Teachers' perceptions of the mentoring of novice teachers in the King William's Town District.

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of

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By

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate the teachers' perceptions of thementoring of novice teachers in the King William's Town District. Inorder to understand how the teachers viewed novice teacher mentoringthe study adopted a qualitative approach. Interviews anddocumentsanalysis were used as data collection instruments. The purpose of the study was to investigate the teachers' perceptions on mentoring of

novice teachers in schools. The respondents provided their explanationsof mentoring and also said what they think is the importance of mentoring. The teachers also had to give their mentoring experiences at school and District levels.

Two schools in the King William's Town District were purposivelyselected to form the context of the study. The respondents were 6 educators, three from a primary school and three from a high school. Principals of the two selected schools were also included asrespondents in the study. The results of the study revealed that mentoring was taking place informally in the schools through sharing ofthe teaching challenges. Mentoring was also taking place through theteachers mentoring each other as Subject and Phase teachers supervised by Heads of Department. Most teachers understoodmentoring as giving guidance and help.

ACKNOWLEDGEMNTS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Mr Fudukile Dlani, Mrs

Nothobile Dlani, Mr Mnyamana Dlani and Mrs Nolingene Dlani.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that "The teachers' perceptions on mentoring of noviceteachers in the King William's Town District," is my work, that it has notbeen submitted before any degree or examination in any other University.   The sources I have used or quoted have been indicated andacknowledged as complete references.

Siyongwana Archibald Dlani

Signed: …………………………………. Date: …………………………….

ACRONYMS

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CASS	Continuous Assessment
DA	Development Appraisal
DoE	Department of Education
EC	Eastern Cape
GET	General Education and Training
HoD	Head of Department
ILST	Institutional Level Support Teams
IPA	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management Systems
LAC	Learning Area Committee
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
PM	Performance Measurement
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SA	South Africa
SDP	School Development Plan
SDT	School Development Team
SGB	School Governing Body

SMT	School Management Team
USA	United States of America
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

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1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to investigate how the teachers in the selected schools perceived and experienced mentoring. This study was conducted in two King William's Town District schools. The focus of the study was more on the novice teachers; however, experienced teachers were also involved. By novice teachers, this study means teachers who are in their first years of teaching and are still developing an identity as teachers (Stanulis, Falloua and Pearson, 2002). This may mean that novice teachers still have to adapt to the new teaching environment. As novice teachers are new in the profession, they may find it difficult to apply the practical teaching strategies (Allen, 2008). They struggle to integrate theory with practice in the workplace. Hence they need other professionals to guide and support them (Ibid).

When novice teachers do not receive the support and guidance required, especially in the early years in the profession, they feel isolated and disillusioned, most resign

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or suffer from burnout in the first years of teaching (Peters and Le Cornu, 2006). It needs to be noted that some novice teachers reportedly leave the profession and are attracted to more lucrative jobs other than teaching (Whitelaw, de Beer and Henning, 2008).The issue of the novice teachers who leave their profession is also supported by Tillman (2005) who notes that novice teachers also leave their positions within a few years after being employed. This therefore suggests that novice teachers need support in the first years of teaching as it helps them adapt to the new teaching environment and stay longer in the profession. When novice teachers stay longer in the profession, the benefit is that it will produce savings in the costs of additional recruitment, hiring and induction. This is possible when novice teachers receive both emotional and professional support. Emotional support makes novice teachers feel comfortable and at ease in their new jobs, while professional support fosters a principled understanding of teaching (Lofstrom and Eisenschmidt, 2008). Furthermore, mentoring assist novice teachers' adjustment to the school as an organization: personal development and professional knowledge support, provision of feedback, teacher socialization, mentor availability and mutual trust and learning from one another (Ibid).Hence it is important that novice teachers are mentored into the new profession.

Unless the novice teacher gets support and guidance, the journey of self-discovery to becoming a fully-fledged educator can be lonely, confusing, frustrating and soul-destroying one, which can often lead to burnout and premature departure from the

profession (Wasburn, Wasburn-Moses and Davis, 2010). Many teachers, who do leave the profession, mainly do so in the first five years after first appointment (Watson, 2006). Amongst others, this is due to novice teachers not getting enough support in the early years of teaching. Most novice teachers leave the profession as they do not get enough support in the early years of teaching. This has serious consequences for the education system as the supply of teachers becomes unpredictable and the investment made in those teachers is lost (Ibid).

Mentoring is an activity in which novice teachers are supported in their early years (Watkins and Whalley, 1993). Novice teachers get help from the teachers who had been in the profession for some time. As first years of teaching are complex and challenging, novice teachers need experienced persons in the teaching field to guide them. Novice teachers are guided by experienced teachers in applying teaching strategies such as classroom management and others. Literature also warns that a mentor needs to be patient and to have stood the test of time herself (Ibid). A mentor is anyone involved in tasks and activities which support a novice teacher (Watkins and Whalley, 1993). It also needs to be noted that mentoring can either be done by one person; or by a number of people who are involved in the task of professional training and induction of novice teachers (Ibid). Mentoring seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice in teacher education (Allen, 2009). A mentor assists and guides a mentee to adapt in the teaching profession. After some years of training, novice teachers feel themselves unprepared to simply walk into the classroom and teach (MacCoy, 2007).They seem unprepared as the real classroom

context may not necessarily be the same as the simulate classrooms they are exposed to during their pre-service training.

According to Starnulis et al, (2002), despite the fact that they have been students at teacher colleges, universities and were apprentice teachers during teaching practice, being appointed to a school as a new teacher brings with it a host of challenges. Novice teachers are allegedly finding it difficult to apply the theory learnt during training as a teacher. Some of these are learning how the school works as an organization, how to maintain order and discipline, how to prepare lessons and deal with the stress of performing in front of a class for seven hours a day. MacCoy (2007) notes the following dissatisfying issues for novice teachers: lack of respect for the profession, low wages, big classes, lack of support or clerical tasks, extra duties such as coaching, inadequate supplies, lack of supportive administrators, lack of active mentors, lack of student interest and parent involvement. However, the issue of the availability or non-availability of a mentor is regarded as the challenge that has the biggest impact to the new teacher (Ibid). A mentor is usually a more experienced person than a mentee who not only guides but also acts as a professional model to a mentee.

Commenting on the significance of mentoring, Fluckiger, Moglamery and Edick, (2006) note that mentoring promotes teacher retention and teacher quality. This means that when new teachers receive mentoring, they are more likely to stay longer in the profession and their teaching ability is also improved. MacCoy (2007)

notes that as much as the novice teachers are exposed to theory during both the pre-service training and practice in the workplace, they still need to be guided when they start their journey as professional teachers. As such mentoring boosts both the teacher performance and that of learners as improvement in student achievement is tied to the effectiveness of their teachers (Martin, 2008). In the atmosphere of trust, mentors must provide guidance and support using their expertise and experience.

Novice teachers are taught to value both theory learnt during pre-service training and practice in the workplace (MacCoy, 2007). Mentoring boosts teacher performance and that of learners as improvement in student achievement is tied to the effectiveness of their teachers (Martin, 2008). Additional benefits include improved retention that will produce savings in the costs of additional recruitment, hiring and induction. The following are the tasks of mentoring in supporting school development and novice teacher's development and novice teacher's adjustment to the school as an organisation: personal development and professional knowledge support, provision of feedback, teacher socialization, mentor availability and mutual trust and learning from one another (Lofstrom and Eisenschmidt, 2008). In the atmosphere of trust, mentors must provide guidance and support using their expertise and experience.

To respond to the needs of the novice teachers, and assist in the transition between pre-service training and the classroom, principals are advised to appoint mentors for novice teachers (Lofstrom and Eisenschmidt, 2008). Literature also indicates that

not any experienced teacher may qualify to be a mentor (Ibid). Mentoring requires determination on the part of both the mentor and the novice teacher. Storrs, Putsch and Taylor, (2008) state that there should be a specific relationship that exists between a mentor and a mentee. The relationship between mentor and mentee, between experienced educator and novice teacher, is not without difficulties and challenges, but given that, much depends on the success of the relationship for all parties involved. It is essential that the relationship be negotiated and carefully monitored to provide the novice teacher with maximum support and a safe environment in which to experiment and make mistakes. Mentoring creates opportunities and space for more than one person to be involved in the leadership and management of schools. Mentoring provides support to novice teachers and also help to retain novice teachers in the profession (Bartell, 2005). Teachers who participate in mentoring programs are more likely to stay in teaching. In South Africa mentoring programs such as Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) support principals so that they can manage mentoring programs in their schools (ACE, 2006). Kent et al (2009) also maintained that training for school principals and mentors are necessary to provide quality guidance that is uniform across schools and administrators.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

There is an increasing number of novice teachers who leave their positions within few years after being hired (Tillman, 2005). When teachers leave, the student achievement and teacher quality of a school is affected (Martin, 2008). Amongst the reported reasons for novice teacher attrition are a sense of isolation, lack of support and confusion over job responsibilities (Wasburn, 2010). As many young teachers with fresh ideas from universities are reportedly leaving the profession early, teachers with old ideas remain. Mentoring is a strategy for addressing the retention of novice teachers and is also linked to developing their professional and personal competence. There is growing interest in teacher induction and mentoring of novice teachers (Dingus, 2008). However, little is known about what novice teachers do, how they think about their mentoring received, and what novices learn from their interaction with mentors. The voice of novice teachers needs to be heard. This study investigated how teachers perceived the mentoring of novice teachers in the King William's Town District. The following research questions have been identified:

1.3 THE RESERCH QUESTIONS

Main question: What are the teachers' perceptions on the mentoring of novice teachers?

Sub-questions:

- What are the teachers' explanations of mentoring?

- What do the teachers think are the importance of mentoring?

- How do the teachers experience mentoring at school level?

- How do the teachers experience mentoring at the District level?

1.4 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Firstly, the purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions and experiences of selected teachers on the mentoring provided in the King William's Town District. Secondly, this study investigated the teachers' explanations of mentoring in the King William's Town District. The teachers may have different and similar perceptions and experiences of mentoring. The mentoring explanations of teachers may contribute to a better understanding and conceptualization of mentoring as a leadership and management tool. Also this study explored the similarities in the mentoring explanations given by the teachers in the King William's Town District.

Thirdly, the study investigated what the teachers regard as the importance of mentoring. Some teachers may attach some value to mentoring while some may see it as a waste of time. Fourthly, the study investigated how the teachers experienced mentoring at the

school level. Fifthly, the study investigated how the teachers experienced mentoring at District level.

1.5 THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:

1.5.1 To determine the teachers' perceptions on the mentoring of novice teachers.

1.5.2 To establish the teachers' explanations of mentoring.

1.5.3 To establish the importance of mentoring.

1.5.4 To determine the teachers' mentoring experiences at school and District levels.

1.6 THE RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The researcher, as an educator has noticed that teachers, in particular novice teachers do not get enough mentoring in the early years of their careers. As a result of this lack of mentoring, some decide to leave the teaching profession and join other more attractive careers. The researcher has noted that mentored teachers become effective in their teaching and they produce good student results. The whole school also becomes effective as a result of the input of mentored teachers. It is against this background that this study seeks to determine the teachers' perceptions on the mentoring of novice teachers.

1.7 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Explanations and discussions of the findings may be used by the prospective, novice and experienced teachers. Perceptions and experiences of the selected teachers during mentoring will be identified. Prospective teachers will be made aware of the mentoring experiences before they decide to take teaching as a career by referring them to the findings of the study. Experienced teachers and principals will use the findings of the study as a tool to guide the newly employed teachers. The principles of social science behavior will be applied to problems of teaching and learning within formal framework. It is also going to contribute significantly in advancing knowledge and promoting progress. Mentoring programmes will reduce attrition.

1.8 THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study investigated how the selected teachers, both experienced and novice teachers perceived and experienced mentoring. Only perceptions and experiences of selected teachers were investigated. The study was conducted in two schools, a primary and a high school in the King William's Town District.

1.9 THE DEFINITION OF CENTRAL CONCEPTS

The following terms are defined:

- **Novice teachers-** are educators who have taught for less than 18 to 24 months after completing the teacher education programme (Sibaya and Sibaya, 2008).

Murphy, 2005 defines a novice teacher as a first year teacher who faces many challenges even if he is bright and intelligent. For the purposes of this study novice teachers are teachers who have three years or less teaching experience.

- **A mentor-**is a person who provides a novice teacher with source of help and support (Stanulis et al, 2002). A mentor is anyone who is involved in tasks and activities which support a beginner teacher (Watkins and Whalley, 1993). For the purposes of this study, a mentor is an experienced and trusted advisor.

- **Experiences-**are knowledge of or the skill in or observation of an event gained through involvement in or exposure to that event   (Zuber-Skerrit and Roche, 2004)**.**

- **Perceptions-** Lindsay and Norman, 2008, define perceptions as an understanding or the meanings assigned to incidents experienced. Schunk, 2004, is of the opinion that perceptions involve equating a sensation with known information. In this study perception refers to the meanings that novice teachers assign to incidents experienced during mentoring

1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINES

Chapter 1   :   Introduction

This chapter introduces the research topic and discusses the motivation for this study. The background to the study, approach to the study, purpose, and research questions for the study are outlined. The chapter also describes the problem and clarifies specific terms regarding the study and research methodology used.

Chapter 2 : Literature review

Relevant literature is sourced and discussed in this chapter. Literature on teachers' perceptions of the mentoring of novice teachers is also extensively discussed. The literature is reviewed in line with the research questions of this study.

Chapter 3 : Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the research process, research approach, research design, sample and sampling, access to the research site and research methods. Advantages and disadvantages of qualitative approach are discussed and reasons for choosing the approach are given.

Chapter 4 : Data Presentation and Analysis

In this chapter findings of the study are analysed and interpreted. Data collected from the respondents are presented and analsed. Emergence of units of meaning and themes are analysed and recorded.

Chapter 5   :   Conclusions and Recommendations

In this chapter findings of the study are summarized. The chapter also gives the conclusion of the whole dissertation based on the findings as well as recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to review literature pertaining to this research study. This study explored the teachers' perceptions on the mentoring of novice teachers. Literature reviewed in this study focused on the following: exploring the mentoring concept; mentoring and coaching; the purpose of mentoring; who should be a good mentor; characteristics of a good mentor; mentoring support for novice teachers; challenges to mentoring; importance of mentoring. The topics are discussed extensively using ideas from different authors.

The main question:

What are the teachers' perceptions on the mentoring of novice teachers?

The sub-questions:

- What are the teachers' explanations of mentoring?

- What do teachers think are the importance of mentoring?

- How do teachers experience mentoring at school level?

- How do teachers experience mentoring at District level?

This chapter is structured as follows:

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Conceptualizing the concept 'mentoring'

2.3 The purpose of mentoring teachers

2.4 Mentoring and coaching

2.5 Who should be a mentor?

2.6 Characteristics of a good mentor

2.7 Exploring mentoring relationships

2.8 Essential concepts of mentoring

2.9 Challenges to mentoring

2.10 Importance of mentoring

2.11 Conclusion

2.2 Conceptualizing 'mentoring'

Philip, (2003), argues that there is no precise definition and nature of mentoring. He notes that mentoring has processes and different stages. This is the case with

mentoring relationships in education that occur in different stages. Young et al (2005, p.170) wrote: 'It is difficult to speak meaningfully about mentoring. Contradictions abound.' As a result of these differing conceptualizations, sometimes contradictions and uncertainties are experienced (Ibid). All these uncertainties have encouraged the researcher to do an investigation on the concept. It is also important that the gaps in knowledge about mentoring are investigated in order to ensure that the true potential of mentoring can be assessed. Hence Young et al (2005) suggests that as mentoring may be difficult to define, those in the mentoring relationship should debate what mentoring is to be in their particular context, in order that a mutual understanding and vision of mentoring can be shared as they embark on their relationship. Even though there are uncertainties and contradictions, not surprisingly, champions of mentoring often speak glowingly of its promise, while mentoring studies, commonly case studies, point toward multiple and perplexing challenges (Ibid).

Mentoring is very complex and varies from one situation to another (Mckim et al, 2007). This leads to researchers and theorist having varying conceptualization of mentoring. Mentoring is interpreted in different ways by different people and it is important that its purpose and intentions in a particular context are explicit. For instance, Megginson and Clutterbuck, 1995, define mentoring as the off line help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking. Off line help is the assistance given by another person to a less knowledgeable one. In this study it is a mentor who gives an off line help to a mentee. Whilst Sweeney, 2008, defines mentoring as the complex developmental process that mentors use to support and

guide their protégé through the necessary transactions that are part of learning how to be effective educators and career-long learners. In Sweeney's assertion, there are implications of a relationship between the experienced and the non-experienced. This is also confirmed by Kram (1985) who noted that mentoring involves an intense relationship whereby a senior or more experienced person, the mentor, provides two functions for a junior person, the mentee. Mentoring is used by private and public organizations and results in the empowerment of the staff.

Eby (1997) explains that mentoring as an intense developmental relationship whereby advice, counseling, and developmental opportunities are provided to a mentee by a mentor, which, in turn shapes the mentee's career experiences. The advice, counseling and developmental opportunities are provided to those new in the profession, such as novice teachers. Normally this developmental relationship is provided by a more experienced professional. Mentoring has several functions; one function is advice or modeling about career development behaviors (Bozemant and Feeney, 2007). As mentoring is normally offered to an inexperienced professional, career development becomes the main focus. As career development does not operate independent of other faculties, another function is personal support, especially psychosocial support (Bozemant and Feeney, 2007). Psychosocial support mentally prepares the novice teacher for the teaching environment. This study focused on the perceptions of novice teachers on the mentoring received.

Ragins, 1997b, explains a mentor as an individual with advanced experience and knowledge who is committed to providing upward mobility and support to mentees' careers. This means that mentors are knowledgeable people whose aim is to develop novice teachers in their careers. After mentoring, the mentees are developed and they are more likely to be promoted than those who did not get the mentoring experience (Ragins, 1997b). That means novice teachers who experienced mentoring perform better than those who were not mentored. During mentoring, the mentor and the mentee share values, knowledge and experience. The tittle and status given to a person who assumes the primary responsibility for mentoring is called a mentor (Sweeney, 2008). Individuals who are developed, supported and guided are called mentees or protégés. The mentors help the mentees to cope with the knowledge or work in the teaching profession.

Hawkey, (1997) spoke of the essential unique nature of mentoring. Unpacking this unique nature of the mentoring relationship, Scandura and Shriesheim (1994) note that as a transformational activity, mentoring activity should involve a mutual commitment by the mentor and the mentee. This means that the mentor should be willing and committed to support whilst the mentor is also as eager to learn and develop his or her professional and personal skills. Sometimes this relationship can also be characterized by power issues, as a more knowledgeable mentor gives professional assistance to a novice teacher (Eby, 1997). Mullen and Lick (1999) point out that although mentoring relationships usually are based on levels of higher authority or expert knowledge, we

might do better to take a multidimensional view that frames mentorship as a flexible, interactive process. Ragins (1997b) also examines power relations in mentoring and also included issues of diversity between the mentor and the mentee. Diversity refers to the differences between the mentor and the mentee. A mentor is usually more knowledgeable and experienced than the mentee. The mentor is also more powerful than the mentee in terms of power relations. To counter the power issues Kram (1985) notes that mentoring can even take place between the peers. This means that the mentoring activity can also be done by a novice teacher, supporting another novice teacher. As this study is focused on the mentoring of novice teachers, the next section unpacks the purpose of mentoring teachers.

2.3 The purpose of mentoring

The main goal of mentoring is to develop a cadre of teachers who are better prepared to overcome the educational challenges in schools and to increase teacher retention by providing better instructional training (Kent et al, 2009). Mentored teachers are more likely to stay in the teaching profession as they will be better prepared to teach than those who did not experience mentoring. Mentoring bridges the gap between pre-service and in-service teaching and addresses the broader concerns of teacher attrition by allowing novice teachers to begin their teaching careers with the support and guidance of a full-time mentor (Ibid). Mentoring also

helps in greater novice teacher preparedness and a subsequent increase in long-term teaching commitment.

Mentoring provides participants with benefits such as academic assistance, professional socialization and problem-solving (Storrs et al, 2008). Mentored teachers will better understand the subject content and the teaching strategies, thus improving their own performance and that of the learners. This implies that the learners that were taught by mentored teachers passed their subjects. Mentoring takes many forms, including e-mentoring, web-based mentoring, musing or collective mentoring and peer mentoring (Ibid). Web-based and e-mentoring refers to the use of modern technology such as computers in conducting mentoring. A mentee can be mentored by a mentor at a faraway place using a computer. Musing or collective mentoring is when mentoring is done to a group of mentees such as novice teachers. Peer mentoring refers to when an individual teacher mentors and supports other teachers. However, these forms of mentoring can be applied in a formal and informal way. Crawford and Smith (2005) point out that the essence of mentoring is the development of individuals on both professional and personal levels.

Mentoring promotes teacher retention and teacher quality and it helps novice teachers to decide when to give up or give in and when to persist (Fluckiger et al, 2006). Mentored teachers usually stay in the profession while those that were not mentored usually leave the profession early (Ibid). Mentors help novice teachers to implement instructional improvements and best practice by passing on a legacy of

expertise to novice teachers. Mentors demonstrate best teaching practices for novice teachers to acquire teaching skills that will help improve their performance and that of learners. Mentoring boosts teacher performance and that of learners (Martin, 2008). As the novice teachers gain more confidence and develop more skills in the profession, their teaching in the classroom improves. Hence Starnulis et al, (2002) are of the opinion that the quality of teachers is improved by mentoring. Similarly, Storrs et al, (2002) are of the opinion that teachers' mentoring can translate into academic performance of learners. Also Sweeney (2008) notes that the ultimate purpose of mentoring programs is improvement of student learning. However, mentoring cannot accomplish that purpose if there is no agreement on what the desired student learning actually looks like. Sweeney (2008) maintains that schools that succeed at increasing student learning and achievement do so because all staff members have agreed on what the desired learning behaviors should look like in classrooms and have aligned all actions to attain that vision.

Mentoring takes place in diverse contexts, and mentoring contexts. These contexts are distinguished by their organizational, instructional and professional orientations towards teaching and mentoring (Orland-Barak and Hasin, 2010). Perspectives towards mentoring are reflected in the language that the mentor uses in order to describe his or her work and the behavior that the mentor exhibits as it plays out his or her actions (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 1985). Contexts of mentoring are diverse in their range from individual to group mentoring, from internal school-based

mentoring to external mentoring, appointed by inspectors or project leaders, and from regional mentoring according to districts to national mentoring to promote curricular reforms at national policy level (Orland-Barak and Hasin, 2010). Individual mentoring is advantageous in that it is a one-on-one activity and lack of attention can easily be detected. Group mentoring can also be advantageous in that mentees can work together as a team in solving their teaching challenges. However, controlling a group can be challenging, especially when the mentor lacks the classroom control skills. Internal school-based mentoring encourages peer mentoring where teachers of the same school mentor each other. External mentoring are usually focused and intensive and power relations are at play as this mentoring is usually done by senior people like inspectors. Regional mentoring has the same advantages as the external mentoring.

The variety of mentoring contexts created for the diverse and changing needs of particular functions and institutions raise the need to establish standards of professional conduct for the practice (Ibid). This implies that mentoring contexts differ from one another depending on the institutions where mentoring is going to take place. Orland-Barak and Hasin (2010) identify the following four different contexts of mentoring: mentoring of novice mentors of teachers, group sessions geared to prepare teachers for the passage from teaching to mentoring in the school education system. Regional mentoring, an external mentor who is responsible for an entire geographical area, both pedagogically and administratively, through workshops, lecture sessions and focused group sessions, whereby the mentor

works in one school with different groups of teachers on areas such as curriculum development, character education and languages. Subject matter mentoring, an external mentor in a particular region is responsible for disseminating reform in a particular subject matter area with groups of teachers and with novice teachers providing with individual assistance. Allen (2009) sees mentoring as a way that seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice in teacher education. Novice teachers are taught to value both theory learnt during pre-service training and practice in the workplace. Mentoring seeks to strike a balance between theory and practice. Theory learnt during teacher training is equally important as practice in the workplace.

Sweeny (2008) argues that induction and mentoring are a compelling and unavoidable strategy that schools must utilize to improve instruction and student learning. Induction refers to the activities and processes necessary to successfully induct a novice teacher into the profession and develop a skilled professional (Ibid). Mentoring can be a very powerful influence, but mentors cannot provide all the support that protégés need to every person whom they would try to help. Wong (2001) emphasizes that mentoring cannot do it all. If we expect accelerated growth of protégés and the kind of performance needed to improve student achievement, an integrated partnership of mentoring and induction is essential (Sweeny, 2008).

2.4 Mentoring and coaching

Mentoring and coaching are terms that are often used interchangeably and they differ with each other (Sweeny, 2008). These terms are used interchangeably because they are interdependent activities. Coaching is the support for technical, skill-related and growth which is provided by another person who uses observation, data collection and descriptive non-judgmental reporting on specific requested behaviors and techniques (Sweeny, 2008). Coaches must use open-ended questions to help the other person more objectively see their own patterns of behavior and to prompt reflection, goal-setting, planning and action to increase the desired results. Although not always the case, often the coaching is focused on learning job-related skills and the coaching is provided by a professional colleague.

Mentoring is the all-inclusive description of everything done to support protégé orientation and professional development (Sweeny, 2008). Coaching is one of the sets of strategies which mentors must learn and effectively use to increase their protégés' skills and success. Therefore, both mentoring and coaching are needed to maximize learning and development. Although the terms coaching and mentoring are often used interchangeably, they are different in focus and process. Coaching is much more

narrowly focused activity and a mentor may well use coaching at some point as a tool in the broader mentoring relationship.

There are two types of mentoring, namely, natural (informal) and planned (formal) mentoring (Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE), 2006). Natural (informal) mentoring is a relation that develops on its own between two people whereby one wants to professionally and personally grow (Ibid). A mentee identifies a colleague he considers to be knowledgeable and willing to assist. For the informal mentor-mentee relationship to flourish, a conducive environment must be created. Planned (formal) mentoring occurs through structured programs in which mentors and mentees are carefully selected and matched through a formal process (Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE), 2006).

Henning (2012) noted that mentoring was used to strengthen phase teacher education in South Africa. She argued that this was so as primary education in South Africa was in a crisis, particularly, learning in the foundation phase, which, as the name applies, sets the foundations for learning (Ibid). Foundation phase teachers learning at Limpopo University were mentored at the University of Johannesburg, as there was no foundation phase mentoring program at the University of Limpopo. The aim of the mentoring program was to establish and develop foundation phase teacher education and in so doing increase learning opportunities for all South Africa's young learners (Henning, 2012). Sweeny (2008) gives eleven crucial issues that mentoring and induction address:

Excellent teaching and student success

Novice teachers who had been mentored are likely going to excel in their teaching and performance of their learners will be improved. Best teachers are teachers who successfully engage their students in problem solving, critical thinking and discovery (Sweeny, 2008). Teaching and learning must be student-centered with students achieving at high levels. Similarly, Storrs et al (2008) maintains that teachers' mentoring results can translate into increased academic performance of learners. That means that learners taught by mentored teachers pass their subjects.

Unique training needs of novice teachers

Mentoring assist teachers especially novice teachers improve student achievement. This means that if novice teachers are mentored their teaching is improved resulting in students passing their subjects. Novice teachers need to be provided with follow-up support in the teacher's classroom for guided practice and correction, problem solving, adaptation, and implementation of the training in work. Novice teachers need constant in-service training when they start teaching.

A need of novice teachers in schools

Some experienced and gifted teachers are leaving without passing on their experience and wisdom. Mentoring allows capturing and sharing of the experience and wisdom that new teachers need to honor those who serve as mentors for

sharing their wisdom. This means that during mentoring the teachers share their teaching challenges.

Few of the hired novice teachers are retained

The most challenging assignments are given to novice teachers and many novices leave in the first three years and more than half of them are gone after seven years (Sweeny, 2008). Overburdened with most difficult tasks given to them, it is alleged that many novice teachers find it difficult to cope and the teaching profession. This means that novice teachers leave the profession due to work overload.

Quality mentoring and induction retain majority of novice teachers

Mentoring ensures that novice teachers have the support and guidance they deserve to quickly learn how to positively impact the success of students. Positive impact of novice teachers on students' results in them stay in the teaching profession. This implies that novice teachers do not leave the teaching profession early if they received quality mentoring and induction.

The cost of not retaining novice teachers is more than the cost of effective mentoring and induction

The huge costs of teacher attrition include finding and recruiting the novice teachers, then orienting, training, supervising, and evaluating them. Other costs are lost administrator time and loss of money in school improvement when they have to start

over. Mentoring and induction are cost effective as they save money lost every year. This implies that it is more expensive to lose teachers than to implement mentoring and induction programs.

Many schools want to become communities where everyone succeeds as a learner

Quality mentoring challenges traditional, outmoded norms and the superficial relationship of isolated professional practice. Novice teachers develop under collaborative norms in which adult learning is as frequent and expected as student learning. Mentoring provides the kind of professional relationships and the reflective and shared practice that characterize effective schools.

Not providing mentoring has a negative impact on the quality of teaching

The habits formed during the earliest years of a teacher's career lead to a disposition toward professional practice that endures throughout the teacher's professional career. A trial and error approach is ineffective and results in the adoption of coping mechanisms and teaching styles that are controlling and teacher-survival focused, rather than the student –centered approach (Sweeny, 2008). Mentoring affects teaching in that teachers that are mentored perform more than teachers who did not get mentoring.

Quality mentoring has a positive impact on novice teacher performance

Research studies provide evidence of the positive impact of mentoring and induction on the improvement of novice teacher performance (Sweeney, 2008). Similarly,

Storrs et al (2008) and Martin (2008) also note that quality mentoring results in improved teaching performance.

Quality mentoring improves the mentor's performance too.

Mentors consciously reflect on and examine their own practice as a part of the process of teaching their protégés what an expert teacher actually does. In their search for being effective models of excellence for their protégés, mentors explore and evaluate their own thinking processes and decisions (Ibid). Mentoring does not only improve the performance of the mentee, the mentor's performance is improved as well.

Schools are addressing the obstacle of time for effective mentoring

Effective mentoring is mentoring that is able to improve the quality of the novice teacher's ability to teach. At school there is usually little or no time set aside to improve the teachers' performance. Time for adult learning competes with time for student learning. Student learning prevails, and little time is left for teacher improvement because it is not built into the school day. As adult learning is the prerequisite for higher levels of student success, use of professional time in strategies such as block schedules, team planning time, and more time mentoring should be implemented.

To improve the quality of novice teacher's instruction, novice teachers must observe excellent instruction that demonstrate the desired methods, and then novices must

have intensive mentoring and support if they are to implement these methods in their work with students.

2.5 Who should be a mentor?

A mentor is therefore someone who helps another person through an important transition such as coping with a new situation like a new job or a major change in personal circumstances or in career development or personal growth (Mckim et al, 2007). This implies that a mentor helps a person in career development or personal growth. In this study, a novice teacher is helped by a mentor to become a fully-fledged teacher who is able to face teaching challenges. Even though a mentee is a new professional who is supported by an experienced worker or professional, they both need to be involved in the mentoring relationship (Ibid). Both the novice teacher and his mentor will debate what mentoring relationship will best suit their particular context, so that they have a mutual understanding and vision of their mentoring process (Mckim et al, 2007). Novice teachers learn by participating in social activities and develop their identities according to how they experience themselves and the feedback they receive from others (Wenger, 1998). As novice teachers acquire the knowledge and skills of the practice, they move to more central participation and eventually assume the role of experts (Schulze, 2009).

2.6 Characteristics of a good mentor

A good mentor would welcome the input and expertise of a mentee (Mullen and Lick, 1999). This implies that during mentoring both the mentor and the mentee must respect each other's views. Good mentors are also expert teachers with rich content, practical and pedagogical content knowledge as teachers (Orland-Barak and Hasin, 2010). Good mentors should be flexible and sensitive to task demands and to social situations surrounding them while solving problems and are challenged to reinterpret and recognize their thinking when they experience dissonance (Glaser, 1990). In their behavior, good mentors excel in a familiar domain and in particular contexts and they develop automaticity for repetitive operations needed to accomplish their goals, and can infer how to act upon new situations from previous experiences (Berliner, 2001).

The literature on mentoring focuses on characterizing good mentoring practices as related to domains of expertise, to interpersonal relationships and to knowledge development (Orland-Barak and Hasin, 2010). In regard to domains of expertise, the good mentor is seen as an expert in the specific subject matter that she/he mentors,

exhibiting a capacity to talk to the mentee about teaching subject matter in ways that connect to the mentee's context of teaching. In regard to knowledge development, good mentors are seen as sources of knowledge who can access their theoretical knowledge and translate it for mentoring purposes in order to enhance the mentee's teaching-learning processes (Roberts, 2000). In addition to subject matter knowledge, good mentors possess rich pedagogical content knowledge which enables them to represent problems in qualitatively rich and deep ways, to engage in fast and accurate pattern recognition, and bring rich, personal sources of information to bear on the problems and dilemmas that they confront (Berliner, 2001). Rich pedagogical knowledge in mentoring also entails the ability to talk about teaching in ways that connect between theory and practice, and the particular context of the mentee (Vonk, 1993).

The good mentor is also described as acting as a model of an ongoing learner who exhibits transparency, is open to learning from colleagues and new teachers, strives for professional growth, engages in development of new curricula, reads professional articles and shares his/her new knowledge with others (Rowley, 1999). Good mentors encourage processes rather than solely products of learning, stressing collaboration over time between mentor and mentee and focusing on the social and professional change in the teacher (Feiman-Nemser, 2001b). Good mentors also provide mentees with learning opportunities in order to foster their professional development and their teaching capacities (Tomlinson, 2001). In this respect, interpersonal relationships based on trust, collaboration, caring, support and mutual recognition are also considered core to the work of the mentor (McIntyre, 1996).

Good mentoring practices also entail mentor's awareness and understanding of the dynamics of power relationships within the new accountabilities, acting as activist professionals (Sachs, 2000). Mentors, thus, need to have a clear vision of what being and behaving as a good professional in changing classrooms, schools, policy and societal contexts means. Good mentors function as role models of different behaviors with qualities and techniques which, through observation of the mentee's actions, can lead to the latter's autonomy (Daloz, 1983). Hence, an important aspect of a good mentoring conversation is the capacity of the mentor to challenge the mentee with reflective questions (Collins and Edwards, 1996). Kent et al, (2009) point out that highly qualified mentors are associated with an increase in student achievement, improved student behavior and greater teacher enthusiasm.

2.7 Exploring a mentoring relationship

A novice teacher and a mentor have to establish a particular relationship based on mutual understanding and trust during mentoring. Relationships are a major source of learning and people do much of their learning through connection with other people (Chutterbuck, 2005). Involved individuals must have a desire and competence to learn. There must be a mentor-mentee relationship which requires the competence by mentees and mentors to create a trustworthy relationship. Competence is the consistent

observable and measurable ability to perform a defined task or an element of a task (Chutterbuck, 2005).

In a mentoring relationship, the mentor and the mentee make a real connection with each other and it is a powerful and emotional relationship (Mckim, 2007). The two people, the mentor and the mentee, form a bond, built on mutual trust and respect, openness and honesty where each party can be themselves. If bonding does not occur and one or both of the two parties are not comfortable within the relationship then neither learning nor mentoring will be sustained (Mckim, 2007).

Kram (1983), Hay (1995), Johnson (2007) and Steiman (2006) agree that mentoring should be done in phases; however, they differ in the number of phases. Kram (1983) suggests five phases of mentoring, namely, rapport building, the directing setting phase, progress-making, winding down and moving on or professional relationship. In rapport building, the mentor and the mentee decide whether or not they want to work with each other. They negotiate how their relationship will be conducted, and what each expects of the other. During direction setting phase, a mentor and the mentee achieve clarity about what each aims to achieve from the relationship and how. Target may be set for the mentee and goals may change with circumstances or as they are achieved and replaced with new ones. During progress-making, the mentor has to guide and support the mentee during the mentoring meetings. Winding down occurs when it becomes obvious that the time has come for the mentee to leave the mentor. The moving on or professional relationship is when the relationship turns into a less committed and becomes more casual.

Hay (1995, p10) gives four stages of the mentoring process which can be identified as follows:

Stage 1 – Initiation, orientation or courtship stage.

Stage 2 – Getting established adolescence, dependency, nurturing or honeymoon stage.

Stage 3 – Maturing, developing independence or autonomy stage.

Stage 4 – Ending, termination or divorce.

Stage 1 (Initiation, orientation or courtship stage)

This stage is about creating an alliance and consists of preparing for the relationship, forming a bond and agreeing on a contract. Lewis (1996) suggests that this stage is about establishing rapport and trust (forming the bond), terms of reference and setting objectives (contracting). The significance of rapport and trust is the creation of a close relationship between the mentor and mentee. Before bonding takes place, both the mentor and the mentee, are to be nervous and unsure (Lewis, 1996). It is important to break the ice and establish rapport. Rapport is established more quickly if individuals behave as if it has already been established (Hay, 1995). Contracting is a way of negotiating a learning agreement or framework for the relationship (Mckim et al, 2007). Contracting adds to the quality of the interaction and ensures that the mentor and the mentee are clear about the purpose of the mentoring scheme and what is likely to happen.

Stage 2 (getting established, adolescence, dependency, nurturing or honeymoon stage)

In this stage the mentees may be anxious and lacking in self confidence. The mentee needs friendly support, a safe and secure environment and help to identify and reflect on learning. Hay (1995) suggests that stage 2 involves helping the mentees to tell their story or narrative. The mentee tells the mentor what he or she expects and also informs the mentor about his or her teaching challenges so that he or she can get help. According to Lewis (1996) stage 2 is characterized by the following:

The development of an honest, trusting, sincere relationship based on open communication, a focus on learning and growth, getting to grips with business matters and moving from plans to real outcomes.

Stage 3 (maturing, developing independence or autonomy stage)

Here the mentor is facilitating deeper learning by encouraging the mentee to reflect, to see things differently. The mentee tells the mentor the areas he or she has improved on and also informs the mentor about areas that need more attention. Furthermore during this stage the mentor has to identify potential changes the mentee might wish to make, possible goals the mentee might wish to adopt and a wider range of alternative options that are available. The mentor will encourage the mentee to be innovative and creative.

Stage 4 (ending, termination or divorce stage)

During this stage the mentoring relationship comes to a premature end or terminate naturally. Mentoring terminates prematurely in that the mentee is not aware when

mentoring is to come to an end. If mentoring is well planned, the mentor knows when mentoring is to come to an end and it gradually comes to an end.   The ending of the mentoring relationship needs to be carefully planned so that the reliance and the habit of the relationship can be wound down gradually to try and avoid the relationship just ceasing (Lewis, 1996). Partners will have to ensure that agreed tasks are completed and consider if there is any unfinished business to be dealt with and if so, how this will be tackled.

In South Africa formal mentoring relationships generally last between eighteen months and three years and progress through four overlapping stages as follows (Johnson, 2007 ; Steiman, 2006):

Phase one (intimate dependence) –This phase is characterized by the mentee's dependence on the mentor. Mentors need skills such as listening, sensitivity towards race and gender, as well as have the time to be available to the mentees.

Phase two (familiarization) – Mentors deliberately spend time with their mentees to become acquainted with them, to appreciate their unique abilities and to clarify expectations. Trust is important in this phase.

Phase three (confidence building) – When mentees experiment creatively and successfully, their professional identities develop accordingly. To facilitate this, mentors share their knowledge and provide quality feedback.

Phase four (weaning, separation and redefinition) – During this phase, the mentees exhibit independent behavior, take the initiative and demonstrate accountability. Interaction becomes less and the relationship becomes more collegial.

The phases and the stages are related. In stage 1 and phase one, a relationship has not yet been established between a mentor and a mentee. During stage 2 and phase two, the mentor and the mentee spend some time together so as to establish a relationship. The mentee tells the mentor about his expectations and the teaching challenges. During stage 3 and phase three, the mentee becomes innovative and creative. In stage 4 and phase four, the mentee shows independent behavior.

2.8 Essential concepts for the mentoring program's success

Sweeny (2008) suggests that there are three essential concepts for the mentoring program's success: mentoring program must have all the needed program components, each component must be working at a best practice level, and the way in which each component's activities is conducted should develop synergy among parts.

The Program Must Have All the Right Program Components

All the stages of mentoring must be continuous and accelerate growth.

Each Component Must Be Working at a Best Practice Level

Every mentoring program component must be conducted in such a way that it gets maximum impact from every activity and explains how to evaluate and diagnose any problems when things do not work as expected.

Conduction of Each Component's Activities Should Develop Synergy

Synergy is an almost magical result in which there is a multiplying effect within the mentoring program. Synergy happens when each program piece plays its part in the developmental sequence and does what it can to set up other program pieces to succeed. Sweeny (2008) gives seven examples of potential synergic results of mentoring: Mentor's own learning will increase and their teaching will improve. Principals will report that protégés are attaining the levels of practice in one year that used to take most teachers three years to teach. Guides who first refuse to become mentors will volunteer to become mentors later. The quality of the new staff will improve, exceeding what mentoring alone could have caused. Principals will report that their interaction with teachers during supervisory evaluation conferences has improved. Positive teacher leadership in schools will become more common. Teachers will discover that "Great mentoring is also great teaching", and will use mentoring strategies with their students, leading to better results.

2.9 Challenges to mentoring

Mentoring can be detrimental to the mentor, mentee or both, if there is a lack of time for mentoring , poor planning of the mentoring process, unsuccessful matching of the mentors and mentees, a lack of understanding about the mentoring process, and lack of access to mentors from minority groups (Long, 1997). Mentoring can also

cause problems to an organization if there is insufficient funding or termination of funding before the program is established. Other challenges of mentoring include problems when there is a lack of support, difficulties in coordinating programs within organizational initiatives, and costs and resources associated with mentoring (Douglas, 1987).

Many past mentor programs have failed after having been implemented too quickly, with mentors having no standards for modeling appropriate practices and no plans for evaluating student performance (Kent et al, 2009). If mentor programs are to be effective, they must combine the best aspects of teaching strategies from both the past and the present. Mentor teachers must therefore understand and be able to relate important long term professional goals to novice teachers. Many teacher preparation programs overindulge student teachers in the latest theories behind education, leadership, and instruction (Kent et al, 2009). Teacher education programs must prepare novice teachers to meet the challenges of students and provide them with a comprehensive induction program that emphases, through hands-on field experience, methods of best practice for meeting the needs of all students. By providing intensive mentoring by exemplary mentor teachers will better prepare novice teachers for the teaching profession.

2.10   Importance of mentoring

Both the mentee and the mentors benefit from mentoring. The benefits for mentees are career advancement and psychosocial support such as encouragement, friendship and advice and feedback on performance. People who experienced mentoring are happier with work and are likely to mentor others (Ehric, Hansford and Tennent, 2004). Mentors play a significant role in teaching, inducting, and developing the skills and talents of mentees. Ehric et al (2004) suggests that mentoring enables potential learning and growth of the mentees. However, Mckim (2007) argues that neither learning nor mentoring can be successful if one or both, the mentee and the mentor, are not comfortable within the mentoring relationship. Other benefits of mentoring include increased productivity, improved recruitment efforts, motivation of teachers and enhancement of services offered by the school (Murray and Owen, 1991). Not only the mentee and the mentor benefit from mentoring, the school as a whole also benefits. An important benefit a good mentoring program can produce is a measurable decrease in teacher attrition (Martin, 2008).

Storrs et al (2007) argues that individuals regardless of whether they were in the role of protégé or mentor often experienced a gap in what they expected to experience in the mentoring relationship and what they actually experienced. Protégés enter the mentoring program with more formal, hierarchical expectations that centered on transmission than their mentors, perhaps a reflection of their status as students. Mentoring relationship is informal and has relational experiences with the mentors. Crawford and Smith (2005) maintain that mentoring relationships carry a sense of reciprocity in that the mentee seeks guidance and support that the mentor provides.

Orientation sessions help to achieve more successful mentoring relationships and clarify values, goals, and expectations. Novice teachers should reflect on their own schema about mentoring and share their own mentoring expectations. Helping novice teachers reflect on their own schema about mentoring is a first step towards success. The mentor and the mentee should share their mentoring assumptions with one another at their first formal meeting as a way to get acquainted and align expectations, explore and compare possibilities and even anticipate some disconnect between expectations and experience. Other protégés have an interdependent expectation and view themselves working together collectively towards a common goal with the mentor. Both mentors and protégés support and learn from one another. Mentors are teachers, yet they are also students, learning from and with their protégés and others (Hansman, 2009).

Hansman (2009) points out that a healthy relationship between the mentor and the protégé is essential. He identifies the following three key ethical issues: do not harm, communicate honestly and examine power and privilege. Doing no harm to, or protecting a protégé means doing some perceived harm to someone else, as in publicly challenging insensitive or even libelous speech. To communicate honestly is when the mentor and the protégé clearly and openly define their relationship and discuss the desired roles, goals, and outcomes of their association. Such clear communication may not be easy in the early stages of a relationship, when trust is less developed or information somewhat tentative. In examining power and privilege, mentors should

carefully consider how their power can be helpful or hurtful in their work with protégés. Mentors should use their power in positive actions for the good of their protégés.

Stanulis and Russel (1999) also emphasize the importance of establishment of a sound working relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Mentoring relationships are constructed around the mentee's needs in three broad areas: pedagogical issues, the school environment, and professional requirements. Classroom management and organization are cited as the most important in the mentoring relationship (Stansbury and Zimmerman, 2000). Patton (2009) points out that women have a more difficult time establishing mentoring relationships in comparison to their male counterparts. Women tend to feel comfortable with having women mentors and are more appreciative of these relationships. They expect mentors to be experienced people who can provide support, trust and opportunities.

Although there are valid and beneficial ways during mentoring to help novice teachers assimilate to a new environment, the absence of student-related issues is striking (Rishel, 2006). Rishel (2006) has a view that mentoring involves a relationship focused mainly on the technical side of teaching, the 'how to's' of running a classroom and fitting into the professional environment. Stansburg and Zimmerman (2000) found that beginning teachers reported feeling that their greatest challenges, aside from classroom management, were motivation of students, dealing with the individual differences among students, assessing student work, and relations with parents. Clearly, novice teachers are at least concerned with how best to interact with their students as they are with how to hone their professional and technical skills. Mentor training programs are

skewed towards meeting the needs of new teachers academically, professionally, and socially (Rishel, 2006). The needs of students are barely touched on, and or no attention is devoted to helping novice teachers to learn about the sociological, cultural and emotional dynamics at work within the classroom. Perry (2000) describes mentoring relationships as focused more on the self-growth of the mentor.

Simion (2003) offers a Christian viewpoint that mentoring is not just a means of achieving institutional goals but also an expression of the Christian virtues, especially practical wisdom, love , hospitality, conviction, and humility. These virtues seek the flourishing of others. This wish to add value to others' lives and help shape future generations has also been noted by other authors such as Steiman (2006). When mentoring, the mentor turns from the self towards others and thus moves towards the healthy resolution of the seventh stage of psychosocial development, generatively, which is in contrast to self-absorption and stagnation (Cunningham, 1999). Gazza (2004) stresses that it is not enough to say that a mentoring program is in place; the institutions must collect and review evidence regarding the effectiveness of mentoring programs.

Mentoring leads to the retention of teachers and effective teaching (Martin, 2008). High quality mentoring saves money by keeping more new teachers in the profession. Mentoring schemes result in improved effectiveness of organizations and individuals (Mckim, 2007). Mentoring boosts novice teachers' performance and that of their students. Martin, 2008, argues that not all mentoring programs gave the same success

in creating high-achieving teachers and students in a short time. Only mentoring programs that have high history of proven results should be chosen and implemented. Mentors bring a wealth of guidance, experience, and support to a novice teacher.

Mentoring programs also benefit the schools as organizations. Sweeny (2008) gives the following five areas addressed by mentoring: Increased retention of new employees and the associated cost savings, bringing new employees up to the level of veteran employees regarding knowledge of and commitment to organizational mission, initiatives, and expectations, accelerated learning curves for new employees. Improved job performance of both protégés and their mentors and increased bottom line results, like student achievement, that the Department of Education needs.

2.11 Conclusion

Mentoring is a complex process that is helpful to schools as it helps in retaining novice teachers. Learning achievements by students are also improved. The mentoring process has phases and stages which can be followed to achieve successful teaching results. Mentoring has advantages and disadvantages, with advantages outweighing the disadvantages.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the methods and methodology that were used in this study. This study is a qualitative study whose aim was to explore the perceptions and the experiences of the selected teachers on the mentoring of novice teachers received. The research questions this study focused on are:

The main research question:

What are the teachers' perceptions on the mentoring of novice teachers?

The sub-questions:

- What are the teachers' explanations of mentoring?

- What do teachers think are the importance of mentoring?

- How do the teachers experience mentoring at school level?

- How do the teachers experience mentoring at District level?

As this chapter explores research methodology and methods used in the study, it is therefore proper to explain the term methodology. The term methodology refers to frameworks for the conduct of a project (Freebody, 2003). It indicates the way data gathering was conducted. This chapter indicates that data gathering techniques include interviews and documents analysis, guided by the research approach chosen by the researcher. In this study the researcher adopted a qualitative approach and used phenomenological interviews and documents analysis as instruments to gather data. Furthermore, this chapter shows that qualitative data analysis procedures will be used in this study. This chapter is structured as follows:

3.2 Research Approach

3.3 Research paradigm

3.4 Research design

3.4.1 Case Study

3.4.2 The phenomenology design

3.5 Data collection techniques

3.5.1 In-depth interviews

3.5.2 Documentary analysis

3.6 Sample and sampling

3.7 Negotiating access to the research site

3.8 How were data collected?

3.8.1 Conducting the pilot study

3.8.2 Conducting the main study

3.9 Data analysis

3.10 Interpretive phenomenological analysis

3.11 Ethical considerations

3.11.1 Voluntary participation

3.11.2 Honesty and openness

3.11.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

3.11.4 Debriefing

3.11.5 The right to privacy

3.12 Conclusion

The next section explores the research approach applied in this study.

3.2   RESEARCH APPROACH: QUALITATIVE APPROACH

Literature mostly refers to two main research approaches, the qualitative and the

quantitative approach. The terms quantitative and qualitative are used frequently to

identify different approaches to research (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). The most

obvious distinction between quantitative and qualitative research is the form of data

presentation they use. For instance, the quantitative research presents statistical results

presented with numbers, while qualitative research presents its research data and

results mostly by means of facts in a narration with words. Qualitative research designs

are less structured than quantitative ones (Ibid). In a qualitative design the specific

procedures are identified during the research rather than specified ahead of time.

Qualitative research is also distinguished by using a case study design, in which a

single 'case' is studied in depth (McMillan and Schumacher (1993). This could be an

individual, one group of students, school, a program, or a concept. The purpose is to

understand the person(s) or phenomena. Qualitative designs investigate behavior as it

occurs naturally in noncontrived situations, and there is no manipulation of conditions or

experience (Ibid). Qualitative data consists of words in the form of rich verbal

descriptions, rather than numbers.

Qualitative research approach is the approach that was selected for this study. This

approach was relevant as this study aims to obtain rich data and thick descriptive

accounts of the teachers' perceptions of the mentoring program received. These were

gathered through collecting data in the form of verbal reports such as such as written

accounts and interview transcripts and the analysis then conducted on these is linguistic

and textual in nature (Smith and Dunworth, 2003). In this study novice teachers and

their principals were interviewed so that they give their own account of their perceptions and experiences on mentoring. The interviews were tape-recorded and the interview transcripts were analyzed in a linguistic and textual way.

Qualitative analysis is concerned with interpreting what a piece of text means and the interpretation is then conveyed through detailed narrative reports of participants' perceptions, understandings or accounts of a phenomenon (Smith and Dunworth, 2003). By analyzing the data obtained from the interview transcripts, the researcher wants to understand the phenomenon of mentoring. For qualitative research, language is important as it is a fundamental property of human communication, interpretation and understanding (Smith and Dunworth, 2003).In conducting the interviews, the researcher uses a language in which the respondents are comfortable with so as to get response and data.

Qualitative approaches are generally engaged with exploring, describing and understanding the personal and social experiences of participants and trying to capture the meanings that particular phenomena hold for them (Smith and Dunworth, 2003). This means that qualitative researchers aim at understanding a phenomenon and then describe it in detail. In qualitative research, an attempt is usually made to understand a small number of participants' lived experience or views of the world (Smith and Dunworth, 2003). In this study a sample of teachers representing the whole population

was selected and interviewed. Their accounts was used to represent the whole population of teachers in the selected contexts.

Qualitative approaches are particularly useful when the topic under investigation is complex, dilemmatic, novel or under-researched and where there is a concern with understanding a process (Smith and Dunworth, 2003). In this study the researcher investigated a complex phenomenon of mentoring. This topic is complex in that it may be understood, perceived and experienced differently by different respondents who are in different or even in the same context.

The main focus of qualitative research is to understand the ways in which people act and account for these actions (Gray, 2004). The qualitative research approach is appropriate because the researcher wanted to understand the mentoring experiences of novice teachers. The qualitative approach is characterized by a concern to the individual (Cohen and Manion, 2009). The approach seeks to understand the subjective world of human experience. To retain the integrity of the phenomena being investigated, efforts are made to get inside the person and to understand from within. Hence in this study the researcher strived to gain the trust of the respondents so that they could explain their social world as they experienced it. As a result qualitative research resists the imposition of external form and structure (Ibid).

Qualitative research approach focuses on action, and actions are only meaningful if they are shared (Cohen and Manion, 2009).In this study, the novice teachers will share their mentoring perceptions and experiences at their respective schools with the researcher. A great deal of our everyday interactions with one another relies on shared experiences (Ibid). Qualitative research approach begins with the individual and sets out to understand his interpretations around him.

In qualitative research, meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world (Merriam, 2002). Unlike positivist qualitative research, the world or reality is not fixed, instead, there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that change over time (Ibid). In this study, the phenomenon of mentoring was interpreted in order to understand the meanings attached to it by the respondents. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding what those interpretations are at a particular point in time and in a particular context (Merriam, 2002). Learning how individuals experience and interact with their social world, the meaning it has for them, is called interpretive qualitative approach (Ibid).

The product of a qualitative research is richly descriptive, with words and pictures rather numbers used to convey what the researcher has learned about the phenomenon (Merriam, 2002). The descriptions of the context, the participants involved and the activities of interest are explained. Data in the form of quotes from documents, field notes, and participant interviews, excerpts from video tapes, electronic communication,

or a combination thereof are included in support of the findings of the study. These quotes and excerpts contribute to the descriptive nature of qualitative research.

Cohen and Manion (2009, p23) give the following advantages of the qualitative approach:

- The qualitative researcher has the power to visit the subjects in their natural habit.

- Qualitative research typically reads like a story written in everyday language; Qualitative research describes everyday life from the point of view of the subjects;

- Qualitative research does not involve numbers, figures, and inferential statistics;

- Data collection is less structured than quantitative research; data collection has characteristics of flexibility, spontaneity, and open-endedness;

- The researcher becomes personally involved and minimally disrupts the natural setting and group being studied;

- By triangulation, the qualitative researcher acquires different perceptions of the same subject interviewed;

- Qualitative data is more detailed and less distorted than those of other research methods;

- Qualitative research is the only feasible way to gather data from subjects who would otherwise avoid known researchers or behave artificially in the face of reactive methods.

Cohen and Manion (2009, p.24) identify the following disadvantages of the qualitative approach:

- While it is undeniable that the understanding of the actions of people necessarily requires knowledge of their intentions, it cannot be said to comprise the purpose of a social science;

- Anti-positivists have gone too far in abandoning scientific procedures of verification and in giving up hope of discovering useful generalization about behavior;

- Qualitative research approach has a relative neglect of the power of external-structural forces to shape behavior.

- Argyl (1978) questions whether, if carefully controlled interviews such as those in social survey are accurate, then the less controlled interviews carry even greater risks of inaccuracy.

- Bernstein (1974) suggests that subjective reports may be incomplete and misleading.

The researcher responded to these disadvantages of qualitative approach by ensuring reliability and validity. Reliability in qualitative research includes fidelity to real life, context and situation-specificity, authenticity, comprehensiveness, detail, honesty, depth

of response and meaningfulness to the respondents (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2002). Qualitative reliability also includes the uniqueness of situations such that the study cannot be replicated. The sources of bias are the characteristics of the interviewer, the characteristics of the respondents and the substantive content of the questions (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2002). Race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, status, social class and age are other sources of bias.

To understand and make sense of phenomena from the participant's perspective, the researcher can approach the phenomenon from an interpretive, critical or postmodern stance. In this study, interpretive qualitative research has been chosen by the researcher as the study seeks to understand the phenomenon, mentoring perceptions and experiences of novice teachers. The next section explores the research paradigm used in this study.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM: INTERPRETIVIST PARADIGM

Interpretive paradigm involves taking people's subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them (ontology), making sense of people's experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell us (epistemology) and making use of qualitative research techniques to collect and analyse information (methodology) (Terre Blanche et al, 2006). Thus the interpretive approach does not focus on isolating and controlling variables, but on harnessing and extending the power

of ordinary language and expression to help us understand the social world we live in. Interpretive paradigm is sometimes referred to as the phenomenological paradigm.

In interpretive qualitative research, the researcher strives to understand the meaning people have constructed about their world and their experiences. The relevance of this paradigm in this study is that this study aimed to understand the meanings attached by the respondents on mentoring. Patton (1985, p.1) notes that interpretive qualitative research "is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting – what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what's going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting…. The analysis strives for depth of understanding." This study also aimed at understanding mentoring from the point of view of the respondents.

In interpretive qualitative research, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis (Ibid). Since understanding is the goal of this research, the human instrument, which is able to be immediately responsive and adaptive, would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analysing data (Merriam, 2002). The researcher can also expand his or her understanding through nonverbal as well as verbal communication, process data immediately, clarify and summarise material, check with respondents for accuracy of interpretation, and explore unusual or unanticipated responses. In this study the researcher organized the interviews in the two schools

selected. The researcher also conducted the interviews and collected the data from the respondents. After the data was collected, it was analysed by the researcher.

Qualitative researchers often undertake a qualitative study because there is a lack of theory or an existing theory fails to adequately explain a phenomenon (Merriam, 2002). Qualitative research process is inductive, with researchers gathering data to build concepts, hypotheses, or theories rather than deductively deriving postulates or hypotheses to be tested as in positivist quantitative research. In attempting to understand the meaning of a phenomenon, qualitative researchers build toward theory from observations and intuitive understandings gleaned from being in the field. Findings inductively derived from the data in a qualitative study are in the form of themes, categories, typologies, concepts, tentative hypotheses, and even substantive theory (Merriam, 2002).

There are certain principles, skills and techniques developed by social scientists working in interpretive tradition. Terre Blanche et al (2006) noted that interpretive research involves understanding in context and it positions the researcher as the primary instrument by means of which information is collected and analysed. In social sciences, meaning of human creations, words, actions, and experiences can only be ascertained in relation to the contexts in which they occur (Ibid). Faced with the texts, social scientists usually deem the task of understanding to involve 'recontextualisation',

That is, the text is placed back in its context and it is then easily understood. Social scientists imagine and try to understand texts in their context, both personal and societal contexts. The principle of understanding in context is sometimes referred to as 'empathic reliving' simply 'empathy', meaning to imagine and try to understand texts in their contexts (Terre Blanche et al (2006). Interpretive paradigm is committed to understanding human phenomena in context, as they are lived, using context-derived terms and categories and the development of methodologies for understanding human phenomena in context. This study seeks to understand the mentoring of novice teachers in schools. The schools form the context from which the researcher wanted to understand mentoring of novice teachers.

In basic interpretive qualitative study, the researcher is interested in understanding how participants make meaning of a situation or phenomenon. This meaning is mediated through the researcher as instrument, the strategy is inductive, and the outcome is descriptive (Ibid). In basic interpretive qualitative study, the researcher seeks to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved, or a combination of these. Data are collected through interviews, observations, or document analysis. The data are analysed to identify patterns or common themes that cut across the data. A rich, descriptive account of the findings is presented and discussed using references to the literature that formed the study in the first place (Merriam, 2002). This study used interviews and document analysis to collect

data. The data collected was presented, analysed and discussed as findings. Literature was also used as reference.

Interpretive research also requires special skills, which, while derived from everyday skills such as looking, listening and speaking, need to be developed in particular ways in order to become research skills (Ibid). As a result when conducting this study, the researcher relied heavily on listening, speaking and looking as the respondents sharing their social worlds with him. Hence Terre Blanche et al (2006) note that in interpretive research, the researcher is the primary instrument for both collecting and analysing data. Interpretive researchers need to learn to listen, to look, to question and to interpret. Another skill required of interpretive researchers is to describe and interpret their own presence appropriately in a research study (Ibid). In interpretive research, subjective bias is not considered the enemy of truth, as is the case with positivist research, but the very thing that makes it possible for us to understand personal and social realities empathically. In reporting on interpretive research, noted Terre Blanche et al (2006) the challenge is then is how the researcher used his or her subjective capacities, and where he or she may have lacked the necessary empathic understanding to make proper sense of the phenomena being studied. The following section explores the research design used in the study.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study made use of two research designs. These are case study and phenomenology designs as discussed in the next two sections.

3.4.1 CASE STUDY

This study used a case study design. A case study is an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as an individual, group, institution, or community (Merriam, 2002). In this study the researcher investigated the phenomenon of mentoring as a unit of analysis. The case is a bounded, integrated system. This refers to the boundary between the case and the context. Punch (2005), notes that the boundaries between the case and the context are not clearly evident but the researcher identified and described the boundaries of the case as clearly as possible.

The case study approach seeks to describe the phenomenon in depth by concentrating on a single phenomenon or entity (case). The unit of analysis, not the topic of investigation, characterizes a case study. For it to be a case study, one particular bounded system, is elected because it is typical, unique, experimental or highly successful, would be the unit of analysis. In the study, the novice teachers was the case study.

Since it is the unit of analysis that determines whether a study is a case study, this type of qualitative research stands apart from other types of qualitative research (Merriam, 2002). Since it is the unit of analysis that defines the case, other types of studies can be and sometimes are combined with the case study. Ethnographic case studies are an example, wherein the culture of a particular social group is studied in depth. In this study, the researcher combined a case study and the phenomenology designs to explore the novice teachers' perceptions of the mentoring program. The next sub-section explores phenomenology design used in this study.

3.4.2 THE PHENOMENOLOGY DESIGN

A phenomenological study focuses on the essence or structure of an experience (Merriam, 2002). Phenomenologists are interested in showing how complex meanings are built out of simple units of direct experience. This research design attempts to deal with inner experiences unprobed in everyday life. Phenomenological research design is based on the assumption that there is an essence or essences to shared experience (Patton, 1990). The experiences of different people are bracketed, analysed, and compared to identify the essences of the phenomenon, for example, the essence of mentoring. In order to understand the essence or structure of an experience, the researcher temporarily has to put aside, or 'bracket', personal attitudes or beliefs about the phenomenon. With belief temporarily suspended, consciousness becomes heightened, allowing the researcher to see the essence of the phenomenon.

Phenomenology is a research design chosen for this study as the study investigated

the experiences and perceptions of novice teachers. Phenomenology is a theoretical

point of view that advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value, and one

which sees behavior as determined by the phenomena of experience rather than by

external, objective and physically described reality (Cohen et al, 2007).

 Phenomenologists are concerned with interpretive practice and share a set of

subjective assumptions about the nature of lived experience and social order. It is a

family of qualitative approaches concerned with reality and constitutes interpretive

practice (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). Phenomenologists differ among themselves on

consciousness but agree on a belief in the importance of subjective consciousness, an

understanding of consciousness as active, and a claim that there are certain essential

structures to consciousness of which we gain direct knowledge by a certain kind of

reflection (Ibid).

There are various strands of development in the phenomenological movement, for

example, the transcendental phenomenology of Hursserl, and existential

phenomenology of Shutz. Husserl (1970) was concerned with investigating the source of the foundation of science and with questioning the commonsense and assumptions of everyday life. Hursserl set up a new way in the analyses of consciousness by looking beyond the details of everyday life to the essences underlying them (Hurssel, 1970). He exhorts researchers to put the world in brackets or free themselves from usual ways of perceiving the world. Consciousness is reduced until there are three elements left, namely, the 'I' who thinks, and the intentional objects of these mental acts (Cohen et al, 2007). Husserl (1970) maintained that the relation between perception and its objects was not passive. He argued that human consciousness actively constitutes the objects of experience. This study seeks to understand mentoring experiences and perceptions of teachers in their schools. The teachers gave their own views on the understanding of mentoring in their schools.

Stressing the constitutive nature of consciousness and interaction, Schutz (1964) argued that the social sciences should focus on the ways that the life world is produced and experienced by members. He defines the life world as the experiential world every person takes for granted. Schutz (1970) also brings in the idea of natural attitude in which the persons assume that the life world exists before they are present and will be there after they depart. Schutz (1970) suggests the bracketing of the life world when doing social research. Bracketing refers to setting aside or suspending all judgements about the nature and essence of things ad events. The researcher must focus on the ways in which members of the life world themselves interpretively produce the recognizable, intelligible forms they treat as real. Schutz (1970) also noted that an

individual approaches the life world with a stock of knowledge composed of common sense constructs and categories that are social in origin. These images, theories, ideas, values, and attitudes are applied to aspects of experience, making them meaningful. Stocks of knowledge are resources with which persons interpret experience, grasp the intentions and motivations of others, achieve intersubjective understandings, and coordinate actions (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). Accounts that were given the teachers on mentoring helped the researcher to better understand the teachers' perceptions and experiences of mentoring.

Schutz (1970) also brings in the idea of typification in which stocks of knowledge produce a familiar world, one which members seem to be acquainted. Typifications make it possible to account for experience, rendering things and occurrences recognizable as being of a particular type or realm. Typifications are also indeterminate, adaptable, and modifiable. Schutz (1970) argued that language is the central medium for transmitting typifications and thereby meaning. The essential task of language is to convey information to describe reality and words can be seen as the constitutive building blocks for everyday reality (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). The teachers were interviewed by the researcher in their schools. They freely gave their accounts about mentoring without being forced to do so.

Schutz (1970) also maintained that our taken for granted use of language and typifications creates a sense that the life world is substantial and is always there. People assume that others experience the world basically in the way we do, and that we can therefore understand one another in our dealings in and with the life world. People take

our subjectivity for granted, overlooking its constitutive character, presuming that we intersubjectively share the same reality (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). Schutz's social phenomenology aimed for a social science that would interpret and explain human action and thought through descriptions in the natural attitude.

Schutz (1970) was concerned with the problem of understanding the meaning structure of the world of everyday life. He related Hursserl's ideas to the issues of sociology and to the scientific study of behavior. The origin of meaning is an unbroken stream of lived experiences which have no meaning in them. Meaning can be found by a process of turning back on oneself and looking at what has been going on. Meaning can be found by the concept of reflexivity depending on the people identifying the purpose or goal they seek. To understand the behavior of others is dependent on a process of typification by means of which the observer makes use of concepts resembling 'ideal types' to make sense of what people do. The concepts are derived from daily life experiences and everyday world is classified and organized through them. The knowledge of the everyday world inheres in social order and the world itself is socially ordered. Everyday knowledge used to typify other people's behavior and come to terms with social reality varies from situation to situation. Existential phenomenology of Schutz is chosen in this study as the researcher seeks to understand the everyday mentoring experiences of novice teachers. The teachers were asked to reflect on their mentoring experiences. By reflecting on their experiences, the teachers were able to give meaning to their experiences.

Phenomenological paradigm is also sometimes referred to as the interpretive paradigm (Terre Blanche et al, 2006). In interpretive research, there is interaction with people in naturalistic, everyday settings. However, interpretive research requires special skills which need to be developed in a particular way into research skills. To do better in interpretive research, a person has to undergo some personal change and become an interpretive researcher. Skills such as listening and interpreting have to be developed. Another skill required of interpretive researchers is to describe and interpret their own presence appropriately in the research study.

Terre Blanche et al (2006) argue that in interpretive research, subjectivity is not considered the enemy of truth, but the very thing that makes it possible for us to understand personal and social realities emphatically. They further note that, in reporting on interpretive research, the challenge then becomes to show how one used one's subjective capacities, and where one may have lacked the necessary emphatic understanding to make proper sense of the phenomena being studied. Interpretive paradigm involves taking people's subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them (ontology), making sense of people's experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell us (epistemology), and making use of qualitative research techniques to collect and analyse information (methodology) (Terre Blanche et al(2006). Thus the interpretive approach does not focus on isolating and controlling variables, but on harnessing and extending the power of ordinary language and expression to help us understand the social word we live in. The researcher wanted to understand the mentoring experiences of novice teachers. The researcher listened to

the respondents' accounts on mentoring and excluded his own understanding of mentoring.

In phenomenological design research studies, the phenomenological method of deriving knowledge forms a central part of transcendental phenomenology (Willig, 2001). Husserl (1970) suggested that it was possible to transcend presuppositions and biases and describe phenomena as they present themselves to us. Husserl (1970) identified a series of steps to extract essences that give the phenomena their unique character. Knowledge derived would be free from common-sense notions, scientific explanations and other interpretations or abstractions that characterize most other forms of understanding. The researcher made use of these steps in trying to extract information during data collection.

Imaginative variation involves an attempt to access the structural components of the phenomenon (Ibid). Imaginative variation is concerned with 'how' the experience is made possible, that is its structure. Phenomenological reduction is concerned with 'what' is experienced, that is its texture. Textural and structural descriptions are integrated to arrive at an understanding of the essence of the phenomenon. The experience of mentoring is made possible by a need to assist novice teachers to overcome the teaching challenges. Consequently, mentoring of novice teachers becomes a necessity. The next section explores the data collection techniques used in this study.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

There are three major sources of data for a qualitative research study, namely, observations, documents, and interviews (Merriam, 2002). The data collection strategy is determined by the question of the study and by determining which source(s) of data will yield the best information with which to answer the question. Often there is a primary method of collecting data with support from another and sometimes only one method is used (Merriam, 2002).

Qualitative data collection techniques collect data in the form of words rather than numbers (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). These include in-depth verbal description of phenomena. The examples of such qualitative data collection techniques include observations, interviews and documents. The benefit of these techniques is that they provide verbal descriptions and can be directly linked to the goal of qualitative research, which is to capture the richness and complexity of behavior that occurs in natural settings from the participant's perspective (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). Once collected, the data are organized inductively to generate findings.

During observation, the phenomena are observed in naturally occurring situations over an extended time and writing extensive notes to describe what happened (Ibid). Since the context of observations is important, the observer is careful to document his or her

role in the situation and what effect that may have on the findings. Hence reflexivity is an important aspect of qualitative research.

Interviews are often characterized as unstructured or in-depth interviews. The interviewer may use general interview guide but not a set of specific questions worded precisely the same for every interviewee. Often the researcher will tape the interviews and transcribe the tapes to analyse common themes or results.

Documents are records of past events that are written or printed (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). They may be letters, diaries, tax records and receipts, maps, journals, newspapers, court records, official minutes, regulations, laws and the like. Historical, legal, and some policy-making studies are examples of research that depend on documents as the source of data. Much of the researcher's time is spent in locating documents with specialized bibliographies and indexes and relevant information and start analyzing the sources. The researcher interprets facts to provide explanations of the past and clarifies the collective educational meanings that may be underlying current practices and issues. The qualitative data collection techniques this study used are in-depth interviews and documentary analysis. These are discussed in the section below.

3.5.1 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The first research instrument the study used were in-depth interviews. The interview

process is a conversation between two engaged people, both of whom are searching to

unravel the mysteries and meanings of life (May, 2003). Interviews are conducted by

one, or, at most, a few persons, they take place slowly over an extended period of time.

The significance of an interview is that there is a face to face interaction between the

interviewee and the interviewer. This face to face interaction amongst others assists in

the development of rapport. Rapport helps in making the social relationship between

the interviewer and the interviewee flow (Ibid).

Gay (1987) defines an interview as an oral, in-person, administration of a questionnaire

to each member of a sample. Cohen and Manion (2009) define interviewing as a two-

person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining

research-relevant information. In short, interviewing is a way of getting information

directly from the people who are presumed to have the required information. Each

question in the interview is going to relate to a specific research question (Gay, 1987).

Kvale (1996) describes an interview as a stage upon which knowledge is constructed

through the interaction of interviewer and interviewee roles. The interviewee is provided

with a context for the interview by a briefing before and a debriefing afterwards. The

context is introduced with a briefing in which the interviewer defines the situation for the

subject. The interviewer briefly tells about the purpose of the interview, the use of a

tape recorder and asks if the subject has any questions before starting the interview.

During a briefing, the subjects will want to have a grasp of the interviewer before they

allow themselves to talk freely, exposing their experiences and feelings to a stranger

(Kvale, 1996). The interviewer establishes a good contact by attentive listening,

showing interest, understanding and respect for what the subject says. The interviewer

is at ease and clear about what he or she wants to know. In this study the interviewer

wanted to know the mentoring experiences of the novice teachers. The objectives and

the purpose of the study were explained to the teachers before the start of the

interview.

After the interview, the interviewer provides the interviewee with debriefing. Debriefing

involves going back to the interviewee and presenting him or her with the data collected

through interaction. During this period the interviewee may either correct some of the

misunderstandings that may exist or add more information. In this study the researcher

went back later to the respondents to get clarification on some unclear responses. The

respondents were also given copies of the interviews in written form.

The researcher can use an interview guide in the interviews. An interview guide

indicates the topics and their sequence in the interviews (Kvale, 1996). It contains

rough topics to be covered or it can be a detailed sequence of carefully recorded

questions. Interview questions can be evaluated with respect to a thematic and dynamic

dimension. Thematic dimension refers to question's relevance for the research theme,

while dynamic dimension refers to the interpersonal relationship in the interview (Kvale,

 1996). Kvale(1996) advises that when designing an interview guide, the "why" and

"what" questions should be asked and answered before the question of "how" is asked.

 In the interview, the main questions should be in a descriptive form, for example, "What

are the perceptions of teachers on mentoring of novice teachers?" The aim is to elicit

spontaneous descriptions from the subjects rather to get their own, more or less

speculative explanations of why something took place. Many "why" questions in an

interview lead to an intellectualized interview, perhaps evoking memories of oral

examinations. Kvale (1996) suggest that the interview can be rounded off by mentioning

some main points learned from the interview and the subject may want to comment on

the feedback. The main question of this study was in descriptive form. The question was: What are the perceptions of teachers on the mentoring of novice teachers? The next two questions were also the 'What' questions that needed explanations from the respondents. The last two questions were the 'How' questions. The questions were: How do the teachers experience mentoring at school level? How do the teachers experience mentoring at District level?

Interviews range from highly structured, where specific questions and the order in which they are asked are determined ahead of time, to unstructured, where the researcher has topic areas to explore but neither the questions nor the order are predetermined (Merriam, 2002). The semi -structured interviews contain a mix of more and less structured questions. When specific information is desired from all the participants, highly structured interviews are used. The type of questions that were used by the researcher were the semi-structured questions. The researcher prepared before time the questions that were asked to the respondents.

The type of interview that was most appropriate for this study was the phenomenological interview. In phenomenological interviewing an interview schedule is not used and the interview starts with one main question only. For example, 'How did

you experience mentoring in your school?' All the following questions were mostly based on the responses of the respondents. Interviewing research instrument has both advantages and disadvantages.

Gay (1987, p.91) notes the following advantages of interviews:

- Interviews involve gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals.
- Non-verbal cues can be picked up during interviewing, anger or pleasure shown by respondents to different situations.
- Interviews allow for greater depth than is the case with other methods of data collection.
- Interviews are appropriate for asking questions which cannot effectively be structured into a multiple-choice format, such as questions of a personal nature.
- Interviews are flexible, the interviewer can adapt the situation to each subject.
- By establishing rapport and a trust relationship, the interviewer can often obtain data that subjects would not give on a questionnaire.
- Interviews result in more accurate and honest responses since the interviewer can explain and clarify both the purpose of the research and individual questions.
- The interviewer can follow up on incomplete or unclear responses by asking additional probing questions and reasons for particular responses can also be determined.

Before the start of the interviews, the researcher established rapport and trust by explaining the aim and purpose of the study to the respondents. During the interviews the researcher could pick up the non-verbal cues, such as insecurity from the respondents. The respondents were told to feel free as the interviews were not aimed at harming anyone. When the respondents gave unclear responses, the researcher asked probing questions.

Gay (1987, p.92) gives the following disadvantages of interviews:

- The responses given by a respondent may be biased and affected the respondent's reaction, either positive or negative.
- The interviews are time consuming and expensive; interviews require skills such as communication and interpersonal relations skills.
- Interviews involve a small sample size.

The researcher responded to the disadvantages of interviews by avoiding causes of bias such as poor rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee, biased sampling, inconsistent coding of the responses, poor prompting and biased probing and selective or interpreted recording of data transcripts (Oppenheimer, 1992). The researcher developed a warm and professional relationship with the respondents. Furthermore, the researcher tried to make the environment as non-threatening as possible. One of the ways that the researcher achieved this was by introducing the ice breakers before asking the actual research interview questions. The use of the

respondents' mother tongue as the medium of research was another strategy used by the researcher. Furthermore, the researcher does not have any problem with acquisition of communication and interpersonal skills as he is a qualified educator.

Waste of time will be avoided by the researcher by drawing up an interview guide with questions. During the interview the researcher will tick every response that covers his prepared questions so as to prevent repetition. An interview guide indicates what questions are to be asked and in what order, and what additional prompting or probing is permitted (Gay, 1987).

As the study also wanted to explore the experiences of the respondents, the researcher used unstructured interviews to obtain data. Unstructured interviews are not confined by an interview schedule and allow respondents to be able to narrate all their mentoring perceptions. Unstructured interviews have advantages and disadvantages.

Gay (1987, p.93) gives the following advantages of unstructured interviews:

- Unstructured interviews result in in-depth responses and provide otherwise unobtainable insights.
- Unstructured interviews facilitate explanation and understanding of the respondents; results can be tabulated and explained.
- Unstructured interviews provide an open situation with greater flexibility and freedom.

- Unstructured interviews are simpler to construct than structured interviews and they allow respondents complete freedom of response as questions are asked with no possible responses.

During the interviews the researcher was flexible and did not stick to the list of questions for the interviews. The respondents were given freedom to narrate all their mentoring experiences.

Gay (1987, p.94) notes the following disadvantages of unstructured interviews:

- Subjects often provide information extraneous to the objectives of the study.

- They produce data which is difficult to tabulate and responses are difficult to score and analyze.

- Unstructured interviews produce data which is not easy to quantify.

In response to the above disadvantages during the data collection stage, the researcher did the following:

- ✓ The aims of the study were explained to the respondents, and the reference points provided whenever necessary,

- ✓ Both English and IsiXhosa (respondents' mother tongue) were used as medium of the research.

- ✓ Became an attentive listener and whenever necessary asked for clarity from the respondents,

- ✓ The data were tape recorded and thereafter transcribed verbatim, and

✓ The data were read and reread such that the researcher understood the data and could prepare it in themes.

3.5.2 DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS

Documents can be written words or cultural artifacts. The common examples of documents used in research are:

- Public records,
- Personal documents, and
- Physical materials are the types of documents available to the researcher for analysis.

The strength of the documents as a data source lies with the fact that they already exist in the situation and they do not intrude upon or alter the setting in ways that the presence of the researcher might (Merriam, 2002). The entire studies can be built around documents and they often contain insights and clues into the phenomenon.

In this study the researcher used the documents that were related to the mentoring and support of the teachers in the last two years, 2011 and 2012. The researcher accessed the documents on workshops of teachers, learning area cluster workshops, workshops by textbooks publishers, Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS), School Management Teams (SMTs), Continuous Assessment (CASS) moderations and the

Committees in the schools. All the documents were analysed by the researcher. The next sub-section explores how the research sites and the respondents were sampled.

3.6 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING

A sample is a subject of measurements drawn from a population in which the researcher is interested (Strydom and De Vos, 1998). Sampling refers to choosing a portion of the target population for a research rather than studying the entire target population (Bieger and Gerlach, 1996). Advantages of sampling are feasibility and convenience. A population is the collection of all individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, events and so on that the researcher is interested in finding about (Mark, 1996). Therefore, a population is a total set of people from which sampling is made.

Literature on sample and sampling indicates that there are different ways of sampling. These include the probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is explained as the subjects that are drawn from a larger population in such a way that the probability of selecting each member of the population is known (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). Studies that usually use this type of sampling are mostly quantitative studies. The advantage of probability sampling is that it enables the researchers to indicate the probability with which the sample results, for example, sample means, deviate in differing degrees from the corresponding population values,

for example, population means. Probability sampling also makes it possible to estimate sampling error, a statistical term which has a bearing on the unrepresentativeness of a sample. Random samples, stratified samples, systematic samples and cluster samples are examples of probability samples. However, in some studies it is usually not practically and economically feasible to involve all the subjects in a research study.

This study made use of non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is when the researcher is using whatever subjects are available such as a class of students or a group of subjects gathered for a meeting (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). Examples of non- probability samples are accidental samples, purposive samples, quota samples and snowball samples. Amongst the reported benefits of non-probability sampling is that such sample studies are less complicated and more economical, in terms of time and financial expenses, than probability samples. Non-probability samples may also be useful in pilot studies in which a preliminary form of a questionnaire has to be tested. The example of the non-probability sampling this study used is particularly purposive sampling because of considerations of convenience and economy. Also the study used this sampling as it was guided by the research questions and the research design.

McMillan and Schumacher 1993) explain purposive sampling as selecting small samples of information-rich cases to study in-depth without daring to generalize to all such cases. In purposive sampling, the researcher relies on his experience, ingenuity

and previous research findings to deliberately obtain participants in such a manner that the sample obtained may be regarded as representative of the relevant population (Huysamen, 1994). The disadvantage of purposive sampling is that it is unable to evaluate the extent to which the sample is representative of the relevant population. The size of the population is borne in mind when the size of the sample is determined. The smaller the total population, the relatively larger the sample becomes to ensure satisfactory results. The desired sample size does not depend on the size of the population only but also on the variance (heterogeneity) of the variable. In determining sample size, the researcher will bear in mind that the number of subjects for whom usable data will eventually be obtained, may be much smaller than the number which was drawn originally. The researcher will draw a larger sample than the one for which complete data are desired eventually. For the purpose of this study, a sample of two schools was chosen. One school was a primary school in a rural area while the other was a high school in a township. The two schools were sampled purposively as they were near the place where the researcher was staying. Economic issues such as the transport to the schools were also considered in choosing the schools. Another reason for choosing the schools was the availability of novice teachers.

With regards to the sampling of the respondents, six respondents were sampled. This means that three respondents were sampled from each school. These teachers were made up of four novice teachers and two school principals. The novice teachers were selected so that they could say how they experienced mentoring in their schools. The

principals were included in the sample so that they could say how mentoring taking place in their schools is. The sample of respondents was chosen purposively to satisfy the needs of the study. The study investigated the teachers' perceptions and experiences on the mentoring of novice teachers.

3.7 NEGOTIATING   ACCESS TO THE RESEARCH SITE

This refers to the gaining of official permission to undertake research in a site (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). Negotiating access into the research site is important because it will allow the researcher to conduct the interviews with relative openness, sensitivity, honesty and scientific accuracy (Cohen and Manion, 2007). The following gate keepers were contacted for permission to gain access to the sites and respondents: The Eastern Cape Department of Education, King William's Town District Manager, Circuit Manager, Principals and the selected teachers, as follows:

- ✓ Filled in the forms from the Department of Education. With regards to the response (SEE APPENDIX 5).

- ✓ Had an introductory letter from the Research Supervisor Dr N. Duku which introduced the researcher to the school. This letter introduced the researcher, the aim of the study, as well as the data collection procedures for the study (SEE APPENDIX 4). This letter was given to the principals of both selected schools.

- ✓ Wrote a letter to the principals of the selected schools seeking permission to conduct research (SEE APPENDIX 3). Both principals responded positively to

the permission letter. Both principals responded orally to the letter requesting permission to conduct interviews. After these negotiations, the researcher had a meeting with the principal and the School Governing Body (SGB) chairperson for an oral explanation of the data collection process.

✓ As this study also involved teachers as respondents, their permission for participation was also sought (SEE APPENDIX 2). As the researcher had drawn a plan outlining research activities, this was presented to the respondents as well. The plan identified the aims of the study, practical applications, the design, methods and procedures to be used, the approximate time involved, the degree of disruption envisaged, arrangement to guarantee confidentiality with respect to data, the role of feedback and how findings can be disseminated, the overall time table within which the research is to be encompassed. This was done in line with the guidelines as suggested by (Cohen et al, 2007).

3.8   HOW WERE DATA COLLECTED

Data for the study was conducted in two phases. These are the pilot phase and the main data collection phases as indicated below.

3.8.1 CONDUCTING THE PILOT STUDY

Before doing the actual data collection, the researcher did a pilot study. Mouton (1996) defines pilot studies as exploratory studies aiming at establishing facts, to gather new data and to determine whether there are interesting patterns in the data. Whilst De Vos et al, (2005) describe pilot study as the dress rehearsal for the main investigation. As it is a rehearsal it is usually a small scale implementation of the planned investigation. The aim of a pilot study is to identify any possible deficiencies to the fore timeously (Ibid). Pilot study is necessary to pretest questions adequately in order to see if the researcher's and respondent's frames of reference correspond (Smith, 1981).

Robson (2002) also defines a pilot study as a small-scale version of the real thing, a try-out of what you propose so its feasibility can be checked. On the other hand, Yin (1994) distinguishes between 'pilot tests' and 'pre-tests'. Pilot tests are helping the investigators to define their data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedures to be followed. According to Yin (1994) the pilot is a laboratory for investigators, allowing them to observe different phenomena from many different angles or try different approaches on a trial basis. The 'pre-test' is a formal dress rehearsal in which the intended data collection plan is used as faithfully as possible, and is perhaps closer to the usual meaning of a pilot study (Yin, 1994).

The researcher learnt from piloting that some respondents did not talk loudly during the interviews. This resulted to some parts of the recorded material to be inaudible. The respondents were urged to raise their voices when responding to the interview questions. Some respondents did not expatiate when giving answers during the

interviews. This resulted in short answers that led to short transcribed interviews. The respondents were requested to give answers that were not less than two sentences. The researcher also used probing questions to make the respondents talk and explain unclear responses.

3.8.2 CONDUCTING THE MAIN STUDY

After the pilot study and the lessons learnt from the pilot study, the main study was conducted. As indicated earlier on this chapter, unstructured interviews were conducted as follows: The interviews were conducted in the schools during break time. The researcher did not want to interrupt the tuition time of the schools. The respondents were allowed by the researcher to use both English and IsiXhosa during the interviews. The use of the mother tongue, which is IsiXhosa, encouraged the respondents to respond fluently to the interview questions.

The respondents welcomed the interview sessions. Some had a previous experience of interviews and reported that the interviews helped them to share their teaching challenges with other people outside their schools. Some reported that the interviews bring them hope that help might come from outside if their challenges were known.

Furthermore, a tape recorder was used during both the pilot and the main study to record the interviews. Tape recording made the process of recording the interviews easier and faster. Also tape recording also ensured the verbatim information from the

respondents. It also needs to be noted that permission to use the tape recorder was sought from the respondents. After the interviews were completed, the researcher transcribed the data. Transcribing an interview means to write down each word of the interview exactly as it was spoken.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

In qualitative research, data analysis is simultaneous with data collection (Merriam, 2002). Analysing data begins with the first interview, the first observation, and the first document accessed in the research study (Ibid). Simultaneous data collection and analysis helps the researcher to make adjustments along the way, even to the point of redirecting data collection, and to test emerging concepts, themes, and categories against subsequent data (Merriam, 2002). Data analysis is essentially an inductive strategy, beginning with a unit of data, any meaningful word, phrase or narrative, and compares it to another unit of data and also looks for patterns across the data. These patterns are given names or codes and are refined and adjusted as the analysis proceeds. In this study, the researcher looked for units of data that are related to mentoring of novice teachers. The units of data were compared with one another and themes or patterns were identified.

Different theoretical stances and different disciplines have evolved particular strategies for data analysis. In an ethnographic study, an organizing scheme or typology of categories might be used. Narrative analysis might employ psychological, literary, or sociolinguistic data analysis strategies. In grounded theory, the constant comparative method is used. In a postmodern-poststructural study, analysis is done by using data analysis forms such as deconstruction, rhizoanalysis, genealogy, archaeology, and schizoanalysis. In a phenomenological study, such as this study on the teachers' perceptions and experiences on the mentoring of novice teachers, specific techniques such as epoche, bracketing, and imaginative variation were used to analyse experience.

The researcher used qualitative data analysis and interpretation because qualitative research approach is a research approach chosen. Analyzing qualitative data is a systematic process that organizes the data into manageable units, combines and synthesizes ideas, develops constructs, themes, patterns or theories and illuminates the important discoveries of a research (Anderson and Arsenault, 2000). Qualitative data analysis is a continuous activity that constantly evolves. Qualitative researchers never really finish organizing and interpreting data until the last printout of the research report. Qualitative analysis relies heavily on triangulation. Triangulation is the use of multiple data sources, data collection methods and theories to validate research findings. Triangulation also helps eliminate bias and can help detect errors in the study.

Moustakas(1990) identifies the following five basic phases of analysis:

- ✓ Immersion with experience;

In this phase the researcher works with the experience.

- ✓ incubation, a time of quiet contemplation;

This is the phase of thinking about the experience.

- ✓ illumination, a time of increased awareness,

This is the phase of being aware of the experience.

- ✓ expanded meaning and new clarity; explication, new connections are made and one prepares to communicate findings; creative synthesis,

In this phase, researcher shares the experience with other people.

- ✓ the research findings and experience are wound together, written and communicated.

The experience is written and communicated with other people.

In this study the researcher used Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as a method of analyzing the data collected. After the interview, the researcher listened to the recorded interviews several times for the sense of the whole. Transcriptions were read several times to provide a context for the emergence of units of meaning and themes later on. The researcher used bracketing and phenomenological reduction by suspending as much as possible the researcher's meaning and interpretations. In the margin next to each sentence, the meaning or topic of that sentence was written. The

researcher looked for units of meaning relevant to the research (how teachers perceive and experience mentoring of novice teachers?) and will eliminate redundant ones. The researcher condensed what the respondents said using as much as possible the literal words of the respondents. Similar topics were clustered together into categories and subcategories. Each category and subcategory was given a suitable heading. Under each heading, the mentoring perceptions and experiences of teachers were described and illustrated by means of direct quotes. The researcher made a summary of each individual interview including themes elicited from the data. At this point answers to the research question were given by referring to categories or clusters of relevant meaning.

3.10 INTERPRETIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is a version of the phenomenological method which accepts the impossibility of gaining direct access to research participants' life worlds (Willig, 2001). Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis aims to explore the research participant's experience from his or her perspective. The phenomenological analysis produced by the researcher is always an interpretation of the participant's experience. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis also aims at capturing the quality and texture of individual experience. However, the experience is never directly accessible to the researcher. In Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, the researcher

identifies themes and integrate them into meaningful clusters, first within and then across (Willig, 2001).

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis works with transcripts of semi-structured interviews (Willig, 2001). As phenomenological research requires the researcher to enter the life-world of the research participant, the questions posed to the participant are open-ended and non-directive. Their sole purpose is to provide participants with an opportunity to share their personal experience of the phenomenon under investigation with the researcher. Focused or specific questions should be used to encourage participants to elaborate rather than to check whether they agree or disagree with particular claims or statements. Whatever type of data collection method is used, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis works with texts generated by participants and are analysed one by one. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis takes an idiographic approach whereby insights produced from transcripts or texts are integrated only in the later stages of the research.

Willig (2001) identifies four stages of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. The first stage of analysis involves the reading and re-reading of the text. The researcher produces wide-ranging and unfocused notes that reflect the initial thoughts and observations he or she may wish to record in response to the text. These could include associations, questions, summary statements, comments on language use, absences, descriptive labels, and so on. The notes are a way of documenting issues that come up for the researcher upon his or her initial encounter with the text (Smith, Harre and Langenhove, 1999). The second stage of analysis requires the researcher to identify

and label themes that characterize each section of the text and are recorded in the right margin. Theme titles are conceptual and they should capture something about the essential quality of what is represented by the text.

The third stage involves an attempt to introduce structure into the analysis. The researcher lists the themes identified in stage two and thinks about them in relation to one another. Some of the themes will form natural clusters of concepts that share meanings or references, whereas others will be characterized by hierarchical relationships with one another. Clusters of themes need to be given labels that capture their essence. These could be in direct terms used by the respondents themselves, brief quotations or descriptive labels. The researcher needs to move back and forth between the list of themes he or she attempts to structure and the text that generated the themes in the first place. The connections between themes identified on paper need to be reflected in the detail of the respondent's account.

The fourth stage of analysis involves the production of a summary table of the structured themes, together with quotations that illustrate each theme. The summary table only includes those themes that capture something about the quality of the participant's experience of the phenomenon under investigation. Some themes generated during stage two are excluded. The summary table includes the cluster labels together with subordinate theme labels, brief quotations and references to where relevant extracts may be found in the interview transcripts. The number of clusters and themes identified can vary widely and depend entirely upon the text being analyzed.

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The ethical issues arise from the kinds of problems investigated by social scientists and the methods they use to obtain valid and reliable data. Perhaps, the foremost significance of ethics is that subjects should not be harmed in any way, physical or mentally (Gay, 1987). The subjects' right to privacy is also an important consideration. Above all, the researcher must have personal integrity (Ibid).The following ethical principles were adhered to:

3.11.1 Voluntary participation

In recognition of this principle, the researcher made a full disclosure about the aims of the study, the procedures and what may be the advantages of the research to the respondents. The researcher also offered to answer any questions concerning the procedures. It was also explained to respondents that their participation is voluntary and were free to withdraw from the study at any time.

3.11.2 Honesty and openness

In this study the researcher ensured honesty and openness. The respondents were informed why they were interviewed and significance and reasons for the study. Anderson and Arsenault (2000) warn that some investigations call the use of deception

or telling the subjects that the purpose or method of the investigation is one thing when in fact it is another. Respondents were also allowed access to the findings of the study.

3.11.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

Anonymity of those involved and the confidentiality of the data collected was also guaranteed. The identity of the respondents is not going to be disclosed and the researcher ensured that the readers of the research study are not able to deduce the identity of the respondents.

3.11.4 Debriefing

Debriefing permits the researcher to give additional information which if given in advance may have biased the results (Anderson and Arsenault, 2000). The researcher informed the respondents about the study at different stages and clarified any questions that arose. After the data was transcribed these were taken to the respondents to confirm and clarify any issues that needed further clarity. The draft dissertation, particularly the findings chapters were also presented to the respondents.

3.11.5 The Right to Privacy

The participants decided what aspects of their personal attitudes, opinions, habits, eccentricities, doubts and fears were going to be made known or withheld from others.

3.12   CONCLUSION

The procedures to be followed during the research process were covered in this research methodology chapter. The procedures include research approach, research design, sample and sampling, and research methods such as data collection and research instruments. The next chapter, which is Chapter 4, explores the presentation of data and the discussion findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESANTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this chapter is to present the data collected from both the respondents and the school documents that were analysed. The study aimed at exploring the teachers' perceptions and experiences of the mentoring received by the novice teachers in the schools. As stated in the methodology, six teachers from two schools participated in this study, who were interviewed individually by the researcher. Three educators were from one school and the three were from the other school. A principal and two novice teachers from each school were participants. That means that

besides the four novice teachers, the study also used two principals. These are all referred to in the study as six educators or respondents, interchangeably.

All the six educators were interviewed using an interview guide schedule as well as unstructured interviews. All the guiding interview questions relate to a specific study objective. The interview schedule is attached as Appendix 1 in this document. The teachers were interviewed in order to get in-depth information on their perceptions and experiences on mentoring provided by their schools. The researcher also requested documents related to the support the teachers received in their schools. The documents were analyzed to look for recorded evidence of the mentoring of novice teachers. The research questions these data collection techniques were responding to are:

The main research question:

What are the teachers' perceptions on the mentoring of novice teachers?

The sub-questions:

- What are the teachers' explanations of mentoring?

- What do teachers think is the importance of mentoring?

- How do teachers experience mentoring at school level?

- How do teachers experience mentoring at District level?

This chapter is structured as follows:

4.1 Introduction

4.2 The profiles

     4.2.1 Profile of schools

     4.2.2 Profile of the respondents

4.3 Presentation and data analysis

     4.3.1 The respondents' explanations of mentoring.

     4.3.2 Who should be mentored?

     4.3.3 Who is a mentor?

     4.3.4 The importance of mentoring

     4.3.5 Teachers' mentoring experiences at different education levels

     4.3.5.1 Teachers' mentoring experiences at school level

     4.3.5.2 Teachers' mentoring experiences at district level

4.4 Conclusion

4.2 PROFILES

The study shows the profiles of the respondents and the profiles of the two schools used in the study. Table 4.2.1 shows the profile of the two schools while table 4.2.2 shows the profile of the respondents. The tables show the commonalities as well as the differences between the schools and among the respondents.

4.2.1 PROFILE OF THE SCHOOLS

Name	Type of school	Where the school is located	Age of the school	Nature of the school	Learner population	Teacher population	Number of classrooms	Number of SMT members	Number of novice teachers
1	High school	Township	27	Public	850	25	20	7	4
2	Primary school	Rural areas	40	Public	128	6	12	1	3

Table 4.2.1 above shows that the study was conducted in two schools that are referred to as School 1 and School 2. These consist of a Primary School (School 2) and a High School (School 1). Both schools are public schools located in the King Williams Town District. The table also indicates that the High School is located in a township whilst the Primary School is in a rural village. The two schools are referred to as, School 1 and School 2 throughout this study because of ethical reasons that guarantee anonymity and confidentiality to all the participants. Both schools are public schools and differed in terms of when they were established.

 School 1 was established twenty-seven years ago while School 2 was established forty years ago. School 1 is a high school in a township and has an enrolment of 850 learners with 20 classrooms. During this research in 2012, School 1 had seven School Management Team (SMT) members and four novice teachers. The school had twenty-five teachers, eighteen female teachers and seven male teachers. On the other hand, School 2 was established forty years ago, has an enrollment of 128 learners and 12

classrooms. The reason for the few number of learners in School 2 is probably because the village is not far from a town of King Williams Town. Village parents these days tend to take their children to schools in the urban areas and this is probably because the urban schools are perceived to have more teaching resources than schools in the rural areas. Of the 12 classes in School 2, only 6 classes were being used. The School 2 has six teachers, four female teachers and two male teachers. The other six classes remained empty as there were few learners in the school.

Both schools are dominated by the female teachers in terms of numbers. The township where the School 1 was situated was in an urban area where many learners seemed to be attracted to. The school was reported to have overcrowded classrooms and there was a reported shortage of classrooms. There was also a reported shortage of teachers in School 1 as the school had only 25 teachers to teach 850 learners. The School 2 had 6 teachers who were also regarded as inadequate as the school had many grades, from Grade R up to Grade 7 with each class having nine Learning Areas in Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase. School 2 had one School Management Team member. School 2 had three novice teachers.

4.2.2 PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Respondent Name	Age	Gender	Occupation	Teaching Experience	Highest Qualification	Mentoring Received	School	Previous Occupation
Respondent	56	M	Principal	30 years	BA, HDE	Informal	1	None

1A								
Respondent 1B	34	F	Teacher	3 years	STD	Informal	1	None
Respondent 1C	35	F	Teacher	3 years	STD	Informal	1	None
Respondent 2X	45	F	Teacher	3years	STD	Informal	2	None
Respondent 2Y	55	F	Principal	34 years	SPTD	Formal	2	None
Respondent 2Z	46	M	Teacher	3 years	STD	Informal	2	Industry

Table 4.2.2 indicates the profile of the respondents used by the researcher in his study. The study used a total population of six, four novice teachers and two principals as respondents from two schools in the King William's Town District. Due to ethical considerations, the schools are referred to as School 1 and School 2. In School 1, Respondents 1A, 1B, and 1C were used and their real names were not used due to ethical reasons. Respondents 2X, 2Y, and 2Z were used from School 2 and their real names were not used due to ethical considerations. The ages of the respondents in School 1 were 56, 35 and 34. The respondent who had the highest age in School 1 was 56 years old and was the principal of the school. The principal had 30 years of teaching experience. The other two respondents were novice teachers with 34 and 35 years of age. Both novice teachers had 3 years teaching experience. Respondent A is a male while respondents 1B and 1C were females.

School 1 had one male respondent and two female respondents. The male respondent was the principal while the two female respondents were the novice teachers. In School 1, respondent 1A is a qualified teacher with Bachelor of Arts and Higher Diploma in Education. Respondent 1B and 1C are qualified teachers with Secondary Teachers Diploma in Education. Respondents 1A, 1B and 1C received informal mentoring. The respondents were never exposed to any form of formal mentoring. All the respondents in School 1did not have previous employment. This means that the respondents did not have any work experience before they started teaching.

From School 2, respondents 2X, 2Y, and 2Z participated in this study. The ages of the respondents were 55, 46,and 45 respectively. The respondent who seemed to be the oldest was respondent 1A, who was the principal of the school and was 55 years old. The other two respondents were novice teachers with 45 and 46 years of age respectively. These respondents were made up of two female respondents and one male respondent, the principal. Teachers 2X and 2Y were females and while respondent 2Z was a male. School 2 had two female respondents and one male respondent. Respondent 2Y was a principal and a female while respondent 2X was a female novice teacher. Respondent 2Z was a male novice teacher in School 2.

Respondent 2Y had 34 years of teaching experience while respondent 2X and 2Z each had 3 years of teaching experience. Respondent 2X and 2Y were novice teachers. All the respondents in School 2 were qualified teachers.

Respondents 2X and 2Y had teaching qualifications of Senior Primary Teachers Diploma. Respondent 2Z had Secondary Teachers Diploma teaching qualifications.

All the respondents, both School 1 and School 2, reportedly received informal mentoring, except for respondent 2Y who reportedly received formal mentoring. Respondent 2Z reported that he had three years teaching experience whilst he qualified as a teacher in 1994, and said before he got the current post he was employed in a construction industry. Also respondents 1B, 1C, and 2X did not get employment in teaching for many years. Unlike respondent 2Z, they remained unemployed for many years until they were employed as teachers about two years ago.

4.3 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This section presents the data that was collected using interviews and the analysis of official documents. The researcher used quotes from the respondents in the study to show the similarities and differences and to illustrate understanding of a phenomenon that is being investigated from respondents' point of view. The following themes were presented and analyzed:

      4.3.1 The respondents' explanation of mentoring.

      4.3.2 Who should be a mentor?

      4.3.3 Who is a mentor?

      4.3.4 The importance of mentoring.

      4.3.5 Mentoring at the school level.

      4.3.6 Mentoring at the District level.

4.3.1THE RESPONDENTS' EXPLANATIONS OF MENTORING

The respondents gave their different accounts and explanations of mentoring. Some respondents linked mentoring to support, guidance, assistance and help. The assistance however was not always linked to inexperienced teacher, which is the focus of this study. In most instances as it will be shown below, mentoring is provided to teachers who seem to be struggling with their teaching responsibilities, irrespective of their teaching experience.

To respondent 2X, mentoring had something to do with giving guidance and help. She reported that guidance and help was given to teachers who were struggling in their teaching. When explaining what the struggling teacher was, she said that a struggling teacher was a teacher who did not succeed in his or her lessons and did not achieve `the objectives of his or her lessons. She said that the teachers who had just joined teaching were the ones who were in most need of guidance. Respondent 2X also said that guidance was needed to assist new teachers to adapt to the new profession and is a way of helping by showing someone else a way of approaching his/her teaching so as to be successful. She reported that if a person has a problem in approaching a lesson he/she has to be helped by someone else. She explained mentoring as a way of helping the teachers who face challenges in their work. Respondent 2X remarked:

"Mentoring is a way of getting guidance from other people including teachers. If a person has a problem in approaching a lesson in a subject, someone else can help him overcome the problem. It is a way of helping by giving someone else a way of approaching his/her teaching so as to be successful."

Respondent 2Y explicitly linked mentoring with inexperienced teachers. She explained mentoring as a strategy to guide and develop a novice teacher. She said that mentoring was a way of getting advice on handling teaching challenges. She remarked:

"Through mentoring, a teacher is developed in a learning area that he/ she is teaching. The teacher is shown how to handle the challenges that he/ she faces in his/ her class"

Even though respondent 2Z did not mention novice teachers, he said that mentoring was a means of being assisted and guided by a more experienced person, and explained that an experienced teacher is a teacher who had taught for a number of years and was used to teaching. He said that a teacher can be helped by not only an experienced teacher but by other teachers as well. Respondent 2Z said that mentoring was also applied in business to make companies succeed. He remarked:

"It is when a teacher is assisted in his or her work by another teacher or by a more experienced teacher. The mentor should be hands-on and there should be goals set. In business it is when a more successful company shows and guides others on how to become successful in their business."

With respondent 2Z mentoring should be a planned activity, whereby goals of mentoring are decided upon and achieved. He has also linked mentoring with business the field where there are deadlines for particular activities to be achieved.

Respondent 1A described mentoring as a way of guidance of a new teacher by a more experienced teacher in his or her teaching. He also explained that a new teacher is a teacher who has just come out of the teacher training college and is in early years in the teaching profession. He also reported that the new teacher does not have enough teaching experience and needs guidance from more experienced teachers. He described experienced teachers as teachers who have taught for a considerable number of years, at least five years and they usually help and guide the less experienced new teachers. He also said mentoring was a neglected concept at school. He remarked:

"Mentoring is the guiding and helping of a new teacher by a more experienced teacher in his or her teaching."

Respondent 1B reported that mentoring is a guiding and mentoring exercise in teaching. She said that during mentoring a teacher is helped to approach his subject. She commented:

"I think mentoring is guiding and mentoring a person who has just started teaching. It is showing a person how to approach a subject and being helped here and there."

Respondent 1C described mentoring as a way that teachers help each other. She was however explicit about the kind of teacher that is mentored, as she said that mentoring is the help that can be extended to less experienced teachers, and also lined mentoring to peers assisting peers, particularly those teaching the same subject. She remarked:

"I think that it is when teachers who are teaching the same subject help each other in the subject. A more experienced teacher can also mentor a less experienced teacher."

The data that was presented on the explanation of mentoring was collected from the six respondents. The majority of the respondents (five out of six), respondents 2X, 2Y, 2Z, 1A and 1B described mentoring as giving guidance or something that guides new teachers. Literature on mentoring supports the five respondents on the main objectives of mentoring as guiding and help. For instance, Megginson and Clutterbuck (1995) explain mentoring as help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking. Consistent with the study, a novice teacher who has less knowledge of teaching will be assisted by a more knowledgeable teacher to reach a stage where he or she can say that he/she is in a position to stand by him/her in the teaching environment. On the other hand, Sweeny (2008) explains mentoring as a complex developmental process that mentors use to support and guide their protégé through the necessary transactions that are part of learning how to be effective educators and career-long learners. Individuals who are supported and guided are

called the mentees or protégés. In this study, novice teachers are the mentees or protégés that are supposed to be supported and guided.

Some respondents reported issues of advice and development in their explanation of mentoring. Similarly, Kram (1985) explained mentoring as something that involves a more experienced person, the mentor, providing advice or modeling about career development behaviors to a junior person, the mentee. Simply put, mentoring is when a novice teacher is helped by a more experienced teacher in teaching career matters. Eby (1997) also emphasizes issues of advice and development in his definition of mentoring as an intense developmental relationship whereby advice, counseling and developmental opportunities are provided to a mentee by a mentor, which, in turn shapes the mentee' career experiences.

Only respondent 1C did not describe mentoring as something that guides
Some respondents reported issues of advice and development in their explanations and she described mentoring as a way of helping each other by teachers teaching the same subjects. Five respondents 2X, 2Z, 1A, 1B and 1C described mentoring as a form of help or assistance. Respondent 2Y reported that mentoring is something that guides and develops. Respondent 2Y did not talk about help in her explanation of mentoring. Not all the respondents explained mentoring in the same way. Most (83.3%) of the respondents described mentoring as guidance and help or assistance while some (16.7%) reported issues such as advice and development.

4.3.2 WHO SHOULD BE MENTORED?

The respondents reported that the new or novice teachers are the ones who need to be mentored. They said that mentoring was important for the novice teachers as it helps them to acquire teaching skills. The respondents also reported that struggling and less experienced teachers needed mentoring to help them achieve their teaching objectives. A junior and a mentee were also reported by respondents as needing mentoring. The respondents also reported that subject teachers and peers should mentor each other.

Respondent 2X who is a female novice teacher form School 2, reported that she accepted and admired the mentoring she received as a new teacher in 2010 from other teachers. She remarked:

"Subject Heads and Phase teachers assisted me a lot by organizing activities such as observation lessons for me. These lesson observations are done in collaboration with phase teachers."

She emphasized that new teachers need to be mentored. She said that a new teacher is a teacher who has just joined teaching and is the one who needs mentoring. She further explained that guidance and help was given to such teachers as they are likely to struggle with their teaching in their early professional lives. Respondent 2X further explained that a struggling teacher was a teacher who did not succeed in his or her lessons and did not achieve the objectives of his or her lessons

Similarly, respondent 1A described mentoring as a way of guidance of a new teacher by a more experienced teacher in his/her teaching. He said that a new teacher is teacher who has just come out of the teacher training and is in the early years in the teaching profession. He described experienced teachers as teachers who have taught for a considerable number of years, at least five years and they usually guide and help less experienced new teachers. He also reported that after being mentored, a new teacher becomes effective in his/her career. He remarked:

"Mentoring is the guiding and helping of a new teacher by a more experienced teacher in his/her teaching. A new teacher can be mentored on how to prepare his or her lessons so as to achieve maximum success in his or her teaching. New teachers are guided on how to approach problematic lessons."

On the other hand, even though respondent 1C only associates mentoring with novice teachers, she noted that such teachers are more likely to benefit from mentoring. In remarking about mentoring and its objectives to the mastery of the subject matter and teaching skills, she also noted that teachers teaching the same subjects were likely to form strong mentoring relationship. She also noted that help through mentoring could be extended to less experienced teachers. She remarked:

"I think that it is when teachers who are teaching the same subject help each other in the subject. A more experienced teacher can also mentor a less experienced teacher"

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Respondent 1B also noted benefits on peers teaching the same subject in mentoring one another. She further explained that subject teachers mentor each other by discussing their teaching challenges in their respective subjects, for example, teachers who teach Life Orientation plan together for each term and they discuss their challenges in the Learning Area. She remarked:

"In this school, mentoring is done by subject teachers. We have four teachers for Life Orientation who meet time and again to discuss their common problems. The subject teachers plan together the work that is going to be taught for each term"

From the above, the indication is that the majority of the respondents (respondents 2X, 2Z, and 1A) are of the view that the new or novice teachers are the ones that should receive mentoring. They said that this was important for them to improve their teaching skills and understanding of their teaching strategies, and help them adjust in the teaching field. The terms novice teachers and new teachers refer to the same group, teachers who are new in the teaching profession. Kram (1985) has a view that mentoring should be provided to a junior person or a mentee. In his definition of mentoring, he maintained that mentoring involves a senior or a more experienced person providing advice or modeling about career development behaviors to a junior person or a mentee. Eby (1997) like Kram, argued that a mentee should get mentoring advice, counseling, and developmental opportunities provided by a mentor, which in turn shapes the mentee's career experiences. In defining mentors, Ragins (1997b)

defines mentors as individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to mentees' careers. From Ragins' definition it is clear that the mentees are the ones that should be provided with the mentoring support. Novice teachers are inexperienced teachers who had just started teaching, and literature agrees with the respondents that novice teachers should be mentored for reasons such as guidance and development.

The other respondents 1B and 1C did not really attach mentoring to novice teachers, but explore it from the perspective of peers assisting and guiding each other. This is in line with Eby (1997) and Bozionelos (2004) who advocated peer mentoring, which means subject teachers mentoring each other. Peer mentoring refers to teachers teaching the same subject in a school observing teaching lessons of one another. Teachers from other schools can also be invited to do lesson observation. However, the aim of peer mentoring is developmental as teachers share their common teaching challenges (Eby (1997). Areas that need improvement are noted and corrected in a later observation lesson. It however needs to be noted that in this study, the majority of the respondents (66.6 %) viewed mentoring as a strategy to assist novice or new teachers, while only (33.4 %) of the respondents linked mentoring to peer support. The next section explores who the mentor is.

4.3.3 WHO IS A MENTOR?

Respondent 2X, a novice teacher from School 2, who has a three year teaching experience, reported that she was mentored by other teachers and there were workshops she attended. She remarked:

''In my school I was mentored and supported by members of the staff. We shared teaching problems with other. I also attended workshops on the new curriculum. The workshops were held after school hours.''

Respondent 2X also noted that being mentored means that the new teacher is given guidance and help by other teachers at the school. Similarly, respondent 2Z from the same school reported that he got guidance from a more experienced teacher who made teaching easy for him and appreciated help from him. He said that he received mentoring in an informal way by sharing the teaching challenges such as approaching lessons during break and lunch time. He remarked:

"In my school we share teaching challenges with each other. This is mostly done in an informal way during break and lunch time. The teachers helped me on how to approach certain lessons that were difficult. The school also has Subject and Grade Committees where teachers share their common problems."

Respondent 2X further reported that she received mentoring from the following:

School Principal: She shared informally her teaching challenges with the principal during break and lunch time.

Staff: The respondent shared her teaching challenges with the staff during break and lunch time.

Subject Heads: Subject Heads in the school organized observation lessons in collaboration with phase teachers. She remarked:

"Subject Heads and Phase teachers assisted me a lot by organizing activities such as observation lessons for me. These lesson observations *are done in collaboration with phase teachers."*

Similarly, respondent 1B and 1C, from School 1 reported that mentoring in her school was done by subject teachers who discussed their common problems and planned together the work of each term. Respondent 1B reported:

"There are Subject Committees and Grade Committees who meet at specified times to discuss the challenges in their respective subjects. We plan together as subject teachers."

Respondent 1C however noted that this was done in an informal basis as there was "no formal program on mentoring". However, the informal mentoring done was supervised by Heads of Department who met time and again to discuss common challenges among teachers and they planned together. She remarked:

"There is no program in place for mentoring. There are Subject Committees and Grade Committees who meet at specified times to discuss the challenges in their respective subjects. We plan together as subject teachers."

Similarly, respondent 2Y, from the School 2 reported that she received support from Grade and Phase teachers and Heads of Department as they shared the teaching challenges. She remarked:

"At my school we have Phase and Grade committees who guide and assist other teachers when they encounter problems in their teaching. The school also has Heads of Department who also guide other teachers. The teachers who have problems in their teaching also consult the Heads of Department in their respective phases. The Phase Committee is made up of the teachers teaching in a phase and the Head of Department acts as an oversee in a phase."

The respondents reported to have received mentoring in an informal basis by sharing their teaching challenges during break and lunch times. Only Respondent 2Y from School 2 reported to have received formal mentoring when she started teaching. Similarly, Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) (2006) notes two types of mentoring, namely, natural (informal) and planned (formal) mentoring. Natural (informal) mentoring is a relationship that develops on its own between two people whereby one wants to professionally and personally grow, while planned (formal) mentoring occurs through structured programs in which mentors and mentees are carefully selected and matched through a formal process (Ibid).

The respondents reported that a mentor is a person who does the following things: he or she supports the new teachers, he or she assists and organizes teaching activities, and he or she gives guidance to new teachers and shares and discusses common teaching challenges. Ragins (1997b) defines mentors as individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to mentees' careers. From the definition it is deduced that a mentor has to have more experience and knowledge and must be able to develop and support the mentee or the novice teacher in his/her career. Respondent 2X and 2Y said that mentoring is giving support to new teachers, while respondent 2Z said that mentoring is getting guidance from a more experienced teacher.

Bozemant and Feeney (2007) echoed the issue of a mentor as giving guidance, he argued that some researchers address the possible negative outcomes of mentoring, where barriers prevent mentors from providing guidance to mentees. The issue of guidance given to mentees by mentors was also noted by Elby (2000) when defining negative mentoring as specific incidence that occur between mentors and mentees, mentor's characteristic manner of interacting with mentees, or mentor's characteristics that limit their ability to effectively provide guidance to a mentee seems to be a crucial characteristic of a mentor. The view of being able to assist and organize teaching activities reported by respondent 2X was echoed by Mackim et al (2007) in their explanation of a mentor.

"A mentor is someone who helps another person through an important transition such as coping with a new situation like a new job or major change in personal circumstances or in career development or personal growth."

Most (66.6%) respondents reported that a mentor is a person who shares and discusses common teaching challenges with other teachers. Other (33. 4%) respondents said that a mentor guides, supports, assists and organizes teaching activities. The respondents said that mentoring should be done by the principal and staff, Subject heads, Grade and Phase teachers, subject teachers and the more experienced teachers. The next section explores the importance of mentoring.

4.3.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING

The respondents gave differing views about the importance of mentoring. They gave many points that seem to support that whether teachers were new in the profession or not, need some mentoring and support. The respondents reported that mentoring helps teachers to adapt and grasp the teaching methods. Through mentoring, teachers are reported to be helped to solve their teaching problems and are helped to interpret the syllabus. The respondents reported that mentoring narrows the knowledge gap between the mentor and the mentee thus improving teaching ability and learner performance. Mentored teachers were reported to be dedicated to their work and confident.

Communication and good working relations among the staff are reported to be improved by mentoring.

Respondent 1A said that mentoring helped the teachers to grasp the teaching methods. He said that mentoring is usually done to the teachers who had just started teaching and it helps new teachers to adapt in the new teaching environment. He also said that new teachers were guided in approaching their lessons. He commented:

"New teachers are guided on how to approach problematic lessons. A new teacher can be mentored on how to prepare his/her lessons so as to achieve maximum success in his/her teaching."

In a more similar view, respondent 1B reported that mentoring helps the educators in solving their teaching problems. She also said that mentoring assists and guides the mentee in interpreting the syllabus. She further explained that a mentee is a teacher who is being mentored and is usually a novice teacher who has just started teaching. She said teaching methods are explained during mentoring. She reflected:

"The methods of teaching and learning are clarified during mentoring the educators are helped in solving their teaching problems. Mentoring also assists and guides the new teacher in interpreting the syllabus".

Respondent 1C reported that mentoring narrows the knowledge gap between the mentor and the mentored teacher. She also said that mentoring helps the mentored teacher to come closer to being perfect in his or her teaching activities and it enhances individual competencies. She said that mentoring demands much attention. She commented:

"Mentoring is individual attention oriented. During mentoring, it is easy to tell if the mentored teacher is not paying attention as it is usually a teacher to teacher activity. Instances of a divided attention are easy to identify and put to an end."

Respondent 2X reported that mentoring developed a feeling of acceptance by the colleagues. The colleagues did not leave her on her own; they gave the teacher constant mentoring support which made the teacher feel accepted in the school. She also pointed that through mentoring she has learnt to be tolerant and dedicated to her work. She remarked:

"At work you should feel well accepted by the colleagues. It is then that you will dedicate yourself fully to your work. Should you feel accepted and assisted, it is then that you develop enthusiasm. You then work hard to achieve your objectives."

Respondent 2X also reported that mentoring improved the teaching ability of novice teachers. She also explained *'mentoring improves the teaching ability of novice*

teachers.' She also explained that after mentoring the teachers perform better in their teaching, and become more successful in their teaching career. She commented:

"Mentoring is also a way of approaching teaching so as to be successful. Mentored teachers are most likely to be successful in their teaching career. After mentoring teachers perform better than before."

What seemed to be the same line of thinking, respondent 2Y reported that mentoring helped in training and counseling new teachers in the school. She said that mentors brought hope to the teachers who were demotivated and hopeless in their teaching by motivating and supporting them. She also said that mentors did demonstration lessons in the class for the new teachers. Respondent 2Y also reported that mentoring developed a teacher in his/her Learning Area and helps in handling teaching challenges in the class. She remarked:

"The mentor goes to the class and demonstrates how a lesson is done. Through mentoring, a teacher is developed in a Learning Area that he or she is teaching. The teacher is shown how to handle the challenges that he or she faces in his or her class."

Whilst respondent 2X explained:

"When I do observation lessons I get more confidence in approaching lessons. Approaching my lessons become relatively easy after doing observation lessons. My teaching lesson challenges are ironed out after observation lessons."

Respondent 2Y, a novice teacher from School 2, also said that she was excited about mentoring and became more confident in handling her teaching matters. She said that she was no longer a student teacher; she was applying what she had learnt at the teacher training college and mentoring has given her a sense of developing from one level to another. She remarked:

"In a month's time I was excited and enjoying teaching. I felt elevated from being a student to being a qualified teacher with a responsibility of teaching young children."

Respondent 2Z, a male novice teacher from School 2, reported that mentoring created communication between the novice teachers and the experienced teachers. He said that mentoring promoted team work among teachers and developed self-confidence and independence. Also noting the importance of mentoring as that of confidence boosting was respondent 2X, who was from the same school as respondent 2Z. Respondent 2Z unpacks the relevance of confidence as in the handling of teaching matters and the development of independence. Kent et al (2009) maintained that mentoring helps in greater novice teacher preparedness and a subsequent increase in long-term teaching commitment. A mentored teacher does not only become ready for any teaching challenges but also becomes dedicated to his work.

Respondent 2Z also reported that mentoring promoted good working relations among the staff. He said that new teachers get new knowledge and ask questions during

mentoring. He added that through mentoring, the new teachers are guided and assisted in their work to achieve success. He commented:

"The aim of mentoring is to achieve success. The new teacher gains some information and knowledge through mentoring. Teachers get a chance to ask questions through the process of mentoring and those questions are answered."

Whilst respondent 1A and 1C, from the same school, reported that the teachers are helped to grasp the teaching methods during mentoring. Respondent 1A explained '*mentoring is usually done to the teachers who had just started teaching and it helps new teachers to adapt in the new teaching environment.'* Whilst respondent 1C reported that mentoring narrows the knowledge gap between the mentor and the mentee and the mentored teacher comes closer to being perfect in his or her teaching activities. She also said that mentoring enhances individual attention. She remarked:

"Mentoring is individual attention oriented. During mentoring, it is easy to tell if the mentored teacher is not paying attention as it is usually a teacher to teacher activity."

The existence of a knowledge gap is also noted by Kent et al (2009) he argues that mentoring bridges the gap between pre-service and in-service teaching and addresses the broader concerns of teacher attrition by allowing novice teachers to begin their careers with the support and guidance of a full-time mentor. Similarly, Storrs et al (2007) argues that individuals regardless of whether they were in the role of protégé or mentor often experienced a gap in what they expected to experience in the mentoring

relationship and what they actually experienced. Allen (2002) also had the same view that mentoring seeks to bridge a gap between theory and practice in teacher education. Mentoring therefore supplements the knowledge that was gained during teacher training.

Similarly, Respondent 1B reported that teaching methods are explained during mentoring. *"The methods of teaching and learning are clarified during mentoring."* This is in line with Respondent 1A's narration that mentoring helps new teachers to adapt to the new teaching environment and were guided in approaching their lessons. Respondent 1B reported that mentoring helps the new teachers to solve their teaching problems and are guided and assisted in interpreting the syllabus. Kent et al (2009) also noted the issue of mentoring helping novice teachers to be able to solve teaching problems. He argued that the main goal of mentoring is to develop a cadre of teachers who are better prepared to overcome the educational challenges in schools and to increase teacher retention by providing better instructional training.

Respondent 2Z also reported that mentoring was important in business because mentored workers become very productive resulting in huge profits and the accumulated profits could last for a long time if young workers were mentored early as they would retire late in their working years. He said that in teaching mentoring reduces the number of new teachers who leave the profession as a result of being unable to succeed in their teaching. He also said that mentoring results in effective teaching and profitable business. Teacher 2Z that in teaching, more learners will pass if teachers

were mentored while high production would be gained in business if workers were mentored. He said that he had much interest in business and the subject, Business Economics was his major at the teacher training college. He remarked:

"*My major subjects are Business Economics and Accounting. I chose the subjects because they were my favorite subjects at post-primary school level.*"

Respondent 2Z reported that in teaching, mentoring reduces the number of new teachers who leave the profession as a result of being unable to succeed in their teaching. The importance of mentoring in improving teaching ability is supported by Martin (2008) who argues that mentoring boosts teacher performance and that of the learners. He also argues that mentoring leads to the retention of teachers and effective teaching. Similarly, McKim (2007) argues that mentoring schemes result in improved effectiveness of organizations and individuals. It is not only a novice teacher who benefits from mentoring, the whole school also benefits as the mentored teacher will have improved teaching abilities that result in improved learner performance and that of the school. Fluckiger et al (2006) also noted that mentoring results in retention of teachers and teachers of high quality.

 Respondent 2Z also reported that mentoring created communication between the novice and the experienced teacher and promotes team-work and good working relations among the staff. Regarding the issue communication, Hansman (2009) points out that there must be communication during mentoring and that takes place when the

mentor and the protégé clearly and openly define their relationship and discuss the desired roles, goals, and outcomes of their association. He also argues that where there is little trust between the mentor and the novice teacher, there will be no honest communication. Regarding the issue of good working relations, Stanulis and Russel (1999) emphasized the importance of the establishment of a sound working relationship between the mentor and the mentee. If there is honest communication among the teachers, then there will be sound working relations.   Most (50%) respondents reported confidence in handling teaching matters as one of the importance of mentoring. Some (33.3%) respondents reported that teachers are helped to grasp the teaching methods during mentoring, while others (16.7%) gave other importance such as new teachers being helped to adapt in the teaching environment and guided in approaching their lessons. The next section explores the teachers, mentoring experiences at different education levels.

4.3.5 TEACHERS' MENTORING EXPERIENCES AT DIFFERENT EDUCATION LEVELS

This section explores the respondents' experiences of mentoring at different levels of the Department of Education. These are school level and District levels. The respondents reported to have received some mentoring at these levels, as follows:

4.3.5.1 Mentoring experiences at the school level

Five respondents reported that they experienced mentoring by sharing their teaching challenges. Only Respondent 1A, a male from School 1, reported that there was no time for mentoring in his school because of workload. Five respondents also reported to have received informal mentoring. Whilst one Respondent 2Y, a female from School 2, reported to have received formal mentoring when she started teaching. The other two respondents in School 2 reported to have received informal mentoring. In School 1, all the respondents reported to have received informal mentoring when they started teaching.

Challenges experienced with the implementation of mentoring

Respondent 1A and 1C, both from School 1, reported that there was little time for the implementation of mentoring and there was no fixed program for mentoring because of workload. Respondent 1A said that mentoring is not working in his school as it was neglected. He remarked:

"In my school we do not have a fixed program for mentoring because of the workload and the shortage of time. It was a concept that was thrown on the table and left to rot."

Similarly, respondent 1C reported that there was no program for mentoring in her school. However, Respondent 1C reported that mentoring was done informally by sharing and discussing their common teaching challenges. She remarked:

"There is no program in place for mentoring. There are Subject Committees and Grade Committees who meet at specified times to discuss teaching challenges in our respective subjects."

All the respondents in School 2 did not report any challenges with the implementation of mentoring. However, they reported that mentoring was implemented by Phase and Grade teachers supervised by Heads of Department.

How mentoring was implemented

Through discussions: Respondent 1B reported that mentoring was done by subject teachers who discussed their common problems and planned together the work of each term. She said that subject teachers mentor each other by discussing their teaching challenges in their respective subjects, for example, teachers who teach Life Orientation plan together for each term and they discuss their challenges in the Learning Area. Respondent 1B remarked:

"In this school mentoring is done by subject teachers. We hold meetings as subject teachers and discuss our common problems. We discussed together our common problems and plan together for each term as subject teachers. We have four teachers for Life Orientation who meet time and again to discuss their common problems. The Subject Teachers plan together the work that is going to be taught for each term."

Similarly, Respondent 2Y, from School 2, reported that in their school, novice teachers received mentoring through activities organized by Phase and Grade Committees and Heads of Department. She said that teachers teaching in the same phase and teachers teaching in the same grade met time and again to share and discuss their teaching problems. Respondent 2Y also said that mentoring is something that guide and assists the novice teachers. Respondent 1C reported that there was no formal mentoring in her school. She said that Subject Committees and Grade Committees supervised by Heads of Department met time and again to discuss common challenges among teachers and they planned together. She remarked:

"There is no program in place for mentoring. There are Subject Committees and Grade Committees who meet at specified times to discuss teaching challenges in our respective subjects. We plan together as subject teachers."

Respondent 2X reported that mentoring helped the teachers on how to work together in approaching the teaching lessons. She remarked:

"In my school Phase Teachers get together and approach together things such as filling, assessment, recording sheets and rubrics. This helped the teachers to know each other's teaching challenges in the school. We also came up with solutions to the challenges as Phase teachers."

Respondent 2Z reported that he was informally mentored in the school by other teachers including senior teachers like Heads of Department, Subject Committees and Grade Committees in the school supported him by sharing teaching challenges and how to approach teaching lessons. He reflected:

"In my school, we shared teaching challenges with each other. This is mostly done in an informal way during break and lunch time. The teachers helped me on how to approach certain lessons that were difficult. The school also has Subject and Grade Committees where teachers share their common problems"

Five respondents reported that mentoring at the school level was in the form of informally sharing their teaching challenges. The five respondents said that there was no formal mentoring and Subject Committees, Grade and Phase Committees supervised by Heads of Department met to discuss their common teaching challenges. Kent et al (2009) argued that the main goal of mentoring is develop a cadre of teachers who are better prepared to overcome the educational challenges in schools and to increase teacher retention by providing better instructional training. Mentored novice teachers become able to overcome the teaching challenges as they share problems with each other.

The respondents in School 2 reported two types of mentoring that were taking place in their school, informal and formal. All the respondents in School 1 reported that informal mentoring was taking place in their school. Informal mentoring is a relation that that

develops on its own between two people whereby one wants to professionally and personally grow (Advanced Certificate in Education: 2006). In order to do mentoring, a novice teacher identifies a colleague considered to be knowledgeable and willing to assist. For an informal mentor-mentee relationship to be sound, a conducive environment to mentoring has to be created (Ibid). Formal mentoring occurs through structured programs in which mentors and mentees are carefully selected and matched through a formal process (Advanced Certificate in Education: 2006). Five respondents in this study reported that they received informal mentoring and only one (Respondent 2Y) reported receiving formal mentoring when she started teaching.

Subject Teachers were reported by Respondent 1C in School 1 as teachers who teach particular subjects in a school. They are allocated subjects that they are going to teach in the school, for example, teachers for Life Orientation. Teachers who teach Life Orientation are called Subject Teachers for Life Orientation. Subject Teachers are reported to be meeting at set dates to discuss their teaching challenges.

Respondent 1C, 1B, 2X and 2Z reported that Phase Teachers are teachers who teach in a particular phase. Teachers who teach at Foundation Phase are reported to be not the same teachers who teach in Further Education and Training Phase. It was reported by the Respondents 1C, 1B, 2X and 2Z that teachers of the same phase usually meet to discuss their common teaching challenges. Teaching challenges usually differ from phase to phase.

Subject Committees were reported by respondents 1C and 2X as committees that are made up by teachers teaching the same subject in a school. The Subject Committees reportedly meet and discuss all the teaching challenges in a subject. When there is a meeting of a Subject Committee, discussed matters are recorded as minutes. The Subject Teachers select members among themselves to make a Subject Committee. The Subject Committees were reported to have a chairperson and a secretary.

All the respondents reported that Phase Committees discuss the teaching challenges in a phase. Members of the Phase Committee are the teachers teaching in a particular phase, for example, Foundation Phase. There are office bearers such as the chairperson and the secretary. When the Phase Committee meet, the matters discussed are recorded as minutes.

Only respondent 1A reported that there was little or no time for the implementation of mentoring in his school. Respondent 1A also reported that there was no fixed program for mentoring and mentoring was no working in his school as it was neglected.

"In my school we do not have a fixed program because of the workload and the shortage of time. It was a concept that was thrown on the table and left to rot."

Similarly, respondent 1C reported that there was no program for mentoring in her school. However, respondent 1C reported that mentoring was done informally by sharing and discussing their common teaching challenges.

"There is no program in place for mentoring. There are Subject Committees and Grade Committees who meet at specified times to discuss teaching challenges in our respective subjects."

Most (83.3%) of the respondents reported that informal mentoring in the form of sharing and discussing their common teaching challenges was taking place in their schools. The other (16.7%) respondent reported that there was little or no mentoring taking place in his school.

The researcher also did documents analysis on mentoring at the school level in the last two years. The two schools supplied the documents that related to workshops by book publishers, School Management Teams (SMTs) and Committees. None of the documents talked about the novice or new teachers and their needs. The documents talked about the teachers in general and were silent about the novice or new teachers.

Book publishers such as Maskew Miller organized workshops for educators to help them cope with the changes in the curriculum. The workshops by the publishers were silent about the novice teachers and their needs. The publishers also used the workshops as an opportunity to advertise their books. The educators in the workshops were given samples of books to choose from for their schools. The educators compared the books and they chose the books that were in standard form and user friendly.

The School Management Teams (SMTs) used documents such as the Year Plan, Minutes book and the teacher consultation program. None of the three documents had issues relating to the novice teachers. The Year Plan informed the educators about the academic and extra-curricular activities for the whole year. The Minutes book had recorded matters during the meetings. The teacher consultation program shows the time when the school Subject Heads met with subject teachers to discuss the work progress and the teaching challenges.

The schools had the documents that showed that they had Grade and Phase committees, Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) committees and the Institutional Level Support Teams (ILSTs). There were minutes that showed the dates when the committees met and the matters that were discussed. All the committees were silent about the novice teachers and their needs. In Grade and Phase committee meetings, the teachers discussed the challenges they encountered in teaching their grades and phases. The Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) committees, Staff Development Team (SDT) and Development Support Group, have a responsibility to provide mentoring and support to the educators. The role and responsibility of the Institutional Level Support Teams is to study the reports provided by the educator on identified barriers and support provided. Similarly, Sweeney (2008) noted that mentoring and support for educators is important for orientation and professional development. Whilst Storrs et al (2008) and Martin (2008) also noted that quality mentoring results in improved teaching performance.

4.3.5.2 Mentoring experiences at the District level

All the respondents in both schools reported that they attended workshops organized by the Department of Education. Documents that were analysed by the researcher invited the educators to attend workshops, such as Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) introduction. Respondent 2Y of School 2 reported that she attended a two weeks in-service training when she started teaching. She also reported that she had regular visits by school inspectors who advised her on teaching challenges.

Respondent 1A, 1B and 1C from School 1, reported that they attended a workshop with other teachers in their school organized by the Department of Education. Respondent 1B commented:

"The teachers at my school attended workshops on the implementation of the new curriculum, Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement or CAPS. We were grouped into a cluster of schools at various centers in the District. Facilitators from the Education Department District conducted the workshops."

Respondent 1C remarked as follows about the workshops she attended:

"I attended a one week Geography workshop in town for Grade 10. We were introduced to the new curriculum, Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) by the

facilitators from the Education Department District office. The workshop was also attended by agents from the textbook publishers, who advertised their books."

Respondent 2X, 2Y and 2Z from School 2 reported that they also attended workshops organized by the Education District officials. Respondent 2X reported that she had teaching challenges and was helped by other teachers and facilitators in the workshops. She reflected:

"I also explained my challenges to the teachers and they informed me how to approach some lessons. I also attended workshops and got some expert advice from the facilitators."

Respondent 2Y, also from School 2, reported that she received a two weeks in-service training that was organized by the Department of Education. She said that school inspectors visited her school and gave her advice on teaching matters. She reflected:

"We were given a two weeks in-service training by the Department of Education as new teachers. That in-service training familiarized ourselves as new teachers with the task that we were faced with."

Even though she had reportedly received the mentoring, Respondent 2X, also reported that she was still having some problems with curriculum issues and needed constant support so as to improve her teaching ability. She said that curriculum was changing time and again. However, she was not fearful with the introduction of Curriculum

Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), as it was a new curriculum to all the teachers in her school. She remarked:

"With the introduction of Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement or CAPS, I am in the same level with other teachers as the curriculum is new to all of us. I am relieved with Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement or CAPS, because it was introduced on my head. However, I need constant assistance so as to be more productive in my teaching career."

Mentoring at the District level was reportedly in the form of workshops or in-service training. Respondent 2X from School 2, reported that as a new teacher she attended workshops and received expert advice on teaching challenges from the facilitators. However, she reported that she had some curriculum challenges especially with Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) and she needed constant support to improve her teaching ability. Respondent 2Y from School 2 reported that she received a two weeks in-service training as a new teacher. She also said that she received advice from school inspectors who visited her school. Respondents 1B and 1C, from School 1, also reported that they attended workshops on the new curriculum, Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (Caps), organized by the Education Department District officials. Kram (1995) explained mentoring as a senior or more experienced person providing advice or modeling about career development behaviors and personal support. Facilitators and school inspectors were more experienced in teaching than the respondents who were given advice. Storrs et al (2008) noted that mentoring provides

participants with benefits such as academic assistance, professional socialization, and problem-solving. Workshops and in-service training helped the respondents with academic assistance, professional socialization and problem-solving. All (100%) respondents reported mentoring at District level by attending workshops organized by the Education Department District office.

The researcher did documents analysis on mentoring at the District level in the last two years. The documents that the researcher got were those related to workshops of teachers, Learning Area cluster workshops, Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS), and Continuous Assessment (CASS) moderation. The invited teachers in general to attend workshops and they did not say anything about workshops for the novice or new teachers.

A number of documents invited teachers to attend workshops. The principals and School Management Teams (SMTs) were invited to a one day Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) advocacy session. In the advocacy session the new changes in the curriculum were introduced and explained. After the principal's workshop, the teachers of all grades were invited to a one day Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) orientation program. The teachers were also invited to attend one day content gap workshop programs. The workshops were held in the first quarter of the year by the teachers of all the Learning Areas in the schools.

During June holidays the teachers were invited to a three weeks Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) training workshops for all Learning Areas. There was also a workshop on the administration of Annual National Assessment (ANA) in Grades 1 to 6 and 9. The principal and one coordinator from each school were trained. A four days workshop on Intensive Computer Training (ICT) was attended by the teachers. The workshop was designed to assist the teachers eager to have entry level training course. General Education and Training (GET) feeder schools support program required teachers in their schools indicate the major training needs for the teachers. All the documents on workshops of the teachers were silent on the novice teacher and their needs. The documents on workshops of teachers catered for teachers in general.

Documents on Learning Area cluster workshops were analyzed by the researcher. Due to the introduction of the new content in the Learning Areas, all educators were invited to attend cluster workshops. The subject advisors of different Learning Areas were facilitators in the cluster sessions. In the sessions, the educators planned their work together for the term in their different Learning Areas. The Learning Area cluster workshops documents did not say anything about novice teachers and their needs.

Documents on Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) were analyzed by the researcher. The Department of Education supported learning and teaching by introducing Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS). The program was an integrated quality management system that consisted of three programs which were aimed at enhancing and monitoring performance of the education system. The three programs were Developmental Appraisal, Performance Measurement, and Whole

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School Evaluation. Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) identified specific needs of educators, schools and district offices for support and development.

By observing teachers in practice and evaluation was used to verify the Developmental Appraisal (DA) and Performance Measurement (PM) of the educators. The teachers attended in-service training and other programs in terms of areas identified for development. The Integrated Quality Management Systems' structure called the Development Support Group (DSG) assisted educators to meet their needs and provided mentoring and support. The Integrated Quality Management Systems' committees did not say anything about the novice teachers and their needs.

Continuous Assessment (CASS) moderation document was accessed and analyzed by the researcher. Teachers were invited to attend Continuous Assessment (CASS) moderation workshops at least twice a year. The National Protocol on Assessment for Grade R up to Grade 12 prescribed the number of formal tasks per grade per term as part of Continuous Assessment (CASS). The National Protocol on Assessment is also silent about the novice teachers and their needs.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the presentation of data from both the respondents and the school documents that were analysed. The chapter also dealt with the analysis of the data as reported by the respondents. The school documents related to mentoring and support were also analysed.

The chapter started with the introduction and thereafter dealt with the profiles of the schools and also that of the respondents. The chapter also dealt with the respondents' explanations of mentoring. The chapter further presented the views of the respondents on who should be mentored and also who is a mentor. The chapter further elaborated on the importance of mentoring. Finally, the chapter proceeds to report on mentoring at different Education levels.

The issue of mentoring was reported by the respondents as being done by the teachers themselves as Grade and Phase teachers under the supervision of the Heads of Department. The majority (Four) of respondents described mentoring as an act of giving guidance and help. Other (Two) respondents described mentoring as giving advice and development. The respondents reported that mentoring was helpful in guiding and councelling novice or new teachers. Most respondents reported that all teachers needed mentoring irrespective of age and experience in the profession. The respondents also revealed that teachers should mentor each other. However, mentoring by other senior people was reported as necessary as well. The next chapter explores the summary, conclusion and the recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENADATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide summary of the findings; provide conclusions and recommendations for further research. The aim of this study was to investigate the teachers' perceptions on the mentoring of novice teachers. The discussion will be guided by the main research question, namely:

The main research question:

What are the teachers' perceptions on the mentoring of novice teachers?

The sub-questions

- What are the teachers' explanations of mentoring?

- What do teachers think are the importance of mentoring?

- How do the teachers experience mentoring at school level?

- How do teachers experience mentoring at District level?

This chapter is structured as follows:

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Summary of findings

5.2.1 The respondents' explanations of mentoring

5.2.2 Who should be mentored?

5.2.3 Who is a mentor?

5.2.4 Importance of mentoring

5.2.5 Teachers' mentoring experiences at the school level

5.2.6 Teachers' mentoring experiences at the district level

5.3 Conclusion

5.4 Summary

5.5 Recommendations

5.2 Summary of the findings

5.2.1 The respondents' explanations of mentoring?

The study revealed that the respondents had different explanations of mentoring. It was noted by the researcher that in the respondents' explanations of mentoring, the issues of guidance and help were emphasized by most (83.3%) respondents while one respondent (16.7%) reported the issues of advice and development. The respondents described mentoring as a way of giving guidance and help so as to assist the novice teachers to adapt to the new profession. Literature supports the five respondents on guidance and help issues in their explanation of mentoring. Megginson and Clutter buck (1995) explain mentoring as help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking. Consistent with the study, a novice teacher who has less knowledge of teaching will be assisted by a more knowledgeable teacher to reach a stage where he/she can say that he/she is in a position to stand by him/her in the teaching environment. On the other hand, Sweeny (2008) explains mentoring as a complex developmental process that mentors use to support and guide their protégé through the necessary transactions that are part of learning how to be effective educators and career-long learners. Individuals who are supported and guided are called the mentees or protégés. This study reveals that novice teachers are the mentees or protégés that are supposed to be supported and guided.

One respondent reported the issues of advice and development and that a novice teacher must be assisted by a more experienced person. Similarly, Kram (1985) explained mentoring as something that involves a more experienced person, the mentor, providing advice or modeling about career development behaviors to a junior person, the mentee. This implies that mentoring is when a novice teacher is helped by a more experienced teacher in teacher in teaching career matters. Respondent 1A and Respondent 2Z reported the issue of mentoring as being guidance of a novice teacher by a more experienced teacher.

"Mentoring is the guiding and helping of a new teacher by a more experienced teacher in his or her teaching."

Eby (1997) also emphasizes the issues of advice and development in his definition of mentoring. He defines mentoring as an intense developmental relationship whereby advice, counseling and developmental opportunities are provided to a mentee by a mentor, which in turn shapes the mentees' career experiences.

The study also revealed that in conceptualizing mentoring, literature gives a narrow explanation of mentoring as it focuses mainly on novice teachers. Contrary to literature, the respondents reported other teachers mentoring each other. It can be argued that experienced teachers can also be novice teachers. With the introduction of Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement, a new curriculum, all teachers irrespective of their

experience were introduced to the curriculum. This implies that all teachers became novice teachers when the new curriculum was introduced, therefore experienced teachers can also be novice teachers.

5.2.2 Who should be mentored?

The respondents reported that new teachers, novice teachers and subject teachers should be mentored. The majority (66.6%) of the respondents reported that novice or new teachers should be mentored, while some (33.4%) of the respondents reported that subject teachers must mentor each other. Three respondents reported that new teachers should, while one respondent reported that novice teachers should be mentored. The terms novice teachers and new teachers refer to the same group of teachers who are new in the teaching profession.

 Kram (1985) suggests that mentoring should be provided to a junior person or a mentee. He also argued that mentoring involves a senior or a more experienced person providing advice or modeling about career development behaviors to a junior person or a mentee. Similarly, Eby (1997) argued that a mentee should get mentoring advice, counseling, and developmental opportunities provided by a mentor, which in turn shapes the mentee's career experiences. Ragins (1997b) also defines mentors as individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to mentees' careers. From Ragins' definition, it is affirmed that the mentees are the ones that should be provided with the mentoring support.

Two respondents, 1B and 1C reported that subject teachers should mentor each other. Similarly, Eby (1997) and Bozionelos (2004) advocated subject teachers mentoring each other and called that peer mentoring. Peer mentoring refers to the teachers teaching the same subject in a school observing teaching lessons of one another. Teachers from other schools can be invited to do lesson observations. The aim of peer mentoring is developmental as teachers share their common teaching challenges. Areas that need improvement are noted and corrected in a later observation lesson.

5.2.3 Who is a mentor?

The respondents reported that a mentor is a person who gives guidance and help; a person who shares teaching challenges supports new teachers and organizes teaching challenges, a person who guides and assists other teachers when they encounter teaching problems. The respondents also reported that they were mentored by other teachers, the principal and staff, Subject and Phase teachers, Grade and Phase Committees, and the more experienced teachers. Most (66.6%) respondents reported that a mentor is a person who shares and discusses common teaching challenges with other teachers. Other (33.4%) respondents reported that a mentor guides, supports, assists and organizes teaching activities.

Ragins (1997b) defines mentors as individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to mentees' careers. The definition implies that a mentor is a person who has more experience and knowledge and must be able to develop and support the mentee in his/her career. Similarly, Respondents 2X and 2Y reported that mentoring is getting guidance from a more experienced teacher. Bozemant and Feeney (2007) echoed the issue of a mentor as someone who gives guidance. They argued that some researchers address the possible negative outcomes of mentoring, where barriers prevent mentors from providing guidance to mentees.

Elby (2000) also noted the issue of mentoring as guidance. He defined negative mentoring as specific incidence that occur between mentors and mentees, or mentor's characteristic manner of interacting with mentees, mentor' characteristics that limit their ability to effectively provide guidance to a mentee seems to be a crucial characteristic of a mentor. The issue of being able to assist and organize teaching activities reported by Respondent 2X was echoed by Mackim et al, (2007) in his explanation of a mentor.

"A mentor is someone who helps another person through an important transition such as coping with a new situation like a new job or major change in personal circumstances or in career development or personal growth."

5.2.4 Importance of mentoring

The study revealed that there are ten points that were given by the respondents as importance of mentoring. The points are: teachers are helped to grasp the teaching methods during mentoring, mentoring helps new teachers to adapt to the new teaching environment and were guided in approaching their lessons, mentoring helps the new teachers to solve their teaching problems and are guided and assisted in interpreting the syllabus, mentoring narrows the knowledge gap between the mentor and the mentee and the mentored teacher comes closer to being perfect in his/her teaching activities, mentoring enhances individual attention, mentoring improves the teaching ability and develops a feeling of acceptance by the colleagues and self-respect, a mentored teacher becomes dedicated and tolerant to his/her work and becomes successful in the teaching career, mentoring helps the teacher to gain confidence, and mentoring creates communication between the novice and the experienced teacher and promotes team-work and good working relations among the staff.

Most (50%) respondents reported confidence in handling teaching matters as the importance of mentoring. Some (33.3%) respondents reported that teachers are helped to grasp the teaching methods during mentoring, while other (16.7%) respondents reported new teachers being helped to adapt in the teaching environment and guided in approaching their lessons. Respondents 2X, 2Y, and 2Z reported that mentoring helps the teachers to gain more confidence in handling teaching matters. Similarly, Kent et al (2009) maintained that mentoring helps in greater novice teacher preparedness and subsequent increase in long-term commitment. This implies that a mentored teacher

does not only become ready for teaching challenges, but also becomes dedicated to his work.

Respondent 1B reported that mentoring helps the new teachers to solve their teaching problems and are guided and assisted in interpreting the syllabus. Similarly, Kent et al (2009) noted mentoring as helping teachers to be able to solve teaching problems. He also argued that the main goal of mentoring is to develop a cadre of teachers who are better prepared to overcome the educational challenges in schools and to increase teacher retention by providing better instructional training.

Respondent 1C reported that mentoring narrows the knowledge gap between the mentor and the mentee. Similarly, Kent et al (2009) argues that mentoring bridges the gap between pre-service and in-service teaching and addresses the broader concerns of teacher attrition by allowing novice teachers to begin their careers with the support and guidance of a full-time mentor. Storrs et al (2007) also maintains that individuals regardless of whether they were in the role of protégé or mentor often experienced a gap in what they expected to experience in the mentoring relationship and what they actually experienced. Allen (2002) also had the same view that mentoring seeks to bridge a gap between theory and practice in teacher education. This implies that mentoring supplements knowledge that was gained during teacher training.

Respondent 2X reported that mentoring improves the teaching ability and develops a feeling of acceptance by the colleagues and self-respect. Similarly, Martin (2008) noted

that mentoring boosts teacher performance and that of learners. He also argues that mentoring leads to the retention of teachers and effective teaching. Mackim also argues that mentoring schemes result in improved effectiveness of organizations and individuals. It is not only novice teachers who benefit from mentoring, the whole school also benefits as the mentored teacher will have improved learner performance and that of the school. Fluckiger et al (2006) also noted that mentoring promotes teacher retention and teacher quality.

Respondent 2Z reported that mentoring creates communication between the novice and the experienced teacher and promotes team-work and good working relations among the staff. Similarly, Hansman (2009) points out that there must be communication during mentoring and that takes place when the mentor and the protégé clearly and openly define their relationship and discuss the desired roles, goals, and outcomes of their association. He also argues that where there is little trust between the mentor and the novice teacher, there will be no honest communication. Stanulis and Russel (1999) emphasized the importance of the establishment of a sound working relationship between the mentor and the mentee. This implies that if there is honest communication among the teachers, then there will be sound working relations.

5.2.5 Teachers' experiences of mentoring at the school level.

Most (83.3%) respondents reported that mentoring was taking place in their schools. They reported that the mentoring at their schools was informal and mostly took the form

of sharing and discussing common teaching challenges. Respondent 1C reported that there was no formal mentoring in her school and Subject Committees and Grade Committees supervised by Heads of Department met time and again to discuss common teaching challenges among teachers and they planned together.

"There is no program in place for mentoring. There are Subject Committees and Grade Committees who meet at specified times to discuss teaching challenges in our respective subjects. We plan together as subject teachers."

Only (16.7%) respondent 2X reported that there was little or no implementation of mentoring in his school. Respondent 1A is a principal of School 1 and he reported that he had never experienced formal mentoring. He also reported that mentoring is not working in his school and it was neglected.

"In my school we do not have a fixed program for mentoring because of the workload and the shortage of time. It was a concept that was thrown on the table and left to rot."

However, novice teachers in School 1 reported that informal mentoring in the form of informally sharing teaching challenges was taking place in the school.

The respondents reported that mentoring was done by subject teachers, Grade and Phase teachers, Grade and Phase Committees supervised by Heads of Department. Most (83.3%) respondents reported that they received informal mentoring and only

respondent Y (16.7%) reported that she received formal mentoring when she started teaching. This implies that formal mentoring was applied to old teachers like respondent 2Y. However, respondent 1A, a principal of School 1, reported that he did not receive formal mentoring when he started teaching. Respondent 2Y is a primary school teacher and respondent 1A is a secondary school teacher, probably, that could be a reason for one old teacher receiving formal mentoring and the other not getting formal mentoring.

The researcher also did documents analysis on the teachers' experiences on mentoring at school level in the last two years, 2011 and 2012. The two schools made available the documents that were related to workshops by publishers, School Management Teams (SMTs), and Committees. None of the documents talked about the novice teachers and their needs. The documents referred to teachers in general and were silent about novice teachers. This was so, probably because the Department of Education District does not have mentoring programs targeting mainly novice teachers and their needs.

5.2.6 Teachers' mentoring experiences at District level.

All (100%) the respondents reported mentoring at District level in the form of workshops. The respondents reported that they received mentoring in the form of workshops and in-service training. The workshops were reported to be conducted by other teachers and facilitators. The in-service training sessions were reported to be conducted by school inspectors who also visited the schools to give advice on teaching

matters to novice teachers. Kram (1995) explained mentoring as a senior or more experienced person providing advice or modeling about career development behaviors and personal support. Facilitators and school inspectors were more experienced in teaching than the novice teachers who were given advice. Storrs et al (2008) noted that mentoring provides participants with benefits such as academic assistance, professional socialization, and problem-solving. Workshops and in-service training provided novice teachers with academic assistance, professional socialization and problem-solving.

Respondents who are novice teachers reported that they attended workshops, while Respondent 2Y who is a principal of School 2, reported that she attended in-service training. There is a difference in terminology, but both terms refer to the same thing, taking place at different times. Respondent 2X, who is a novice teacher reported that facilitators conducted workshops, while respondent 2Y, a principal of School 2, reported that the school inspectors conducted the in-service training to novice teacher. Respondent 2Y also reported that she received formal mentoring when she started teaching, while respondent 2X reported that she received informal mentoring by sharing teaching challenges with other teachers. Respondent 1B and 1C from School 1, reported that they attended workshops organized by the Department of Education District office on the new curriculum, Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). The study reveals that there was formal mentoring for some novice teachers in the past and there is no evidence of formal mentoring for the current novice teachers.

5.3 Conclusion

This study has contributed to highlighting the teachers' perceptions on the mentoring of novice teachers. The study has also helped to explain the concept of mentoring and also explaining who should be mentored and also who is a mentor. The study also identified the importance of mentoring. The teachers' experiences of mentoring at school and District levels were highlighted.

The study revealed that the respondents had different explanations of mentoring. Most respondents reported issues of guidance and help while others reported issues of advice and development. Most respondents reported that new teachers or novice teachers should be mentored while others reported that subject teachers must mentor each other. Most respondents explained that a mentor is a person who shares and discusses common teaching challenges with other teachers. Other respondents reported that a mentor is a person who guides, supports, assists, and organizes teaching activities.

The study also revealed that most of the respondents reported that confidence in handling teaching matters as the importance of mentoring. Some respondents reported that teachers are helped to grasp the teaching methods during mentoring while other respondents reported new teachers being helped to adapt in the teaching environment and guided in approaching lessons.

The study also revealed that most respondents reported that mentoring was taking place in their schools, while one reported that there was little or no mentoring taking place in his school. Most respondents reported informal mentoring in the form of sharing their teaching challenges during break and lunch time. Only one respondent reported to have received formal mentoring when she started teaching. Phase and Grade teachers were also reported to be mentoring each other in the two schools.

The study also revealed that the documents analysed in the two schools showed that teachers were mentored by workshops by textbook publishers, School Management Teams (SMTs), and Committees. None of the documents analysed by the researcher talked about the novice teachers and their needs. The documents referred to the teachers in general. This was so, probably because the Department of Education District does not have mentoring programs targeting novice teachers and their needs.

The study also revealed that all the respondents reported that they received mentoring at District level. The respondents reported that they attended workshops that were organized by the Department of Education District office. The documents that were analysed by the researcher invited the teachers to attend workshops such as the new curriculum, Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). The documents invited the teachers in general and did not specifically target novice or new teachers. This is so, probably because the Department of Education District does not have a mentoring program that targets novice teachers.

5.4 Summary

In summary, the study showed that the respondents wanted mentoring to be done by all the teachers in a school. Respondents described mentoring by more senior people as also important. The respondents described mentoring as something that guides and assists teachers in their teaching challenges. Effective mentoring was reported as resulting in improved teaching performance and the performance of learners is also improved. The study also did not get any mentoring program that targeted the novice teachers.

5.5 Recommendations

The researcher recommends that experienced teachers should mentor and assist the novice teachers in the profession. The experienced teachers should also give each other mentoring support. However, mentoring is mostly needed by those teachers that are new in the teaching profession. Reviewed literature on mentoring maintained that mentoring has benefits for teachers as individuals and the school as a whole. Most mentored teachers become successful in their teaching and most of their learners also succeed in their studies. It is also suggested that The Department of Education should organize mentoring programs for every group of teachers that have joined teaching for the first time. The programs should be organized in the first year of teaching.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Tell me more about yourself.
2. Tell me more about yourself as a professional.
3. Why did you choose teaching as a profession?
4. What were your major subjects at tertiary level?
5. Are you teaching the same subjects you learnt at the college?
6. Which subjects are you teaching now?
7. What is mentoring?
8. How does mentoring take place in your school?
9. Do you encounter any mentoring problems in your school?
10. Tell me about your first day as a teacher.
11. What were your fears? Please explain these for me.
12. How were your fears lessened?
13. How did you feel about teaching in the first month?
14. What kind of support did you get from the school?
15. Did you ever think of leaving the profession?
16. Do you have any other comment to make?

APPENDIX 2

Permission letter to the respondents.

To   : The respondent

     School x

From: S. A. Dlani (Mr)

     P. O. Box 1796

     King William's Town

     5600

Subject: Research Studies

Sir/Madam

I am currently engaged in completing my Dissertation for Master of Education as a student at the University of Fort Hare (UFH) under the supervision of Dr Duku. My student number is 9536620 and my topic is "The teachers' perceptions of the novice teacher mentoring programme received." I request you to grant me consent to interview you and I assure you that strict confidentiality and anonymity will be adhered to.

I appeal to you to respond as honestly as possible.

<u>Details of the respondent</u>

Name………………………

Position……………………

School…………………….

APPENDIX 3

LETTR SEEKING FOR PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

Cell no 0834230094   P. O. Box 1796

King William's Town

5600

18 October 2012

Department of Education

King William's Town District

King William's Town

5600

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I Siyongwana Archibald Dlani am a student at Fort Hare (student no. 9536620).

I am currently busy reading towards a M. Ed. Degree under the topic "The teachers' perceptions of the mentoring of novice teachers in schools."

I would like to do research in two schools in the King William's Town District.

S. A. Dlani

APPENDIX 4

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Continuing and General
Education
50 Church Street,
East London
Phone: East London: 043 704 7222/221
Email: nduku@ufh.ac.za

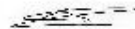University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

12 July 2012

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that Siyongwana Dlani is a Master of Education candidate at the University of Fort Hare. His student number is 9536620. In order to fulfil the requirements of her study, he needs to undertake field research. The title of his research is "The novice teachers' perceptions of the mentoring programme received". He has identified your school as one of the research sites, and is due to collect data during July/September 2012 period. Kindly grant him permission to collect data in your school.

Feel free to contact me for any more information at the following contact numbers:
043-704 7222/7221.

Sincerely

Dr. N. Duku
Research Promoter

APPENDIX 5

0437027427

Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES
Steve Vukile Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape
Private Bag X0032 • Bhisho • 5605 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: +27 (0)43 702 7426 • Fax: +27 (0)43 702 7427/20 • Website: www.ecdoe.gov.za

Enquiries: Dr Heskroodt   Email: bernelia@iefrica.com

11 April 2011

Siyongwana Archibald Dlani

Ngqwele Location

Box 1798

KING WILLIAM'S TOWN

5600

Dear Mr Dlani

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH FOR A MASTER'S THESIS: AN INVESTIGATION ON HOW NOVICE TEACHERS EXPERIENCE MENTORING IN THE KING WILLIAM'S TOEN DISTRICT

1. Thank you for your application to conduct research.

2. Your application to conduct the above mentioned research in five (5) Secondary Schools in the Eastern Cape under the jurisdiction of the King William's Town District is hereby approved on condition that:
   a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;

   b. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;

   c. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) to the District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;

   d. you will make all the arrangements concerning your research;

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043702/42/

e. the research may not be conducted during official contact time, as educators'
programmes should not be interrupted;

f. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted,
an application to do this must be directed to the Director: Strategic Planning Policy
Research and Secretarial Services;

g. the research may not be conducted during the fourth school term, except in cases
where a special well motivated request is received;

h. your research will be limited to those schools or institutions for which approval has
been granted;

i. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis
free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a
separate synopsis (maximum 2 – 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and
recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis. This must also be in an
electronic format.

j. you are requested to provide the above to the Director: The Strategic Planning
Policy Research and Secretarial Services upon completion of your research.

k. you comply to all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to
conduct Research in the ECDoE document duly completed by you.

l. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form).

m. You submit on a six monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research,
concise reports to the Director: Strategic Planning Policy Research and Secretariat
Services.

3. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Director, Dr.
Annetia Heckroodt on 043 702 7428 or mobile number 083 271 0715 and email:
annetia.heckroodt@edu ecprov.gov.za should you need any assistance.

Advocate M Mannya

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: EDUCATION