplied during the workshops and the conditions in which they are conducted.

5.5.4 Theme 4: Teachers’ Perceptions about Mentoring

From the responses given by all participants, mentoring stands out as a very fruitful, effective, efficient, and a powerful way of passing on knowledge, skills and information with the aim of empowering the less experienced. Mentoring enables the serving teachers to develop their own skills, strategies and capabilities to tackle the hurdles that lay ahead of them. Teachers derive pleasure from mentoring programmes because during sessions the communication is so intense that it helps them to explore, develop and implement problem-solving skills in their work (Bower, 2007:73). This implies that, to serving teachers, mentoring is a way of supporting, guiding and fostering professional development of teachers.

Teachers need intense professional development programmes for them to improve their classroom practice. The serving teachers perceive continuous professional development

as an investment and so essential that each school should establish the means of implementing the programmes through effective management and leadership. Darling-Hammond (2009:17) posits that the professional learning of teachers can be made more effective through encouraging teachers to examine their practices and engage in on-going dialogue in regard to the performance of students. This would allow them to employ instructional practices that are effective. It would be appropriate to conclude that mentoring programmes play a very crucial role in the professional and personal developments of serving teachers, therefore, the positive perception they have of mentoring. The following categories also emerged, namely, improvement of instructional practice and the importance of teamwork. The first to be discussed will be improvement of instructional practice.

5.5.4.1 Improvement of instructional practice

The responses of the participants suggest that serving teachers perceive mentoring as a positive strategy that afford them opportunities to co-plan for teaching with teachers as well as observe mentors teaching. The Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) suggests that beginning teachers need to learn a lot in regard to handling parents, working with students, offering student- centered instruction, classroom management as well as grasp the culture in schools.

The time spent planning with mentor-teachers gives serving teachers access to seek the art of scheduling the school day, planning daily lessons, as well as general tips on how to be an effective teacher. Blank and Kershaw (2009:13) acknowledge mentoring as an effective strategy for improving beginning teachers' skills, hence, increasing the likelihood that they will remain in teaching. Mentoring is very critical to the beginning teachers' development in the sense that it helps in the improvement of instructional effectiveness. According to respondents, mentoring is a tool that assists new teachers to develop and hone their skills for improved instructional practices. Teacher 1 from school B and teacher 2 from school F commented as follows:

“It is so important such that I think everybody needs mentoring, we learn from our seniors. We are guided by more knowledgeable people with expertise, showing us how things are done and that help to reduce common mistakes because things are done practically.”

Teacher 2 from school F commented:

“It is a helpful activity good for empowering the up and coming teachers. It helps reduce nervousness, give guidance about classroom management, handling of learners and it reduces pressure and frustrations.”

The mood amongst all the respondents is that of singing praises for mentoring as a support strategy for teacher development as the programme increases their learning and supports their professional growth. It is a way of helping teachers to become competent and comfortable in the classroom (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb & Wyckoff, 2009:418). In the minds of the respondents, mentoring has a positive impact on the performance levels of beginning teachers as it increases teacher effectiveness, commitment, higher satisfaction, and career retention. The implication is that, a teacher who is competent and comfortable has the confidence and courage to do more. Teacher 2 from school C reacted like this:

“Mentoring is a good idea because teachers gain a lot from it; they learn to adjust to the new environment, closing the distance between teacher training and the practical classroom situation.”

It is clear from the respondents that, through mentoring, teachers remain motivated, competent and comfortable which leads to job satisfaction. All the respondents agreed that mentoring helps beginning teachers make the transition from preparation to practice and become more effective. This is supported by Roland (2006:22) who argues that mentoring promotes the development of the profession and triggers the process of growth and self-actualisation. Richards and Farrel (2005:19) state that professional improvement empowers individuals, creates opportunity and builds confidence to implement ideas and influence methods of professional practice

5.5.4.2 The importance of teamwork

The respondents agree that, mentoring leads beginner teachers into believing in themselves and becoming actively involved. It inspires the *uBuntu* principle of collaboration, teamwork and openness to criticism (Van der Merwe, 2012:231). From their own assessments, the respondents strongly feel that mentoring helps new teachers to cope with uncertain circumstances, establish common purpose as well as adapt to changes that are rapid. Mentoring programmes that are productive create agents of transformation, break bridges and foster a collaborative culture. It is broadly accepted that teachers are rewarded from the collective support of coaches and colleagues (Wertsch, 1998:109). Accepted, therefore, is the notion that individuals learn more effectively from engaging in social experiences within a cultural context, in a real situation, by learning how to work together on a task and engaging in discussion or dialogue to promote deeper learning.

Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development (1970) advocates that teaching, and learning is conducted through the use of collaborative, as well as teamwork approach. The implication here is that knowledge construction occurs within social context as individuals learn through sharing space and interacting with others. Teacher 1 from school E responded as follows:

“The collaborative relationship between the facilitator and the newly appointed teachers is good to facilitate learning.”

The understanding of the respondents is that, individuals interacting with people can learn different ideas from one another, can assist one another and construct knowledge together. The less experienced would rely on the more knowledgeable other for guidance, support and direction - social interaction and collaboration. Through social interaction and collaboration, knowledge is constructed, enabling individuals to learn from one another (Vygotsky, 1978:59). This implies that the newly-appointed teachers must be receptive to learn from others in a social context that is conducive for development. Teacher 1 from school D had this to say:

“As newly appointed teachers we must learn to do things in a team work to share ideas and opinions.”

The above response emphasizes the value of learning and working collaboratively to construct knowledge. This can include co-teaching which has recently been realised as a prime model of collaborative practice. The construction of knowledge takes place in social contexts which improve the mentee and mentor working together to address real problems. These are tackled with the employ of skills, experience and language that are resultant from a particular culture (Vygotsky, 1978:102). The respondents, therefore, contend that knowledge is the internalisation of social activity that emanates from social interaction.

5.5.5 Theme 5: The Effect of Mentoring

The role of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development was clearly acknowledged by the respondents. Mentoring is needed to help teachers in setting high but achievable goals, making realistic plans and passing on the skills (Freeman, 2008:23). According to some respondents, mentoring is a way of encouraging, supporting and promoting the acculturation of new teachers. Conversation with the respondents revealed the following categories of themes:

5.5.5.1 Support system

The concept of continued support, after qualification, through mentoring is a norm in various professions. It is, therefore, essential for teachers in education to appreciate that not all programmes for teacher education have adequate intensity to transform the attitudes and dispositions that are acquired in the education of teachers. This calls for the need to supplement the knowledge that student teachers acquired during their training. A newly-qualified teacher needs to be provided with support that will help him/her to build confidence which will lead to the much-needed competency. According to the respondents, it is through mentoring programmes that a newly qualified teacher is

supported to navigate through the complexities of the organisation. This is justified by the responses from the participants. Teacher 2 from school B said:

“With the support that we get from our mentors, we can confidently solve some of the problems that come our way.”

The response reinforces and captures the key feature of Vygotskian view of teaching as being guided by others which translates into what he called scaffolding. Rasmussen (2001:570) notes that scaffolding can be interpreted as a form of support for the development and learning of a mentee. Scaffolding, therefore, can be used to describe the way mentor-teachers give support, guidance and other resources to mentees for them to learn.

Mentoring has the ability and potential of improving awareness of learning gaps on the side of the mentee, therefore, by collaborating and interacting with others, one is able to identify personal shortfalls and develop strategies to fill this gap (Scalon, 2008:51). The understanding that respondents have about mentoring is that, if well managed, it provides personal support and motivation that will help new teachers to have ambition. Teacher 1 from school A said:

“Mentoring revives you as a teacher and makes you feel empowered. It gives you that believe and confidence to stand in front of your learners. Mentoring help to develop skills for handling conflicts and the elders help us to find our footing.”

The responses from the participants lead to the conclusion that mentoring programmes must commit to the idea that all teachers are more effective when they can learn from and be supported by a strong community of colleagues. This is in line with Hedegraad (2002:13) who define learning as co-construction of knowledge between the mentor-teacher, mentee and colleagues engaged in collaboration and co-learning.

5.5.5.2 Emotional support

Emotional support is one of the strongest needs of beginning teachers when guilt, frustration, anxiety and insecurity threaten them. Teaching by nature is an emotional practice, and as a result new teachers' increasing needs for emotional support must be taken care of (Van Wyk, 2010:84). This implies that, caring and forming relationships is an emotional experience which also needs to be handled well. Teacher 1 from school F said:

“Mentoring promotes collegial, social interaction and professionalism which is good for working and learning from teaching colleagues.”

The statement is in line with the sociocultural perspective which emphasizes that human learning is largely and inherently a social process. Roth and Lee (2006:31) advances that knowing is a cultural practice which leads to the transformation of the design of teaching and learning that encourages the attitude of collaboration in performing activities. Teacher 2 from school B acknowledged the emotional support that emanates from mentoring by saying:

“As teachers we need mentoring because it reduces frustrations and settle the nerves. Mentoring clarifies certain aspects of teaching, motivates and helps teachers in areas where they are struggling. Mentoring is needed because it helps to breach the gap between university theory and practical classroom situation. Through mentoring I was guided to handle and accommodate emotions of the learners and to control my own feelings. I got to know how to react to different situations.”

The respondent suggests that mentoring is an organisational method of promoting professional development of serving teachers and it connects individuals with different people in all ages and groups. This is further supported by Berk (2002:51) who states that mentoring is a process that can be used as a means of passing on the tradition of the organisation, nurturing talent, securing future leadership and integrating individuals into an organisation.

Most of the respondents regard mentoring as a strategy that helps new teachers control and manage their emotions. The psychosocial aspect of mentoring raises the feeling of effectiveness and competence in the profession while also inspiring the roles of friendship and counselling as derived from the practices of the mentor (Kram, 1983:613). Working with children from fractured, poor and single-parent families is an emotional experience which also needs to be taken care of. Teacher 1 from school F on the issue responded like this:

“Getting advice from experienced and knowledgeable person help in developing problem-solving skills, how to control personal emotions and pressure. Mentoring provides solutions for stressing problems that are related to teaching; bring people of different experiences and knowledge together to share ideas and thoughts.”

The respondents consider mentoring as a device that helps in building strong professional teaching cultures in schools as it is dedicated to improving teaching, learning and caring.

5.5.6 Theme 6: The Reception of Mentoring

Mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development is well received by the teachers and in their responses, there is no doubt that they acknowledge its importance and emphasize the need for it to be taken very seriously. Serving teachers perceive continuous professional development as an investment, and it is very essential that each school establishes the means of implementing the programmes through effective management and leadership. Darling-Hammond (2009:49) argues that for professional learning to be effective, teachers should learn by engaging in continuous dialogue and examination of their practice and student performance and to develop and implement more effective instructional practices. The sentiments expressed by the respondents with regard to their reception of mentoring led to the emergence of two categories, namely, the developmental nature of mentoring and mentoring as an empowering strategy.

5.5.6.1 Developmental nature of mentoring

The respondents understand and accept mentoring as enriching, supportive, motivating, and generating enthusiasm in teachers. This is in line with Caena, (2011:3) who states that mentoring activities are designed to develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher. This stands to reason that, mentoring enhances and creates opportunities for adult learning and promotes the quality of education in the classroom. This is how they responded. Teacher 1 from school F said:

“As new teachers, mentoring equips and familiarise us with the procedures to follow in performing learner assessments in accordance with the National Protocol on Assessment.”

From the respondents' perspective mentoring is developmental because it assists with the acquisition of new skills, techniques, and knowledge and teaching strategies. This is in line with Peters (2010:110) who says mentoring programmes assist the beginner teachers to develop ways to lead which reflect their own philosophies and convictions and which are aligned to contemporary societal demands. This leads to the conclusion that mentoring is developmental in nature because it is all about transfer of knowledge and skills. This is evidenced by the following response given by Teacher 2 from school A, who had this to say:

“Mentoring is a way of encouraging personal development and helping individuals cope with transitions such as moving into a new job or role.”

This is further supported by Teacher 1 from school D who said:

“Mentoring is a career advancement and professional development of new teachers because it is performed by high-ranking member of the institution.”

From these responses it is clear that, mentoring is well received by the teachers for it accelerates professional development of new teachers and that in itself strengthens their autonomy and independence. This implies that mentoring is a strategy to improve

workplace learning and capacitates serving teachers with techniques and skills. This is further supported by Kram (1985:613) who suggests that the mentoring of serving teachers is mainly focusing on the development of teaching skills with the purpose of facilitating constructive and meaningful learning.

5.5.6.2 Empowering activity

With conviction, the respondents acknowledged the important role played by mentoring in the development of serving teachers. Mentoring emerges as an effective strategy for transforming knowledge and skills which further inspires the loyalty and cooperation of workers in the organisation (Abiddin, 2006:107). It is therefore, appropriate to believe that the empowerment of teachers is the essential benefit of professional development. This is hinged on the assumption that mentoring adds skills of teaching and assessment on the rubrics of teaching and learning. Teacher 2 from school A said:

“Mentoring is good for professional development of teachers; it creates space to share knowledge and expertise. It is a positive way of passing knowledge from one person to the other. My wish is that mentoring is applied and implemented in every school because it guides teachers towards level of competency.”

The concept of empowerment allows teachers to be capable to engage in as well as control events in environments that influence their lives (Murray, 2010:3). According to the respondents, mentoring is an activity that is aimed at supporting beginning teachers in mastering teaching methods and the transformation of the profession and culture of teaching. Teacher 2 from school E said:

“Mentoring afford teachers opportunities and the confidence to act and improve how they perform in their profession.”

Wang and Odell (2007:473) have identified the purpose and goal of a mentoring relationship as being to help the mentee learn procedures that will become a part of his/her teaching life. The positive reception of mentoring as an empowering tool is overwhelming and encouraging, for the respondents stressed that mentoring cannot be

divorced from professional development of teachers as it is part of human existence. From the respondents' perspective, professional development leads to teachers' improved personal capacity and skills, increased self-confidence, greater motivation, improved reflection on practice and greater ability to take part in or lead change initiatives.

Huling and Resta (2001:2), categorised the benefits of mentoring as comprised of six issues. On the professional competency, mentors are rewarded through the application of cognitive skills of coaching inclusive of asking inquisitive questions, offering feedback to students which is not judgemental and listening. As a reflective practice, mentoring provides mentors the chance to make valid the experiences gained in the previous years. The commitment of mentors to the profession of teaching tend to be strengthened. In regard to psychological benefit, mentoring enhances the mentee's feeling of empowerment and self-esteem. On corroboration, it is perceived that the interaction as colleagues in the mentoring process is strengthened. The capacity of the mentee in leadership is built through the mentor training and experiences. Mentors are trained professionally on issues of developing coaching skills and classroom observation.

The importance and value attached to mentoring can only be explained through the words of some respondents who said:

Teacher 1 from school D responded like this:

“Mentoring is a must have, it is a learning curve and we learn from the better and experienced. Mentoring is a confidence builder; it directs and guides an individual to understand rules, regulations and policies.”

The same sentiments were shared by teacher 2 from school F who had this to say:

“Mentoring is a necessity for professional development, life becomes easier with the help of a mentor and it takes away frustration and pressure.”

The respondents agree that, professional development deepens the teachers' knowledge of subject matter and student thinking to improve classroom teaching. Zepeda (1999:2), maintains that the main purpose of professional development is to add to the professional knowledge teachers have, improve their professional skills, and help them know their professional values so as to facilitate growth in individuals as well as in the organisation. The respondents clearly believe mentoring is a developmental activity that empowers teachers to become more effective and efficient

5.6 NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

The researcher conducted direct observations in the schools in which the participants were working as this “gives and allow the researcher to hear, see, and begin to experience reality as participants do” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:256). Through this method the researcher, saw, heard and recorded observations rather than relying on participants' responses to questions. In the observation, the researcher paid particular attention to the following: physical environment of the school, school furniture, infrastructure, state and conditions of the buildings and anything that is associated with the functions and efficiency of teachers. All the schools except for one, which was in a state of the art condition, the conditions were appalling, with lack of space being the most obvious. The classrooms are very old and in a state of decay, the furniture in almost all the schools is virtually non-existent and the physical environments left much to be desired.

5.7 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Documents have always been a significant source of data in qualitative research. Bogdan and Biklen (2007:136) contend that schools, like other organisations produce documents for specific kinds of consumptions. In all the schools the researcher had visited for data collection, there were no school-based mentoring programmes generated by the schools. Surprisingly, the schools produced similar departmental policy documents as their guide and relevant tools for mentoring. Common policy documents that are used in these schools for mentoring are Departmental Appraisal System (DAS), Whole School

Evaluation (WSE) and Integrated Quality Measurement System (IQMS) which are compulsory and accompanied by incentives. The analysis of official documents served to add knowledge to the research and explained certain social events. The researcher explored official documents relating to mentoring programmes at the school level. Brief discussion of official documents relating to mentoring was held between the researcher and relevant personnel at the schools.

5.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The exploration and analysis of the raw data were guided by Vygotsky and Piaget's Sociocultural theories because they are well positioned to direct the study based on their position that the more knowledgeable other would always direct and facilitate the development of the learner. The theories, from their constructivist point of view enabled the researcher to have knowledge regarding what to examine and measure. From the constructivist point of view, learning is the harmonious working together of human beings and sociocultural tools, in the constructing of knowledge in real contexts.

Piaget and Vygotsky share the common belief that classroom must reflect and portray constructivist learning environments. Learning is about adaptation to reality, during which learners actively and collaboratively construct knowledge. The activities include among others, teamwork, observation and discovery; all happening in a constructivist environment under the guidance and assistance of the more knowledgeable other. In line with this study, the theories assume that all knowledge is constructed from the learners' previous knowledge.

Both theorists hold the view that, the learner's cognitive development is about developing or constructing knowledge through social interaction, discovery, collaboration and teamwork as well as the use of sociocultural tools in a natural setting. Both theorists, recognise the significant role of the more knowledgeable other (MKO) and who in this study is the mentor-teacher. The responses from the participants confirm that new teachers learn from actively and collaboratively working with more knowledgeable others

in real contexts. The participants' responses testify that in mentoring, individuals learn effectively and efficiently through strategies like discovery, collaboration, social interaction and experimenting with sociocultural tools, in natural settings, under the guidance of the facilitator/mentor.

5.9 EXPERIENCES OF THE PARTICIPANTS ABOUT MENTORING

The study was meant to find out how newly-appointed teachers in Mopani District in the Limpopo Province feel about mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development. From the responses of the participants, mentoring is a powerful way of passing on skills, techniques, information and knowledge from one individual to the other. The more knowledgeable, experienced and matured person work with the less experienced, with the aim of developing the latter from the actual/current level of development to the potential level; this is in line with Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD). In terms of Vygotsky's 1978 Sociocultural Theory, learning through the more knowledgeable other implies that the mentee is acquiring knowledge and skills from a more skilled individual with the much needed expertise to enhance the competence of the mentee. Acquiring knowledge, skills, expertise and competence in solving problems independently, is an indication that learning has occurred since the mentee is moving from the actual level of development to the potential level.

The same can be said when looking at Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development (1970) which states that learning is not a passive assimilation of given knowledge, but a dynamic process comprising successive stages of adaptation to reality during which learners actively construct knowledge by creating and testing their own theories of the world. The theory follows the assumption that all knowledge is constructed from the learner's previous knowledge.

The two theories are in agreement that learning starts from a certain level of development; this is supported by the participants' belief that mentoring helps close the gap between teacher education and real practical teaching.

From the experiences of the newly-appointed teachers, mentoring is a necessity and should be taken very seriously, by both the department and schools. The thoughts of the newly appointed teachers with regard to mentoring are governed by the belief that, it is a capacity-building process aimed at empowering and building the confidence of the less-experienced. The significance of mentoring was strongly stressed by all the participants, with special emphasis on the ability of the programme to move less-experienced individual from their actual level of development to their potential level.

From the interviews, some teachers had experienced mentoring as a tool to help new teachers to navigate through the complexities of teaching and the same time as an opportunity to overcome challenges, insecurities and nervousness of being in a new environment by gaining confidence through social interaction, communication and collaboration with colleagues. The experiences of these new teachers suggest that professional development and personal growth are an integral part of mentoring process. Mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development, helps new teachers with skills and knowledge to perform their duties. This is done with little or no pressure, hence reducing common mistakes and frustration. School managers should reduce the anxiety, nervousness and the isolation of the new teachers by setting aside specific blocks of time to interact with them at the beginning of the school and then periodically, throughout the year (Gasner, 2001:73).

From the analysis, it is clear and convincing that mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development is well-received by the new teachers. This is evidenced by the comments made by the participants with regard to how mentoring helped them overcome challenges, like stage fright, lesson planning and preparation, recording and record keeping as well as problem-solving. The participants view mentoring as a way of skilling, empowering and improving new teachers for them to reach the level of doing things independently. Some of the participants expressed negative feelings about the minimal role played by the Department in teacher professional development; the feeling was that

in teacher professional development, the department is not doing enough with its short courses conducted in congested halls.

5.10 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the researcher presented the findings obtained from participants through the use of face-to-face interviews, document analysis and observation as data collection tools. The participants are serving teachers in Mopani District in the Limpopo Province. The findings were presented in the form of themes, namely, *developmental areas covered during mentoring, the need for mentoring, the departmental role, teachers' perceptions about mentoring, the effect of mentoring and the reception of mentoring*, which are all closely linked to the research questions. Theme 1 was about the developmental areas that are covered during the mentoring programme; theme 2 exposed the need for mentoring among the serving teachers; theme 3 explored the role of the Department in the mentoring of teachers; theme 4 addressed the perceptions teachers had about mentoring; theme 5 exposed the effect of mentoring while theme 6 dealt with the reception of mentoring. The discussion were presented in detail, as data analysis. In the chapter that follows, the researcher presents a summary of the findings, recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 5, the researcher presented the results and findings as they emerged from the collected data. This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusion, limitations, and recommendations based on the results of the research. Suggestions for further study was also presented. The objectives of this study were to establish the effect of mentoring as a form of professional development on teachers' performance, whether serving teachers need mentoring and to explore how teachers perceive mentoring. The findings and conclusion presented in this chapter therefore serve to answer the main research question - *What are the effects of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development?*

6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This section focuses on the findings of the study as established from focus group interviews, documentary analysis and observations.

6.2.1 Findings pertaining to the individual Interviews

The positive attitude that emerged from the participants with regard to the notion of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development confirms how they value and acknowledge the strategy's importance. The idea that new professionals should have mentors to guide them through developing skills of managing the stresses of their work has become increasingly accepted (Hargreaves & Fullen, 1995:1). From the participants' point of view, mentoring is a very essential and an essential aspect of teacher professional development. The newly-appointed teachers welcomed mentoring in their

context for it afforded them platforms to share knowledge, skills and expertise with experienced, matured and more knowledgeable individuals. They view mentoring as a professional way of passing on knowledge and information to the less experienced by a more-experienced individual with the aim of helping the former to reach greater heights. This in line with Vygotsky (1978), who through the seminal notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) stressed that in mentoring, the more experienced will take the mentee from the current level of understanding to a potential level. For the participants, accepting mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development had never been difficult because through it they acquired new ideas, skills and techniques needed in their teaching activities. Mentoring is a creative method of promoting professional development that sets in motion the process of self-actualization and growth (Roland, 2006:22).

The reception of the strategy was overwhelming, because without doubt all the participants regard mentoring as a necessity for it directs, guides and helps individuals to understand rules, regulations and policies governing their profession. Mentoring helps in integrating individuals into an organization and assists the mentee to become efficient and productive (Thomas, 2001:79). Getting advice from the more knowledgeable others, helps to close the gap that exists between teacher training and the real practical teaching situation. This is in line with Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (1978) which states that in learning we start from the actual/current level of development to the potential level. Their responses are in agreement that mentoring takes away frustrations, pressure and reduces common mistakes, which enhances the newly-appointed teachers' courage to venture without fear. Professional development is an on-going process that systematically attempts to affect the professional practices, beliefs and understanding of school persons towards an announced goal (Ingersoll, 2012:73). It is on the basis of this that, the respondents view mentoring as one of the powerful ways of teaching and guiding other people to develop skills and deal with challenges related to their work.

The high esteem which they receive and accept mentoring as a strategy for teacher development is confirmed and supported by the positive perception they have about it.

The view they hold about mentoring is that it is a professional tool to socialize and show new teachers how things are done and for them to get better experience as things are done practically, in a natural setting. Learning effectively with and from other professionals is a powerful component of effective professional learning. Teachers attach value to learning with other teachers, and many teachers involved in focused-collaborative professional development subsequently change or substantially develop aspects of their teaching which improve their pupils' learning (Blair, 2007:36). Collaborative professional development brings with it greater sense of self-confidence, belief in the ability to make a difference to pupils' learning, more enthusiasm and greater commitment to trying out new strategies. Collaborative professional development involves mutual engagement where colleagues open up, share and co-construct ways of developing practice. It is, therefore, understandable that participants perceive mentoring as part of teacher existence; this affords them the opportunities to learn from seniors collaboratively, in a natural setting, using natural tools like language. This confirms Piaget's sociocultural theory (1970) which states that effective learning takes place under the guidance of a facilitator in a natural setting.

The good perception these teachers have about mentoring is deeply rooted at the back of their minds and they can only think of it as a tool that enhances their teaching performance. Robert and Sage (2011:753) agree that professional development contributes to a positive ethos where people feel valued and motivated. They learn good values like being accommodative, able to share and teamwork. The participants hold the view that through mentoring they will be able to learn social aspects like being accommodation, emotional control and empathy. In their minds, mentoring is placed very high because through it they also develop skills for content arrangement, lesson planning and preparation and assessment. Hobson (2002:1), consider mentoring as an empowering mechanism that helps teachers to adjust, become versatile and more importantly, it boosts their confidence. This implies that, mentoring leads newly-appointed teachers into believing in themselves and becoming actively involved.

The participants expressed great appreciation for mentoring as a strategy for professional development of teachers because they believe that it is extremely helpful in guiding teachers on how to deal with classroom management as during the programme, opportunities are created for new teachers to observe mentor-teachers doing work, practically, in a natural setting. Mentoring assists novice teachers to learn how to teach in a school-based setting (Tomlinson, 1995:7). The participants have high regard because the strategy takes away nervousness and helps to reduce pressure and frustrations while at the same time providing new teachers with role models. Harris (2004:511) states that mentorship is crucial for clarifying expectations for new teachers, socializing them into the school culture and helping them to assess their strengths and weaknesses.

Mentoring as a teacher professional development strategy is warmly, heartily and well received by participants; they have very positive thinking about mentoring. The positive perception and attitude they have about mentoring combined with how well they received it, suggests and symbolises the significance they attach to mentoring. Their responses indicate mentoring plays a very significant role in professional development of teachers. In mentoring they are guided and assisted by a more knowledgeable person with expertise and this enable them to overcome challenges like committing common mistakes such as losing focus, confusion and frustrations. To the participants, mentoring simplifies and clarifies policies, help in developing skills to conduct school-based assessment and keep personal portfolio updated.

Through mentoring, teachers can confidently and easily deal with challenges like curriculum delivery, working with rubrics and marking learner's work; these enhance their teaching performance. Mentoring is about helping the mentee to grow in self-confidence and develop independence, autonomy and maturity (McMillan, 2010:4). This emphasizes the fact that mentoring is a nurturing process in which a more skilled person serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional development. Designing and planning a lesson structure becomes much easier when working with a

mentor. Mentoring is a way of empowering teachers and sharpening their skills and building their capacity (Duncan & Stock, 2010:32). The strategy aids the transfer of skills, techniques, information and knowledge to the new teachers so as to equip them with problem-solving skills, conflict management and emotional control. Mentoring has the potential of bringing people of different experience and knowledge together to share common approaches to teaching.

All the participants were in agreement that serving teachers need mentoring for their professional development and personal growth. Mentoring as a learning strategy to enhance workplace learning holds that a senior person with experience and position provides information, advice and emotional support to a junior person in the same contextual environment, in a relationship that lasts for an extended period of time and that is marked by substantial emotional commitment by both parties (Mertz, 2004:13). It is for this reason that, to the newly-appointed teachers, mentoring is a necessity, for it closes the gap between being a university student and the practical reality of the classroom situation. In the eyes of the new teachers, mentoring is seen as a practical way of transforming theory into practice. The participants regard mentoring as a priority because it introduces new teachers to the school environment, helps to settle nerves and creates an atmosphere conducive for work.

The participants emphasize the need for mentoring in the lives of new teachers on the basis that it presents opportunities for them to observe mentor-teacher demonstrating actual lesson presentation. It leads to efficiency as new teachers learn to do things on their own. Through guidance and assistance of the mentor-teachers, who are more experienced, new teachers feel safe, free and secure to venture and that lifts teachers' work ethics (Kram, 1983:613). It for this reason that the newly-appointed teachers need mentoring for clarifying certain aspects of teaching, motivation and to help them in areas where they are struggling. This implies that, mentoring leads to teachers' improved personal skills and capacity which include, increased self-confidence, greater motivation, improved reflection on practice and greater ability to take part in or lead change initiatives.

For Walkington (2005:55), serving teachers need mentoring because the these programmes are developmental and designed to help teachers in areas like, lesson planning, managing class register and developing a bond with learners. This implies that, mentoring has numerous advantages for the mentee because it encourages on-going learning, develops and identifies learning opportunities in the work situation. Through quality mentoring, beginner teachers can develop a repertoire of problem-solving strategies for dealing with the practicalities and complexities associated with contextual school and teaching situations (Hudson, 2012:72). New teachers are taught elements of parenthood, how to handle and work with learners from different social backgrounds; all these are done to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and performance of new teachers.

These mentoring programmes are designed to cover essential areas that shape the professional path of each individual teacher. High quality professional learning generates and contributes new knowledge to the profession, helps teachers keep up with developments in their individual fields, and in education, generally, increase their ability to monitor students; the programme assists to provide constructive feedback to the students and appropriately redirect teaching (Vail, 2005:16). New teachers are taught the dynamics of the classroom situation, the kind of learners to expect, classroom culture, content organizing, recording and record keeping. The participants appreciate mentoring because it had helped them in areas like lesson preparation, assessment techniques, setting tests, interpretation of CAPS documents, like pace setters and policy documents; this had led to a smooth transition. This implies that, professional learning should deepen teachers' knowledge, skills and techniques and getting to know these basics of practical classroom teaching made life, for new teachers much easier.

Generally, the participants welcomed and appreciated the involvement of the Department in the professional development of teachers, although they still had reservations and concerns. According to the participants, the departmental strategies are beneficial because new teachers are afforded opportunities to exchange ideas and thoughts. The Department supplies teachers with resourceful study materials, like soft wares, previous question papers, pace setters and policy documents.

The departmental strategies are relevant for teachers since they are content-related and help them to handle common mistakes happening in the classrooms. These departmental workshops are beneficial to the teachers because themes for discussions are clearly introduced and defined and teachers are advised on how to arrange content for learning following the prescribed policies and rules.

At the same time there are those who had reservations and misgivings about the departmental role in teacher profession development. The department is blamed for providing belated information to the teachers and conducting workshops in congested halls with little or no ventilation. The workshops are usually conducted in the afternoons when teachers are tired and exhausted and equally annoying is the fact that the workshops are very short with little or no follow-ups from the curriculum advisors.

6.2.2 Findings from Document Analysis

It emerged from the interaction with the leaders of the schools that were visited for the data collection, that all the schools have not generated or developed their own school-based mentoring programmes as all the schools produced similar documents which are the products of the Department of Basic Education. The developmental documents which they were able to provide included Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), Whole School Evaluation (WSE) and Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) which are accompanied by incentives.

6.2.3 Findings from Observations

The researcher visited research sites before and after data collection, and the observations made revealed that almost all the schools are dilapidated except for one, which was in excellent condition. In fact, it could be considered a state-of-the-art. The buildings, environments, furniture and other facilities are not conducive for proper teaching and learning. The observations were conducted outside normal school hours to avoid disruptions. The researcher was able to observe teaching and learning during extra

lessons conducted outside normal school hours; the observed teachers displayed high level of confidence, good classroom management and related well with the learners. The observations, from the researcher's perspective, revealed that all schools visited are capable of reaching high levels of instructional practices.

6.3 LIMITATIONS

Limitations of the research are discussed with regard to literature review, geographical accessibility of the research sites and the empirical study. A huge amount of literature is available on the nature, application and implementation of mentoring. Greater percentage of the literature on mentoring covers aspects, mainly, on novice- or student teachers and not in-service teachers. In-service and well-established teachers also need mentoring to keep up with the latest developments in teaching, although this is not emphasized in most literature.

The sample size of 12 newly-appointed was not big enough to generalize the results to a larger group of teachers. The other limitation is that the sample was not diverse enough to look at other aspects such as culture, language and race.

Issues concerning accessing participants were prevalent because of participant's commitments and workloads that are related to curriculum delivery. As a result, the researcher was compelled to reschedule visits over and over again and that was time consuming. In some schools it was not easy to have telephonic conversations with participants because of network-related problems. Observational and reflection meetings were also limited as the participants voiced backlogs of certain duties and workloads as reasons for not having enough time for interviews.

At the time of interviews, the participants were working on scripts and preparing the submission of term 3 schedules, hence, the teachers were pressured with the marking of scripts. This also added to the challenges with the pace of the completion of data collection.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the research findings.

The results of the study clearly indicate that not all the newly-appointed teachers received mentoring after being appointed. In some instances, the mentoring sessions were too short for the teachers to benefit. Mentoring should be taken very seriously and be part of all schools' developmental programmes, therefore, the department must make it a point that all schools without fail have mentoring programmes in place to help new teachers to navigate through the complexities related to teaching. Schools should have a pool of mentors, have mentoring as part of normal school programmes and budgeted for.

The study further revealed that in all the schools in which participants are working, there were no school-generated mentoring programme. All the schools produced similar documents generated and developed by the department for its monitoring purposes. Common policy documents that are used in these schools for mentoring are Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), Whole School Evaluation (WSE) and Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) which are compulsory and accompanied by incentives. The Department is again called upon to ascertain that every school, without compromise or fail has mentoring programmes in place for the benefit of the new teachers.

It emerged from the study that the department is not doing enough to take teacher professional development to higher levels. The participants revealed that although the department is putting in place different types of initiatives, there is still a lot of ground to cover. The participants indicated that the workshops arranged by the department are too short, take place in the afternoons, in congested halls with little ventilation. In certain cases, the workshops provided late information like giving out pace setters half way in the year. The department is advised be at the forefront in as far as teacher professional development is concerned.

A genuine concern was raised by the participants regarding lack of support and intervention by the curriculum advisors. After conducting the workshops, the curriculum advisors do not make any follow-ups to check the progress made by the teachers. The only time the curriculum advisors are seen to be active is during the moderation of CASS (Continuous Assessment). A call is made again to the Department to make sure that the CAs (Curriculum Advisors) perform their duties as required.

The study also revealed that in the instances where participants are being mentored, the school principals have taken a back seat, leaving everything in the hands of Heads of Departments (HODs) and senior teachers. Bubb and Earley (2007:18) found that the principal can fulfill the need for newly-appointed to be orientated around issues, such as culture-hidden agendas, traditions and regular social events of the school. It is, therefore, advisable for school principals to stand up and take the lead with regard to the implementation of mentoring programmes.

Responses from the participants suggest that very few were advised and encouraged to further their studies for their professional development and growth. Reading and furthering one's personal studies are powerful ways of gaining knowledge and experience. It is the responsibility of school principals to step up and show the new teachers the value of furthering their personal studies.

6.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In the light of the above discussion, the researcher recommends the following for further study:

- Stakeholder participation in the mentoring of teachers for professional development
- An evaluation of mentoring strategies that are available for teacher professional development
- The efficacy of using mentoring to enhance the teaching of a particular school subject

6.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The study contributes towards greater understanding of how mentoring can be used to develop teachers professionally. The findings in this study would help to implement mentoring programmes in all schools. The researcher intends to communicate the research findings and recommendations to the policy makers for them to make a determination. The policy makers can make use of the findings and recommendations to fully implement mentoring in all the schools.

The study revealed how departmental workshops and training are not meeting the needs of teachers. The department through the curriculum advisors conduct courses and workshops in congested halls with little or no study materials. The policy makers should do something to make sure mentoring is taken very seriously and is fully implemented without fail. The study also revealed that curriculum advisors do not do follow ups after conducting workshops.

It was also discovered that in some schools' new teachers are left on their own without any person to take responsibility of mentoring them. Let schools take mentoring very seriously and have teacher mentors to take of new teachers.

The researcher intends visiting some of the schools to help with workshops that would trigger the implementation of mentoring in all schools. The department must find a way of making mentoring a compulsory programme.

6.7 CONCLUSION

The positive effect of mentoring on new teachers was exposed by the responses the participants gave during data collection. All the participants, even those who had not been mentored appreciate and acknowledge that mentoring is a strong and powerful way of passing information and knowledge from one person to the other. Mentors are special people who are helpful and can have significant impact on the lives of their mentees. The

effect that mentors have on mentees' lives can range from capacity and confidence building and empowering, to acting as a role model by setting standards of behaviour and conduct which are inspiring to everyone concerned. Among others what mentors also do is to teach the mentees how to critically reflect (Rhodes, Stokes & Hampton, 2004:36). In schools where mentoring programmes are designed and implemented for a short while, issues related to teacher's professional development are not well and properly addressed. The responses from the participants revealed that in some schools the mentoring only lasted from a few days to a month, which is not enough time. What came out from the responses of the few participants is that schools have no structured time in their daily programmes for mentoring.

In a school where mentoring programmes are implemented in a well-planned, structured and measured fashion, newly-appointed teacher's feelings of anxiety, nervousness and insecurity fade away and the new teachers feel welcome and part of the school team. Meaningful mentoring programmes have long lasting effects on teacher's performance and retention. The findings of their study may be of assistance to policy makers and school management teams in developing standardized, well-structured mentoring programmes, for new teachers, in ordinary public schools.

The study has revealed that the newly appointed teachers have an appreciation for mentoring as a strategy for teachers' professional development. The positive effects of mentoring are very inspiring and newly-appointed teachers feel very comfortable to be involved in such initiatives. This is in line with the purpose of the research since it was always the contention of this study that mentoring is a powerful way of empowering new teachers.

6.8 SUMMARY

One strategy to promote effectiveness and efficiency of serving teachers is through intensive mentoring programmes designed, developed and implemented by schools. In order for new teachers to adjust to the new school environment, in which they work, and

the colleagues and the learners with whom they interact, mentoring should be in place (Steyn, 2004:1). The best way of retaining, supporting and developing newly-appointed teachers is through properly conducted and well-designed mentoring programmes. The study has revealed, without doubt, that participants need, accept and acknowledge the significance of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development. It is for this reason that the Department of Education should find it fitting to develop and implement mentoring programmes tailored to meet the needs of new teachers.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN THE MOPANI DISTRICT

LETTER TO THE PROVINCIAL HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

P.O BOX 566

TZANEEN

0850

12. 06. 2017

The Head of Department
Department of Education
Private Bag X 9489
Polokwane
0700

Dear Sir/Madam

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN THE MOPANI
DISTRICT.**

My name is Maahe Mmamodimo and I am a student at the University of Venda, School of Education, in the Department of Educational Management. The research I wish to conduct, is for my Doctoral dissertation titled: *'The effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development in Mopani District—Limpopo Province'*.

The knowledge and information obtained from this study will be relevant and valuable to the School Management Teams, teachers and policy-makers with regard to school based continuous professional development.

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted after school hours so that there will be no disruption of teaching and learning. Participation in this study is voluntary and the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to them. All the participants will be given letters of informed consent which will explain the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter will also include the title of the as well as the details of the researcher. Confidentiality and anonymity of all participants is guaranteed as no participants will be required to provide their names, names of their schools or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation.

This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof N.P Mudzielwana and Dr N.F Litshani (University of Venda) I hereby seek your permission to approach the schools in the Mopani District to ask for participants' consent in this study. Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Department of Education with a copy of the summarised research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on: 0826865475 & Email: mmamodimo@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. Attached hereto find the approval of proposal from the University of Venda.

Yours sincerely

Maake Mmamodimo

Researcher signature:.....



APPENDIX B: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MOPANI DISTRICT



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ref: 2/22 Eng. MC Makola PhD Tel No: 015 290 9448 E-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Maake M
PO Box 566
Tzaneen
0850

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **"THE EFFECT OF MENTORING AS A STRATEGY FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOPANI DISTRICT"**.
3. The following conditions should be considered:
 - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
 - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.
 - 3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
 - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
 - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
 - 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH MAAKE M

CONFIDENTIAL

Cnr. 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X9489, POLOKWANE, 0700
Tel: 015 290 7600, Fax: 015 297 6920/4220/4494

The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people!

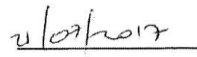
4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research

5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.



Ms NB Mutheiwana
Head of Department



Date

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH. MAAKE M

CONFIDENTIAL

APPENDIX C: QUESTION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MOPANI DISTRICT

LETTER TO THE DISTRICT SENIOR MANAGER

P.O BOX 566

TZANEEN

0850

14 June 2017

The Senior District Manager

Private Bag x 578

GIYANI

0826

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN THE MOPANI DISTRICT.

My name is Maake Mmamodimo and I am a student at the University of Venda, School of Education, in the Department of Educational Management. The research I wish to conduct, is for my Doctoral dissertation titled: *'The effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development in Mopani District—Limpopo Province'*.

The knowledge and information obtained from this study will be relevant and valuable to the School Management Teams, teachers and policy-makers with regard to school based continuous professional development.

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted after school hours so that there will be no disruption of teaching and learning. Participation in this study is voluntary and the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to them. All the participants will be given letters of informed consent which will explain the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter will also include the title of the as well as the details of the researcher. Confidentiality and anonymity of all participants is guaranteed as no participants will be required to provide their names, names of their schools or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation.

This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof N.P Mudzielwana and Dr N.F Litshani (University of Venda) I hereby seek your permission to approach the schools in the Mopani District to ask for participants' consent in this study. Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Department of Education with a copy of the summarised research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on: 0826865475 & Email: mmamodimo@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. Attached hereto find the approval of proposal from the University of Venda.

Yours sincerely

Maake Mmamodimo

Researcher signature:



APPENDIX D: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MOPANI DISTRICT



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

MOPANI DISTRICT

REF : 2/2/2
ENQ : SONO S.N
DATE : 21 JULY 2017

TO : MAAKE MMAMODIMO

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: THE EFFECT OF MENTORING AS A STRATEGY FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOPANI DISTRICT

1. The above matter refers.
2. Permission is granted to you to conduct a research on the above mentioned Topic.
3. Your focus should only be limited to schools listed below:
 - 3.1. Bessie Maake Secondary
 - 3.2. Lebitso Secondary
 - 3.3. Mamosala Secondary
 - 3.4. Mokhapa Secondary
 - 3.5. Ramoba Secondary
 - 3.6. Serara Secondary
4. Please make sure that schools' work is not interfered.
5. Hope you find this to be in order.

.....
DISTRICT DIRECTOR

.....
DATE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MOPANI DISTRICT, Private Bag X 578 GIYANI, 0826
Tel 015 811 7700 Fax No. 015 812 3412 or 015 812 1689

The heartland of Southern Africa – development is about people

APPENDIX E: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN KHUTJWANA CIRCUIT

LETTER THE CIRCUIT MANAGERS (THABINA CLUSTER)

Researcher: Mr M. Maake

Date: 14 June 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN KHUTJWANA CIRCUIT

My name is Maake Mmamodimo and I am a student at the University of Venda, School of Education, in the Department of Educational Management. The research I wish to conduct, is for my Doctoral dissertation titled: *'The effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development in Mopani District—Limpopo Province'*.

The knowledge and information obtained from this study will be relevant and valuable to the School Management Teams, teachers and policy-makers with regard to school based continuous professional development.

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted after school hours so that there will be no disruption of teaching and learning. Participation in this study is voluntary and the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to them. All the participants will be given letters of informed consent which will explain the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter will also include the title of the as well as the details of the researcher. Confidentiality and anonymity of all participants is guaranteed as no participants will be required to provide their names, names of their schools or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation.

This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof N.P Mudzielwana and Dr N.F Litshani (University of Venda) I hereby seek your permission to approach the schools in the Khutjwana Circuit to ask for participants' consent in this study. Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Department of Education with a copy of the summarised research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on:

0826865475 & Email: mmamodimo@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. Attached hereto find the approval of proposal from the University of Venda.

Yours sincerely

Maahe Mmamodimo

Researcher signature: 

APPENDIX F: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN KHUTJWANA CIRCUIT



Enq: Mohlatlole M.W

Cell No. 071 679 3814

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference:
2. The Circuit wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: THE EFFECT OF MENTORING AS A STRATEGY FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOPANI DISTRICT- LIMPOPO PROVINCE
3. The following conditions should be considered:
 - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for the Circuit.
 - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the schools concerned.
 - 3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
 - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
 - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
 - 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Circuit.
4. Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.
5. The Circuit appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Kind regards



CIRCUIT MANAGER



25.7.2017
Date

BZM

APPENDIX G: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN THABINA CIRCUIT

LETTER THE CIRCUIT MANAGERS (THABINA CLUSTER)

Researcher: Mr M. Maake

Date: 14 June 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN KHUTJWANA CIRCUIT

My name is Maake Mmamodimo and I am a student at the University of Venda, School of Education, in the Department of Educational Management. The research I wish to conduct, is for my Doctoral dissertation titled: *'The effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development in Mopani District—Limpopo Province'*.

The knowledge and information obtained from this study will be relevant and valuable to the School Management Teams, teachers and policy-makers with regard to school based continuous professional development.


Semi-structured interviews will be conducted after school hours so that there will be no disruption of teaching and learning. Participation in this study is voluntary and the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to them. All the participants will be given letters of informed consent which will explain the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter will also include the title of the as well as the details of the researcher. Confidentiality and anonymity of all participants is guaranteed as no participants will be required to provide their names, names of their schools or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation.

This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof N.P Mudzielwana and Dr N.F Litshani (University of Venda) I hereby seek your permission to approach the schools in the Khutjwana Circuit to ask for participants' consent in this study. Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Department of Education with a copy of the summarised research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on:


0826865475 & Email: mmamodimo@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. Attached hereto find the approval of proposal from the University of Venda.

Yours sincerely

Maake Mmamodimo

Researcher signature: 

APPENDIX H: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN THABINA CIRCUIT



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SHILUVANE CIRCUIT**

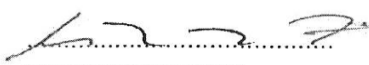
REF : Student No. 16023565
ENQ : Dr T Mbalati
CON : 079 510 4106
E-MAIL: tim.mbalati@gmail.com

Friday, 23 June 2017

Mr M Maake
P O Box 566
TZANEEN
0850

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SHILUVANA & THABINA CIRCUITS

1. The above matter refers.
2. Permission to conduct research in Shiluvane and Thabina circuits is hereby granted.
3. The condition attached to this permission is adherence to all research ethics.
4. Hoping that schools will provide information that will enable you to produce the required thesis.


.....
**CIRCUIT MANAGER
SHILUVANE**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
SHILUVANA CIRCUIT
Private Bag X 1411 - LENYENYE, 0857
Tel 015 355 4537 - Fax No. 085 516 4085

The heartland of Southern Africa – development is about people

APPENDIX I: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN SHILUVANA CIRCUIT

LETTER THE CIRCUIT MANAGERS (THABINA CLUSTER)

Researcher: Mr M. Maake

Date: 14 June 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN SHILUVANA CIRCUIT

My name is Maake Mmamodimo and I am a student at the University of Venda, School of Education, in the Department of Educational Management. The research I wish to conduct, is for my Doctoral dissertation titled: *'The effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development in Mopani District—Limpopo Province'*.

The knowledge and information obtained from this study will be relevant and valuable to the School Management Teams, teachers and policy-makers with regard to school based continuous professional development.

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted after school hours so that there will be no disruption of teaching and learning. Participation in this study is voluntary and the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to them. All the participants will be given letters of informed consent which will explain the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter will also include the title of the as well as the details of the researcher. Confidentiality and anonymity of all participants is guaranteed as no participants will be required to provide their names, names of their schools or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation.

This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof N.P Mudzielwana and Dr N.F Litshani (University of Venda) I hereby seek your permission to approach the schools in the Shiluvana Circuit to ask for participants' consent in this study. Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Department of Education with a copy of the summarised research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on:

0826865475 & Email: mmamodimo@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. Attached hereto find the approval of proposal from the University of Venda.

Yours sincerely

Maake Mmamodimo

Researcher signature: .....

APPENDIX J: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN SHILUVANA CIRCUIT



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SHILUVANE CIRCUIT**

REF : Student No. 16023565
ENQ : Dr T Mbalati
CON : 079 510 4106
E-MAIL: tim.mbalati@gmail.com

Friday, 23 June 2017

Mr M Maake
P O Box 566
TZANEEN
0850

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SHILUVANA & THABINA CIRCUITS

1. The above matter refers.
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3. The condition attached to this permission is adherence to all research ethics.
4. Hoping that schools will provide information that will enable you to produce the required thesis.



.....
**CIRCUIT MANAGER
SHILUVANE**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
SHILUVANA CIRCUIT
Private Bag X 1411 - LENYENYE, 0857
Tel 015 355 4537 - Fax No. 086 516 4085

The heartland of Southern Africa – development is about people

APPENDIX K: CONSENT LETTERS TO PARTICIPANTS

CONSENT LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

DEAR PARTICIPANT (TEACHER)

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN THE MOPANI DISTRICT.

My name is Maake Mmamodimo and I am a student at the University of Venda, School of Education, in the Department of Educational Management. The research I wish to conduct, is for my Doctoral dissertation titled: *'The effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development in Mopani District—Limpopo Province'*.

The knowledge and information obtained from this study will be relevant and valuable to the School Management Teams, teachers and policy-makers with regard to school based continuous professional development.

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted after school hours so that there will be no disruption of teaching and learning. Participation in this study is voluntary and the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to them. All the participants will be given letters of informed consent which will explain the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter will also include the title of the as well as the details of the researcher. Confidentiality and anonymity of all participants is guaranteed as no participants will be required to provide their names, names of their schools or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation.

This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof N.P Mudzielwana and Dr N.F Litshani (University of Venda) I hereby seek your consent to participate in the research. Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide you with feedback for you to verify the accuracy of the information supplied. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on: 0826865475 & Email: mmamodimo@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and

consideration in this matter. Attached hereto find the approval of proposal from the University of Venda.

Yours sincerely

Maake Mmamodimo

Researcher signature:



PARICIPANT CONSENT

I hereby give consent to Mr Mmamodimo Maake to involve me as a participant in his research on 'The effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher Professional Development in Mopani District-Limpopo Province. I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to me. The nature, purpose and objectives of the study as well as the details of the researcher were explained to me. My confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed as I will not be required to provide my name, the name of my school or to give any personal details that could identify me or be traced back to me. There will be no risks to me as a participant in this study.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE

APPENDIX L: UNIVERSITY OF VENDA: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:

Mr M Maake

Student No:

16023565

PROJECT TITLE: The effect of mentoring as a strategy for teacher professional development in Mopani District Limpopo Province.

PROJECT NO: SEDU/17/CSEM/11/2809

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Prof NP Mudzielwana	University of Venda	Promoter
Dr NF Litshani	University of Venda	Co- Promoter
Mr M Maake	University of Venda	Investigator – Student

ISSUED BY:

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date Considered: October 2017

Decision by Ethical Clearance Committee Granted

Signature of Chairperson of the Committee:



Name of the Chairperson of the Committee: Senior Prof. G.E. Ekosse



University of Venda

PRIVATE BAG X5050, THOHOYANDOU, 0950, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA
TELEPHONE (015) 962 8504/8313 FAX (015) 962 9060

"A quality driven financially sustainable, rural-based Comprehensive University"



APPENDIX M: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. For how long have been teaching...? [Probe: Where? Which subjects? Which grades?]

.....
.....
.....

2. I wish to concentrate a bit on your involvement in the mentoring process: [probe: Which areas of development were covered in the process? Who was responsible for your mentoring? How did you feel when you got involved? [Why did you feel that way?]

.....
.....
.....

3. Describe what you do during the mentoring sessions. [Probe: How long do the sessions last? Who leads the sessions? Do you think serving teachers really need mentoring? [Explain.]

.....
.....
.....

4. Take us through the mentoring provided by the Department of Education. [Probe: How are they arranged? What study materials are you provided with? Are there any follow ups?

.....
.....
.....

5. Tell us about the perceptions you have regarding mentoring process. What do you think about it? [Probe: What are the gains? What are the things you like about mentoring? What are your dislikes? (Why?)

.....
.....
.....

6. In your own assessment of mentoring, can you say it help teachers to overcome challenges? [Probe: Give examples of such challenges. Does it provide long-term or short-terms solutions? [explain.]

.....
.....
.....

7. How do you compare mentoring programme with professional development strategies like workshops, subject meetings and seminars that you have attended previously? [Probe: Is there any difference? How?]

.....
.....
.....

8. What was your mentor like? [Probe: Were you comfortable and relaxed in front of your mentor? Did you feel free to express your views? Was the mentor committed to your course? [How?]

.....
.....
.....

9. What was the relationship like? [Probe: [Was it cordial? Was the relationship mutual and beneficial? [Explain]

.....
.....
.....

10. Do you think participating in the mentoring programme contributed in making you a better teacher? [Probe: Why do feel this way?]

.....
.....
.....

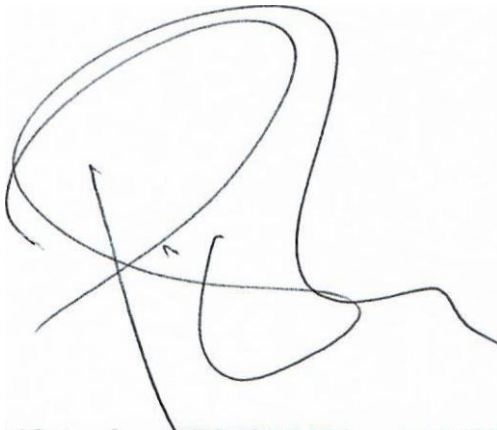
11. In general terms, how do you perceive mentoring? [Probe: What exactly do you think and feel about it?]

.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX N: EDITOR'S LETTER

13 October 2018

This is to certify that I, **Dr P Kaburise**, have proofread the research proposal titled – **THE EFFECT OF MENTORING AS A STRATEGY FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOPANI DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE** - by **MAAKE MMAMODIMO**. I have indicated some amendments which the student has undertaken to effect, before the final document is submitted.



Dr P Kaburise: 0794927451 / 0711138079)

Dr P Kaburise: BA (Hons) University of Ghana (Legon, Ghana); MEd University of East Anglia (Cambridge/East Anglia, United Kingdom); Cert. English Second Language Teaching, (Wellington, New Zealand); PhD University of Pretoria (South Africa)