

SHARED EXPERIENCES OF NOVICE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' MENTOR TRAINING: A
PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCE OF PEER EDUCATORS

by

Bryan Martyn

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the shared experiences of novice school principals' mentor training and to gain an understanding of the experience of peer educators. This dissertation employed a qualitative case study methodology to interview Arizona principals with less than three years of experience who did not receive district-provided, formal mentorship training during their first years as principals to determine their experiences and support needs. I assessed the current literature on inexperienced principal mentorship programs in the United States via the lens of Kram's Mentoring Model and then linked this literature to the principals' reported concerns. In this study, I made conclusions about the practice of Arizona school principals and the potential development of formal mentorship programs at the district level using interview data. I investigated the challenges faced by inexperienced principals in Arizona, as well as the suggested inputs, processes, outputs, and potential outcomes if the proposed program were implemented. Using the principal participants as improvement partners, a program theory coaching model was created to facilitate the transition and success of new Arizona principals. The study identifies the perceived value of principal mentorship and many of the challenges associated with the current mentoring models in Arizona. The study concludes with suggestions for a wide range of stakeholders, including state education authorities, school directors, district executives, human resources, career development executives, district executives, and a select group of principal advisors.

Keywords: novice principal, mentorship, higher education, mentors, mentee

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Foreword

The author's lifetime of personal observations encompasses many elements of this work. As a young adult, following high school graduation, he began an outstanding military career in the US Army. After earning his helicopter pilot wings, he qualified as a helicopter gunship pilot. Quickly, he gained additional flight qualifications, propelling himself into the Instructor/Evaluator echelons. His flying expertise matched the Army's needs for Advanced Gunnery Helicopter Instructor duty. An interservice transfer opportunity arose, allowing Mr. Martyn to transition into the Air Force commissioned pilot corps. He served with me in an active Combat Zone in Iraq for several months. Using his Army background, he made myself, with the entire Special Operations Flying Group, an extremely valuable part of the highly successful Joint Force acting as leading element of the second Iraqi Invasion. As a military retiree, returning home to Arizona, he observed community needs through a wide variety of professions. Bryan has personal, hands-on experiences, increasing his insight into the shortfalls of the current principal mentoring programs. I encourage close examination of the following study.

O.G. Mannon
Major General, USAF Retired

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to those who make the effort to show up every day and try to make a difference. Leading as an educator has become one of the most challenging professions of our time. The requirement of passion, dedication, knowledge, and sacrifice serve as hallmarks of the role of leader. Thank you to those who choose the profession of teaching and leading our youth. Thank you for “*getting in the arena!*”

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Acknowledgments

This journey began with a step of faith and prayer. The Lord continues to bless me with challenges and opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others. I would be nothing without His grace.

Allow me to acknowledge my amazing wife, Susie, as we continue this unbelievable journey. Her never-ceasing support has guided us through more than 35 years of marriage, three sons, six combat tours, and multiple career choices. This Ph.D. endeavor is simply another chapter in what has been an amazing “book” of my life.

There are many exceptional people that have inspired me to seek the next challenge. My grandfather taught me to be a gentleman and a warrior. My mother demonstrated daily the value of hard work and dedication. My most inspiring military commanders, O.G. Mannon, Joe Becker, and Paul Eno, all represented the finest qualities of leadership. My closest friends have always been there to support, inspire, and keep me accountable. Thank you, Dave Eske, Brad Fribbs, Eric Johnson, Dave Richins, Woody Rankin, Tom Bilsten, and Jay Ream.

Finally, I need to thank the young men and women who put me on this path--my students. You continue to inspire me to challenge myself while challenging others to be the best they can be. You have changed my life as much as I've changed yours. Thank you-

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List of Abbreviations

Administrative Leadership Academy (ALA)

Coaching Leaders to Achieve Student Success (CLASS)

Entry Year Program (EYP)

Extra Support for Principals (ESP)

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

Social and Emotional Competencies (SEC)

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

The Kansas Educational Leadership Institute (KELI)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the shared experiences of novice school principals' mentor training and to gain an understanding of the experience of peer educators. The research will seek to comprehend the individual perspectives and experiences of novice school principals as they undergo mentor training and to gain insight into the collective experience of peer educators. This qualitative study utilizes the transcendental phenomenological research method to describe novice school principals' leadership training (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). As this study focuses on novice school leaders' perspectives and experiences, a qualitative research approach is appropriate for this work. This study analyzes how candidates are prepared to effectively direct education programs through diverse experiences and leadership training programs. Through in-depth study, critical thought, and the compilation of the leaders' experiences, I sought to investigate the narrative of principals and the numerous educational leadership programs in which they participate. The relevance of this study to colleagues and other academics resides in the fact that it contributes to the body of information regarding educational leadership practice, particularly as it pertains to novice principals in Arizona. In addition, it assesses the several school leadership training programs that already exist. To supplement the historical perspective, an examination of the fundamentals of educational leadership and its evolution over time will follow.

Background

According to a study conducted and published by the RAND Corporation (2021), approximately 20% of newly appointed principals resign from their positions within one to two years, typically leaving a school that continues to experience academic decline after their

departure. Mentoring is one technique that may ease the transition into a new role for a principal and increase the likelihood of success. There is not one single definition of mentoring that everyone embraces. According to Johnson (2008), a mentor is a seasoned professional who works with novices to foster professional development and success by offering support, aid, and direction in their endeavors. Mentoring is an effective way to assist teachers in moving into principal roles. According to Haggard et al. (2011), mentoring is a relationship between two people in which an experienced person (the mentor) passes on knowledge, advice, and support to a less experienced person (the mentee). It is typically a long-term relationship where the mentor provides guidance, support, and encouragement to help the mentee reach their goals. Mentoring is defined in a variety of ways. In general, it is a relationship between an expert and a novice focused on fostering the growth and advancement of the person new to the task or situation.

There are formal and informal forms of mentoring. Establishing a formal mentoring relationship often requires establishing an organization's explicit and organized mentorship program. Under this program, mentees and mentors are teamed up with one another and assigned to work together. After that, the organization normally allots time for the mentors and the mentees to meet and address any queries or concerns, in addition to setting objectives and targets for forthcoming projects (Murray et al., 2001).

Quinnell (2017) states, "Formal mentoring is when an organization creates a program where employees and leaders may opt-in as mentors or mentees" (p. 14). The program's administrators will next try to find compatible matches between mentors and mentees (Quinnell, 2017). When it comes to official mentoring programs, a timetable is arranged so the mentee and the mentor can get together regularly to discuss the issues influencing the mentee's development and comprehension. Consequently, the most distinguishing feature of formal mentoring is its

organized and highly structured method of providing mentorship. As a result, there is no possibility that anyone interested in having a mentor would be denied one, given that mentors are allocated to everyone who enrolls in the program. Formal mentoring may help level the playing field for both genders, which is a significant advantage of the program.

There is a greater risk that a formal mentoring relationship will not be a good match, as it is assigned, rather than developing naturally as an informal mentoring relationship would. Formal mentoring relationships are less organic than informal ones (Murray et al., 2001). These relationships can result in mentees and mentors not being able to communicate effectively with one another, forcing the mentee to have an uncomfortable talk with the program administrator about getting a new mentor.

Informal mentoring interactions, on the other hand, are not formally established but rather evolve organically within a corporate setting rather than being allocated. Both purposeful and unintended interactions constitute informal mentoring. An example of the former would be a younger worker actively searching for a more experienced colleague to mentor them (i.e., two employees befriending and learning from each other).

Transforming a causal connection into a mentoring relationship is typical informal mentoring. A common scenario involves a junior employee making friends with a senior employee, which results in the senior employee eventually taking the junior employee under their wing. Another scenario involves a junior employee discovering a senior employee to whom they feel comfortable asking essential questions.

According to Quinnell (2017), “informal mentoring” occurs when workers discover a leader or peer they can grow to depend on and wish to share the experience with others. When this occurs unintentionally, an employee may learn to go to a particular leader to gain helpful

counsel or personal and professional development direction. Because of this, a mentoring relationship may emerge organically, even if the parties involved would never refer to themselves as mentors or mentees. In the context of a school environment, a formal mentorship program is one in which the senior person, such as the administrator, board of trustees, or state legislature, demands that a mentoring program be formed for various people within the system. When school administrators require such programs, formal agreements are often made to serve as the basis for the subsequent prearrangements for relationship building.

To reduce pressure, stress, and the lack of fresh principals, many school systems have started to prioritize principal mentoring, according to Spiro et al. (2007). A program called the Entry Year Program (EYP), a two-year pilot project for an Administrative Leadership Academy (ALA), gave principals high-quality professional growth to increase their capacity for development and learning. The Entry Year Program supported new school administrators in building their school (administration) portfolio. The Ohio Department of Education studied the Early Years Program (EYP) to determine which kind of educational activities are required by their requirements.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) is an organization that works nationally to support principals in their pursuit of being visionary school leaders by offering professional resources supported by research and validated by peers. Through its mentorship program, NASSP contributes to the professional growth of elementary school principals who are new to the role.

Historical Context

Building-level school leadership has drawn the attention of authorities, donors, and academics in recent years (Beisser et al., 2022). A growing body of evidence suggests a link

between student achievement and the actions of school administrators (Williams, 2020).

Research shows that leadership can impact around 25% of the diversity in student achievement related to school-level characteristics, even though the influence is indirect and relatively small (Perilla, 2020). This research explores contemporary school reform programs emphasizing building-level leadership and school administrators through site-based accountability.

Some scholars and reform advocates are attempting to widen the definition of leadership to encompass activities carried out by teachers, community groups, and site-based teams. When discussing school leadership, they usually refer to the principal's position. Consequently, as interest in school leadership has increased, so has an interest in principalship, which is supposedly more challenging, time-consuming, and crucial than ever (Solomon et al., 2018). Principalship interest has increased in tandem with educational leadership interest. Many contemporary studies and reports on principalship compare the work that school principals do now to what they did in the past and say that the principalship of a school in the 21st century is or must be radically different from what it was in the past.

It was once sufficient for a principal to simply be competent at their job. Principals were primarily expected to comply with district-level directives, address personnel issues, place orders for supplies, maintain a budget for each program, keep hallways and playgrounds safe, extinguish fires that threatened peaceful public relations, and ensure that busing and meal services were operating without a hitch over the last century. Principals are still responsible for all these mandates but now have extra duties (Guptan, 2018).

In the framework of public education's broader history, the modern function of the principal is a phenomenon that evolved later (Harris & Jones, 2020). In the early days of education, courses were taught by a single instructor, known as a master, who was typically

answerable to the local community for the conduct of their classes through elected or appointed school boards. The phrase “principal teacher” was not coined until the early 1800s, when schools became significantly larger and began grouping students by grade (Day et al., 2016). This employee, who was invariably male, was a teacher who also performed administrative and clerical tasks to keep the school running smoothly. This employee was responsible for assigning classes, administering discipline, maintaining the facility, taking attendance, and ensuring that school began and concluded on schedule, among other responsibilities. The teacher’s obligation to communicate with and answer inquiries from the district superintendent, who typically oversees local schools from a distance, imposed a certain level of responsibility on the latter (Saidun et al., 2015). As the century passed, the primary teacher lost his teaching responsibilities and became a manager, administrator, supervisor, instructional leader, and a rising number of politicians (Rousmaniere, 2007). This change in responsibility happened as the role of the principal teacher shifted from the nineteenth to the twentieth century.

Social Context

During the past two decades of educational reform in the United States, the role of the school principal has become increasingly varied (Akinbode & Al Shuhumi, 2018). Principals have a substantial effect not just on the well-being and academic performance of their students, but also on the lives of their fellow academics and staff. In a recent survey, state-level educational policymakers were questioned about the role of school administrators in fostering social and emotional learning (SEL) and creating healthy, caring schools (Solomon et al., 2018). According to the survey, results play a crucial influence in both areas. Presently, educators and policymakers view SEL as the foundation upon which the performance of schools and students’ learning outcomes are constructed.

Principals are exposed to a significant amount of stress due to the many challenges associated with their leadership role; nevertheless, they frequently do not have the training and resources necessary to develop their own social and emotional competencies (SECs), which could assist them in correctly responding to the stress (Knapp et al., 2010). Many principals believe they cannot effectively lead their schools because they do not possess the necessary training (Rangel, 2021). Not only do principals affect the happiness of the teaching staff, but they are also an important factor in students' achievement. According to the findings of a study conducted by Leithwood (2010), the principal's participation in student performance was comparable only to that of teachers. I also discovered that teachers had the most significant effect on students' learning and success. The involvement of the principal accounted for about 25 percent of the total influence that the school had on the academic performance and learning of the students (Leithwood, 2010). Because of this, principals are responsible for ensuring that they are adequately equipped to carry out their roles.

According to Simpson (2022), a leader has strategic visionary traits, is capable of transcending beyond individual self-beliefs, is prepared to be self-sacrificing to attain and accomplish the larger good and is willing to stand up and take leadership when others want someone to emulate. A leader is willing to accept responsibility for the people who follow them, has a philosophy that contributes to a greater good than oneself, and is prepared to make tough choices when others may be unwilling to do so. Principals of high-performing schools know they do not have all the answers. Because of this, they try to ensure that a decision-making process involving collaboration is in place at their institutions (Harland, 2014). Influential school leaders recognize the need to work together as a team rather than place all the responsibility on the shoulders of a single individual to improve a school.

Markow et al. (2020) found that the onerous title of “principal” is no longer attractive to people, contributing to a scarcity of people filling this post. In most situations, during the principal’s first induction into their work as a new principal, there is a lack of support, which, in addition to the obligations and strains of this position, is also a factor in the position itself. Many principals are compelled to learn on the job by making mistakes, working in isolation, and receiving little to no feedback during their first few years in the position (Markow et al., 2020). Life during the induction time may make novice principals feel overwhelmed, and if they do not get the aid they need, they may become disillusioned and quit their jobs at an alarmingly high rate.

It is common for teachers to rise through the ranks to become principals. There are several critical distinctions between the responsibilities of a teacher and those of a principal. A teacher’s thinking is confined to the students in a particular classroom. Still, the principal is accountable for the whole student body and must report responsibilities to upper management within the district (Akinbode & Al Shuhumi, 2018). As a result, moving from being a teacher to becoming a principal attracts new obstacles that may take time to solve.

The obstacles that school directors encounter are varied and involve making day-to-day administrative choices, such as purchasing school supplies and sustaining the facility, in addition to more critical curricular considerations, such as determining which courses should be made accessible to students and resolving disciplinary and personnel concerns as soon as they arise. It is necessary to find solutions to these problems. In addition, the principal is the one who is ultimately accountable for the accomplishments of both the students and the institution (Ruggirello, 2022). According to Akinbode and Al Shuhumi (2018), being a good principal may be achieved by beginning with a plan, pre-planning for expected obstacles, and finding ways to

overcome the hurdles.

Theoretical Context

Two fundamental principles are associated with leadership preparation and provide additional insight. The theory of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is the theoretical underpinning of this research. It refers to the unique knowledge and abilities that educators must acquire to educate and lead effectively. Shulman (1986), an educational psychologist, developed the inquiry-based framework. It was based on teacher certification exams and a movement that reinforced its focus on knowledge of subject matter over training. The primary topics of this research are the dynamics of content knowledge, how that knowledge is translated into leadership, and the evaluation of teaching experiences.

The findings of Almeida et al. (2019) strengthen the applicability of PCK to the research since it extends the notion of PCK concerning other educational disciplines, namely educational leadership. In general, subject matter, topic, methodologies, and learning assessment are some specific knowledge and competencies covered in the PCK construct.

Consider the following example to comprehend better how PCK was utilized: There is a correlation between the effectiveness of principals and teachers and between the effectiveness of instructors and student accomplishment (Perilla, 2020). This argument supports the requirement that principals in all sectors aiming to support teachers and students have strong leadership skills and adequate preparation. During their work, the researchers have compiled a list of qualities that are thought to be indicative of an “excellent” school principal. Having a command of administration and processes, in addition to instructional leadership, is demonstrated by several of these characteristics (Hebert, 2019). Nevertheless, it was their duty to provide a contribution that is relevant both to the results of student development and to the effectiveness of teaching.

Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist framework regarding the novice principals states that the novice principal must learn how to interact with their peers to be successful. The novice principal must learn how to lead and manage the school, collaborate with teachers, parents, and other stakeholders, and create an environment of trust and respect. The novice principal must also develop the skills to communicate effectively with the staff and community to foster a positive school climate. Vygotsky's theory suggests that the novice principal should be provided with opportunities to practice their skills and receive feedback from peers to develop their abilities (Kallio, 2016). Additionally, the novice principal should be provided with resources and support as they transition into their new role. This support should include mentorship from experienced principals and access to professional development opportunities to help the novice principal develop their skills and knowledge. Within the framework of this study, social constructivism refers to the premise that new learning experiences can be formed through interactions with coworkers and other individuals' experiences (e.g., formal training, mentorship, and superintendents). I focused on the significant experiences within leadership training programs to study how they are prepared holistically.

Problem Statement

The problem is that novice school principals in Arizona may not receive appropriate preparation and instruction to recognize and handle the complexities of operating school settings and programs in compliance with federal and local regulations, best practices, and explicit inclusionary policies (Reid, 2021; Shoho & Barnett, 2020; Spillane & Lee, 2017). The lack of preparedness is problematic because novice leaders must comprehend and address operational complexities to do their jobs effectively. Principals are responsible for ensuring that all students in their schools receive an appropriate education; hence this is a concern (Samuels, 2018).

Because the principal is responsible for monitoring all programs inside the school where they work, more training from the mentors is required. Student educational outcomes are most immediately affected by this issue, and if the information gap among building leaders is not addressed, students will continue to be underserved (Harris & Jones, 2020). Students may only access high-quality learning opportunities if school administrators are well-equipped and sufficiently trained to provide support. This issue indirectly impacts families and individuals in the community. If essential training is not provided, it is probable that a substantial percentage of the educational programming will not be fully implemented. According to Schulze and Boscardin (2021), more research needs to be done on principals' leadership development. DeMatthews et al. (2020) agree with their results that this gap in the study supports the issue that principals require further training. They cite this gap in the research as supporting the problem that principals need additional preparation (particularly in facility and faculty support).

Rodriguez et al. (2019) show that leadership training for new leaders may not be as successful as previously thought. In the process of faculty development, there needs to be more commitment to embracing and fostering the leadership potential of future principals (DeMatthews, 2019). If this problem can be handled, educational outcomes may improve, particularly in academic achievement, social and emotional development, and preparedness for life after secondary school.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the shared experiences of novice school principals' mentor training and to gain an understanding of the experience of peer educators. This research can support links between the knowledge base of effective school leadership practices and the setting in which K-12 school leaders are employed because of the

authors' former activities as a school principal and their current work in leadership development programs.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this research lies in the fact that it gives empirical information on how novice school administrators experience and perceive mentor training, as well as the influence it has on their development and professional advancement. The training of mentors has been highlighted as a critical aspect in the effective transition of new school leaders into their new roles, making this an essential issue to investigate. This research also gives theoretical insights into the function of peer educators and their role in the professional development of novice school leaders. This research gives essential insight into the efficiency of mentor training programs and the function that peer educators play in forming future school leaders.

Empirical Significance

The empirical significance of this study lies in the potential to understand better the experiences of novice school principals and their mentor training. This study provides insights into the shared experiences of novice school principals in Arizona, with a particular focus on the mentoring process. It provides an opportunity to explore the qualitative experiences of novice school principals and their mentors, as well as the effects of the mentor training program on their perceptions of the mentoring experience. In addition, this study provides data and insights on the impact of mentor training on the overall success of novice school principals in the state of Arizona. School administrators and policymakers can then use this data to make better decisions about school principal training and mentor development in the county.

Studies on novice principal mentorship programs, their components, and the benefits they provide have been conducted nationwide at many academic institutions. Unfortunately, research

on the mentorship requirements for incoming Arizona principals has yet to be conducted. To contribute to the current body of knowledge in the field, I focused on investigating the formalized mentorship requirements of novice principals in Arizona, as well as perceived outcomes. I believe this research contributes to the current body of research in the field because it provides a unique perspective on the mentoring process and its impact on the development of school leaders.

Theoretical Significance

The study's theoretical significance is to explore the shared experiences of novice school principals' mentor training in Arizona. By studying this phenomenon from a phenomenological perspective, the research provides insights into the lived experiences of novice school principals and their mentorship roles. The findings of this study benefit society since, while being indirect, principal leadership is a vital school factor linked to student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2018). This research provides valuable information to the field of educational leadership, as well as informs policymakers in Arizona regarding the importance of mentorship in principal training. Additionally, this research's findings can inform the development of professional learning communities and guide how to effectively structure mentorship programs to promote successful principal training.

Students around Arizona have a significant need for improved academic achievement, emphasizing the necessity for improved school leadership. Examining the requirements these new leaders must achieve is critical, given that just 50% of first-year principals think they are prepared to meet the Arizona Instructional Leadership Standards (Arizona Department of Education, 2021). Researchers have shown that mentoring new principals positively impacts their leadership behaviors (Augustine-Shaw & Liang, 2016). On the other hand, what kind of

ongoing, customized, formal mentoring assistance Arizona's new principals require to affect their ensuing success on the job needed to be clarified.

Practical Significance

The practical significance of this research is that it offers a comprehension of the experiences often held by novice school administrators who have participated in mentor training. The research results help guide the creation of mentor training programs that are successful not just in the state of Arizona but also in other states. Given that Arizona is ranked 47th in the nation for education from kindergarten through twelfth grade by US News and World Report, this inquiry's findings will benefit Arizona (Baker, 2021). Because of the information gathered from this research, school administrators will be able to understand the requirements of novice school leaders better, and they will be able to offer those principals essential assistance and direction to ensure their success. In addition, the result of this research enables school districts to evaluate the efficacy of the mentor training programs more accurately and, if required, modify those programs.

It is of the utmost significance to find a solution to this predicament. Support for novice principals in Arizona throughout the early stages of their employment could allow these leaders to develop their leadership skills, socialize them into the sector, assist them in retaining their positions, and influence student achievement. Therefore, Arizona school districts that apply the proposed strategies developed from this study's findings may better equip novice principals to handle the profession's demands through continued formal mentorship support. The findings may help develop their leadership skills, which may counteract the loss and steady rise in student accomplishment during their first school years (Fullan, 2019; Miller, 2020). This study provides direction to school human resource officers, professional development workers, and school

administrators regarding what should be stressed by their departments to introduce new principals into the field while simultaneously enhancing their leadership capacity. These data will then be used to provide implications for the formal establishment of mentorship programs in Arizona school districts.

Research Questions

This study focuses on the experiences of peer educators in providing mentor training to novice school administrators. Specifically, this study explores how peer educators perceive the mentor training experience, their challenges in providing it, and their strategies to overcome these challenges.

The research questions for this study will be:

Central Research Question

What are the experiences of novice school principals undergoing mentor training in Arizona?

Sub Questions

1. How do Arizona novice principals characterize and explain their mentors' functions?
2. What do novice principals in Arizona believe to be the results of their involvement in mentorship programs?
3. What do novice principals view as the aspects that made their experiences as mentees more challenging?
4. Which aspects do they believe contribute to the effectiveness of mentoring?

Definitions

1. *Mentee* - A person who is being mentored or coached by a mentor. A mentee is typically someone looking to gain knowledge and insight from a mentor to further their personal or professional development.
2. *Mentor*: A trusted advisor who provides guidance, support, and feedback to help someone reach their goals. Mentors can provide personalized advice based on their experience and expertise, often serving as role models while providing encouragement and motivation.
3. *Novice Principal* - A novice principal is an educational leader who is new to the principal role. They have typically taught for many years but have not been a principal (Maestas, 2021). They may have recently been promoted to the role or taken a job as a principal in a new school.
4. *Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)* - An instructional design concept that focuses on the intersection of teaching and content. It is a combination of pedagogical knowledge, which is knowledge about how to teach, and content knowledge, which is knowledge about the subject matter (Ummi, 2020). PCK helps teachers understand how to effectively teach content and how to help students understand and apply it. It is an essential concept for teachers to understand as it helps them to create meaningful learning experiences for their students.
5. *Principal Leadership* - An approach to school leadership that focuses on developing and sustaining a school culture that places a premium on learning and achievement. It involves the principal taking an active role in the school's day-to-day operations, setting high expectations for student learning and achievement, and working with teachers, staff,

and the school community to meet those expectations. Principal leadership emphasizes creating a safe, supportive, and stimulating learning environment and fostering a sense of responsibility and ownership among all school community members (Pardosi & Utari, 2022).

6. *Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)* - Learning that develops the skills children and adults need to succeed. These skills include recognizing and managing emotions, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, and setting and achieving positive goals. SEL is a critical part of a well-rounded education and is increasingly being integrated into school curricula across the United States (Hallinger, 2021).

Summary

Arizona's Leadership Survey results indicate that novice principals in Arizona are offered less support than novice teachers in the same region (Arizona Department of Education, 2021). The author alludes to several superintendents who admit that principals under their supervision receive less support than new instructors (NASSP, 2022). Moving from a broader perspective of the nation, the author will turn the reader's focus to a more local challenge that Arizona principals and schools are experiencing.

This study aims to assess novice principals' mentorship training in Arizona by eliciting their opinions. This study's findings were reviewed to infer implications for the future development of methods and programs to meet these needs. An overarching research question and four subsidiary questions are provided. The overarching topic inquires about the perceived customized assistance needs of novice principals in Arizona and the possible impact of this individualized support on these leaders and their schools. In addition, the supporting questions

inquire about the impact of this support on these leaders and their schools. Notably, the study can potentially affect the practices of these principals and, ultimately, their schools. In addition, the theoretical frameworks utilized in reviewing the relevant literature are supplied, along with a concise summary of the research methodology employed in qualitative studies.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This literature review investigates formal mentorship programs for novice principals in the United States, including their program components, methodology, and influence on the performance of novices. The review offers a basis for creating the theoretical model that the research was founded on by reviewing the relevant literature and providing a foundation for developing the conceptual framework. It offers background material that is necessary for comprehending the theoretical framework of the study as well as the objectives of the research. The literature review covers a variety of sources, including relevant research, academic papers, books, and reports, all of which describe these themes. The literature on these programs is examined using Kram's Mentorship Model of 1983 (Lamm, 2017). As the topic of mentorship for inexperienced principals is studied, the terms novice, mentoring, mentor, and mentee need to be carefully defined. Literature indicates that novice principals are school administrators within their first three years of service.

Theoretical Framework

This study's theoretical base is Kram's Mentoring Model. Adults prefer collaborations that aid them in negotiating early-career hurdles, as stated by Kram in 1983 (Mullen et al., 2022). Mentoring is essential to transfer training-based information to the novice's new position as he or she gains experience (McKimm & O'Sullivan, 2015). Mentoring has several functions for novices. According to Mullen et al. (2022), mentors play a functional role due to their superior qualities and accomplishments in the field. However, it was also vital for the mentor to exhibit affective attributes demonstrating concern for the novice's emotional and mental states.

Alterations in the organization's expectations and the mentee's particular psychological requirements determine the evolution of the mentorship relationship from one stage to the next.

Phases of Mentorship

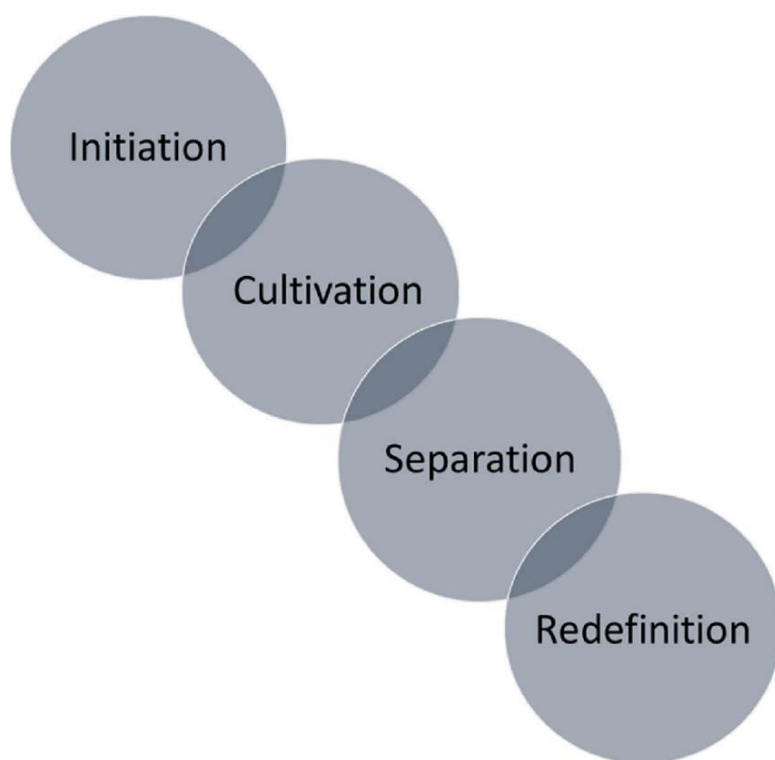
In the mentoring relationship, Kram (1983) recognized four stages: initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. During the Initiation phase of the partnership, both the mentor and the mentee came to learn more about the working styles of the other. At this point, mentors should focus on developing a connection with the mentee and gaining their trust. An unstructured meeting is one of the things done to help strengthen the relationship. The mentor can now inquire about the mentee's learning needs. There is also the opportunity for peer observation to take place. The relationship evolves in the Cultivation phase if a meaningful mentoring connection is developed (Mullen et al., 2022). The Cultivation phase is the most intensive relationship era. It is also the phase from which the relationship gets the most benefits. This phase is distinguished by an abundance of psychosocial interactions, including the mentee seeing and learning from the mentor and the mentor's extensive promotion and protection of the mentee. At this point, there are several chances for interaction, which may lead to further growth for both parties (Kincade, 2022). The relationship is developed even further. During this phase, the mentor and mentee might work together to complete initiatives that can contribute to the mentee's professional growth. There is also the possibility of challenges because of the relationship.

After the Cultivation phase, the relationship enters the Separation phase when the partnership's formal aspect ends. During this phase, the mentors discuss several self-management methods with the mentee. Suppose the mentee's goals and objectives still need to be met. In that case, it may lead to disappointment and dissatisfaction for the mentee when the

mentee is given greater responsibility and is expected to manage things independently. During this stage, there is also the notion of an open door, where the mentee may meet the mentor on a need basis to get helpful listening and direction to get them back on track. Following the Separation phase, the mentoring connection transitions into something more akin to an informal support or peer relationship. This phase is one of the defining characteristics of the Redefinition phase (Mullen et al., 2022). The redefinition phase allows the mentor and mentee to rethink their previous encounters and embrace a new professional relationship.

Figure 1

Kram's Mentorship Phases



With these four phases, relationship development is the key to unlocking the door to opportunities for mentoring and coaching. When the mentee exhibits resistance, there is no way for the mentor and mentee to have a productive engagement that results in beneficial mutual learning. New teachers who have just graduated from a teaching institution are a good source for

mentors to learn from since they may have been exposed to the most recent pedagogy but need more practical experience (Kincade, 2022). Mentees and mentors can gain knowledge from one another and facilitate good development for both sides if they undertake the teaching journey together.

Mentorship Approaches

According to Kram's mentoring paradigm, mentorship has two distinct functions: professional and psychological (Mullen et al., 2022). Kram defines *career functioning* as coaching, aiding with socialization, protection, and visibility promotion for the organization. These methods help the navigation of organizational life and professional progress. In contrast, psychological functioning provides the mentee with a leadership position, affirmation, confirmation, assistance, and therapy (Mullen et al., 2022). The Presidential Task Force of the American Psychological Association (2016) concluded that psychological functioning is only possible after the mentoring pair has established an interpersonal relationship (Leininger, 2016). Trust must be established before providing comforting or critical feedback. In support of Kram's model contention that mentorship serves a dual purpose, Mott (2020) asserted that novices benefit from a relationship with an experienced mentor who supports, advises, and utilizes the mentee's life history to ask crucial questions. This procedure leads to reflection and growth. In essence, mentoring provides personal and professional assistance (Ewing, 2021).

According to Kram, the mentor and the mentee benefit from mentoring. While the mentee acquires skills that lead to professional success, the mentor gains the respect of their peers for cultivating new talent and the satisfaction of knowing they have assisted a younger colleague in achieving organizational success (McKimm & O'Sullivan, 2015). Additionally, mentored individuals report greater job satisfaction, higher salary, and faster career development

than unmentored individuals (American Psychological Association, 2016). Although mentorship has the potential to provide the mentee with professional and psychological benefits, the relationship's limitations may render it unproductive or even harmful (Mullen et al., 2022).

Current Critiques of Kram's Model

According to Kram and Higgins (2012), even if modern advances in mentoring suggest that the novice seek out a network of mentors, it was common for novices to seek out their assigned mentor. In support of Kram's position, Hagler (2018) references the increase in mentorship-related studies published over the previous two decades, emphasizing the importance of mentorship in the early phases of a career.

Brockbank and McGill (2017) enhance Kram's paradigm by suggesting four mentoring approaches: outcomes, involvement, development, and program change. In contrast to the productivity and interaction approaches, which concentrate on the organization's production, the developmental and system-change procedures enhance the cultivation phase. The mentee pursues personal transformation through internal and external mentoring in a systematic strategy. The mentor and mentee engage in a reflective discussion discussing the learning and application of new concepts and their sentiments throughout the process. The growth technique also promotes respect, while the mentor exhibits high levels of empathy. As a result, the mentee bears responsibility for their education. Through a systemic transformation strategy, the authors state that successful mentoring of individuals will help the entire organization.

The findings of Hagler (2018) lead them to the conclusion that the life experiences of both the mentor and the mentee affect their connection and learning. Because of this, mentorships can provide more all-encompassing support when the two people involved are of the same sex or race or have a socially comparable habitus. Otherwise, misunderstandings may arise,

and either the mentee's or the mentor's advice will be disregarded. It was essential for the mentor to determine what the mentee requires during the beginning and nurturing periods of the mentoring relationship. This study focuses on Kram's mentoring model and the theoretical improvements that pertain to mentoring the novice principal into a professional in the field, notably in the initiation and nurturing phases of the mentoring process.

Related Literature

Mentoring is a practice that dates back hundreds of years. Throughout history, mentors have played a crucial part in the growth of novices' innate abilities and the abilities they acquire through study and practice. Although there has been a long-standing interest in mentoring in the business world, and although it has been an essential part of the process of professionalizing in fields such as medicine, law, and architecture, it was not something that has been implemented to a large extent in the academic section. It has not historically been a practice that is common in school administration.

Responsibilities of Principals

The importance of principals in schools cannot be overstated. Principals are vital in setting the tone, vision, and direction for the school and its students. They are the key decision-makers in the school and are responsible for providing a safe and stimulating learning environment for students and teachers alike. As such, schools must select and retain principals dedicated to their mission and have the skills and experience to lead and inspire students, staff, and parents to reach their fullest potential.

Creating a Vision of Academic Achievement for Every Student

Researchers who have studied education leadership are unanimous in their belief that good administrators are accountable for building a schoolwide vision of dedication to high

standards and the achievement of all students. However, they express this belief in various ways (Leithwood et al., 2018). Throughout history, principals of public schools have been seen in the role of school administrators. “Success” can be defined as an entry-level to an excellent job for students who had followed a “generic track,” and “success” could also refer to low-skilled employment for students who had dropped out of school (Leithwood et al., 2018). One of the keys to bridging the achievement gap between students from privileged backgrounds and those from less privileged backgrounds is to have high expectations for all students (Porter et al., 2006, p. 47). This shift in perspective is partly a reaction to the realization that a solid education is essential to professional success in a global market. For all sectors of U.S. society to compete on an even playing field, the wide gap in academic accomplishment between underprivileged and advantaged children has to be closed.

According to a study conducted at Vanderbilt University (Porter et al., 2006), the first step in this process is for principals to articulate “high standards and demanding learning objectives” for the students in their institution (p. 147). In particular, they state that “the research literature over the past quarter century has consistently supported the view that having high expectations for everyone, including clear and public standards, is one route to decreasing the performance gap between advantaged and less advantaged students and for boosting the total accomplishment of all students” (p. ?). An efficient principal is also responsible for ensuring that the teaching staff embraces the concept of academic success for all students and for laying the groundwork for what researchers from the University of Washington referred to as a schoolwide learning improvement agenda that is centered on the attainment of specific learning objectives by individual students (Allensworth & Hart, 2018). As a result, one of the essential

aspects of effective school leadership is forming a consensus on academic expectations and the achievement of all students.

Developing a Conducive Atmosphere for Learning

Effective administrators allow students in their schools to emphasize education as the primary focus of their daily activities. According to research conducted at Vanderbilt University, “a healthy school environment” is characterized by fundamentals such as orderliness and safety, in addition to intangible qualities such as a “supportive, responsive” attitude toward the children and a sense among teachers that they are part of a community of professionals focused on providing quality education (Goldring et al., 2009; Porter et al., 2006). When reflecting on his experiences, a former school principal recounted a typical staff meeting at an urban school many years ago. He observed that “morale never appeared to get out of the basement.”

Principals can create a conducive atmosphere for learning by focusing on building relationships with students, teachers, and parents. Through positive interactions and consistent communication, they can foster an environment of trust and respect. Principals can also ensure that the physical environment of their school is welcoming and comfortable. The physical environment includes providing adequate resources and materials, such as books, supplies, and technology, and ensuring the school is clean and orderly. They can work to establish an equitable and supportive learning environment free of biases and discrimination (Lyon & Maxwell, 2007). The learning environment includes creating policies and procedures that protect students from bullying and harassment while enforcing anti-discrimination laws. Principals can promote professional development and staff collaboration, creating a continuous learning and growth culture.

Many administrators make it their mission to include not just the students' families but others from the surrounding community, such as proprietors of local businesses.

Fostering Leadership Qualities

In the field of leadership theory, there is a widespread and long-standing consensus that leaders from all walks of life and all types of organizations, public and private, need to depend on others to accomplish the group's purpose and need to encourage the development of leadership across the organization. This idea has been held for a very long time. Schools are not an exception to this rule. According to a study conducted at the Universities of Minnesota and Toronto, administrators who obtain high scores from teachers for establishing a good teaching atmosphere also receive better marks than other principals for stimulating leadership in the faculty (Porter et al., 2006). This research was conducted with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP, 2022). Students benefit when administrators are more ready to share leadership responsibilities with other faculty members. Effective leadership from any source, including principals, influential teachers, staff teams, and others, is associated with better student performance on math and reading tests is one of the most striking findings that emerged from the report that the universities of Minnesota and Toronto conducted.

According to the findings of research by Faddis (2022), effective leadership positively impacts teacher motivation and working conditions. Effective leadership, in turn, may strengthen the teaching given in the classroom. According to the researchers, "higher-achieving schools gave all stakeholders with a stronger impact on choices" (Faddis, 2022, p. 271). The findings of the research by Tillman (2015) conclude that "the superior performance of these schools might perhaps be explained as a result of the greater access they have to collective knowledge and wisdom ingrained within their communities" (pp. 313-314).

Principals can foster leadership qualities in their students by providing multiple opportunities for students to be leaders. For example, they can create student councils and student-led initiatives that allow students to practice their leadership skills. Additionally, they can give students access to mentors and resources to help them develop the confidence and skills needed to lead. Finally, they can encourage students to take risks and celebrate their successes. By providing these opportunities and recognizing leadership qualities, principals can help foster leadership qualities in their students.

Improving the Teaching Process

Effective principals strongly emphasize the quality of education and strive tirelessly to raise student accomplishment. According to researchers from the University of Washington, these programs “Help establish and encourage high standards; they fight teacher isolation and fragmented effort; and they interact directly with instructors and the classroom” (p. 48).

Principals also foster a culture of ongoing professional development. They emphasize research-based ways to enhance both teaching and learning, and they begin conversations about different instructional approaches with individual teachers and teams of educators. Leaders need to have an in-depth understanding of the “technical core” of education, which refers to the components necessary to enhance a school’s teaching and learning level.

Principals can play an essential role in improving the teaching process by providing support and guidance to teachers. Principals can help teachers stay up-to-date on best practices in education and ensure that each teacher utilizes the most effective teaching strategies (Fessehatsion & Peng, 2020). Principals can also provide resources and professional development opportunities to ensure teachers have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the classroom. Additionally, principals can provide teachers with feedback and mentorship,

helping them develop and refine their teaching practices. Principals can set the tone for a positive learning environment and create an atmosphere where teachers feel supported and valued.

Managing People, Data and Procedures

When managing people, data, and processes, the principal must ensure that the school operates as effectively and efficiently as possible. These operations involve designing and executing school policies and procedures, supervising the collection and analysis of data, and providing a safe and supportive environment for students and employees (Marshall, 2021). To manage people efficiently, the principal must be dedicated to supporting and advising the teaching staff and students. This support entails actively listening to their issues and offering criticism and direction for how they may become more effective. In addition, the administrator has to encourage and energize the teaching staff and the students to work together toward achieving the school's objectives.

To manage the school's data, the principal is responsible for ensuring the school has correct and up-to-date information on the students, staff, and overall performance (Murphy et al., 2017). This practice includes collecting, analyzing, and reporting data on the performance of students and staff members, in addition to data on school budgets and operations.

The principal ensures that the school's policies and procedures are followed to manage processes efficiently. It involves developing and implementing policies and procedures that enable equal access to resources and opportunities, create a healthy school culture, safeguard the safety and security of students and staff, and ensure that students and employees are protected from harm (West, 2022). The administrator must ensure staff and students know and comprehend the school's regulations and procedures.

There are many responsibilities that the principal carries, and therefore, novice principals must be mentored. Mentoring novice principals is essential for the development of effective school leadership.

Challenges Faced by Novice Principals

Aspiring principals get basic training in which they study different leadership and management ideas in preparation for their jobs at various institutions. According to research, school leadership positions are challenging, and there is a strong likelihood that these challenges would impair principals' well-being. In this setting, new administrators will be put in difficult circumstances. They will need help completing their assignments, comprehending their own school's culture, and adjusting their leadership preferences to work within the parameters of the school environment. After finishing their leadership preparing programs, aspiring principals join the transition phase into the principalship. This time often lasts one to two years. As a result, inexperienced principals are "thrown into the trenches" without preparation, are segregated, and are expected to thrive independently. It might be challenging for first-year principals to put into practice what they have learned about leadership in the classroom (Saidun et al., 2015). These unforeseen challenges suggest that most first-year principals do not adequately understand their jobs until they are promoted to these roles.

Mentorship-emphasized methods are used to make moving from theory to practice more manageable. Suppose mentoring only provides novice principals experiences beyond theory, literature, and coursework (Ruggirello, 2022). In that case, the basic preparation adds little value to the novice principal's knowledge of how schools function.

Henry (2011) states that the primary means of education in Barbados are "fundamentally unsuitable for the effective training of new teachers and administrators. When confronted with

growing responsibility, new principals could not handle the burden and left their positions prematurely” (p. 127). These hurried and early retirements may impede the appropriate transfer of knowledge and skills to succeeding leaders, leading to further deterioration in the leadership qualities of future school leaders. The information presented demonstrates that obtaining an official degree in educational administration and leadership from a college or university is a significant accomplishment; however, there is yet to be a guarantee that a novice principal will be successful in the position of a leader.

According to Crow (2006), the functions of school administrators are quite broad, and as a result, inexperienced principals are faced with various complicated issues. This complexity adds to the difficulty of the tasks that are required of them. Being a principal is akin to having one’s home become a “popcorn popper” (Parkay & Hall, 1992, p. 268). This analogy was used to illustrate how principals are expected to be present everywhere, hopping from one end of the building to the other and moving quickly from one issue to the next. The statements made by Parkay and Hall (1992) provide more evidence that new principals encounter a variety of difficult challenges: “The novice is confronted with a complex array of multi-faceted challenges, ranging from learning the ropes for the day-to-day operation of the school to enhancing the culture of the school so that it becomes more educational. These challenges range from learning the ropes for the day-to-day operation of the school to enhancing the culture of the school. The need to create a professional identity, i.e., an image of oneself as an active leader who can effect change, will likely be the most challenging obstacle a new principal will have to overcome” (p. 1-2). Principalship tends to be fragmented, fast-paced, and diversified, including long hours and a significant workload, as Spillane and Lee (2017) state.

Similarly, this confirms the intricacy of the principal's job by noting that there are still different expectations from the learners, their parents, and the teachers. There is no question that principals working in these settings are more likely to experience significant levels of stress and burnout.

Henry (2011) describes several additional obstacles that first-time principals must overcome and that new principals find it challenging to cope with the legacy and leadership style of those who came before them. For novice principals, succeeding past principals is a significant challenge since it requires them to reflect on the types of leaders they have surpassed, the accomplishments they have attained, the initiatives not completed, and the areas in which they have been unsuccessful (Henry, 2011). It may be challenging for a novice and inexperienced principal to manage and prioritize the initiatives started by the previous principal and choose which projects and ideas should be continued and when change should be introduced.

To make things even more challenging for the first-time principal, the teaching staff and other school community members often evaluate the incoming principal based on their experiences with the prior administrator (Spillane & Lee, 2017). If the previous principal was a hero, the new principal has some large shoes to fill. On the other hand, if the previous principal was a disappointment, the new principal would most likely be expected to perform (Spillane & Lee, 2017; Gray et al., 2007). The new principal will face a diverse set of obstacles in each scenario, and this is true, and it does not matter what kind of principal the outgoing principal was.

When a novice administrator is brought into a school where the staff, students, and other members of the school community have been acclimated to the traditions and routines already in place, this may be another problematic situation (Doherty, 1999; Gray et al., 2007). Often, the

staff may be reluctant to embrace the new principal's changes simply because they want to maintain their daily routines and believe their way of life is threatened (Spillane & Lee, 2017). In addition, Kram and Isabella (1985) warn that most experienced and novice principals find it challenging to seek help from others because they find themselves in a hierarchical position where one is expected to have the expertise to deal with challenges independently. As a result, principals tend to keep their difficulties to themselves since asking for assistance from others may be seen as a sign of incompetence and a lack of control.

The location of schools is another issue affecting all school principals in general, but may be more of a disadvantage for new principals. Colleagues from other schools, inspectors, and other regional authorities seldom visit schools that are difficult to reach, located far away, and geographically isolated. Visiting such institutions may need a variety of considerations as well as careful preparation. Before anything else, it will be necessary to consider aspects such as the state of the roads, the accessibility of government vehicles, and financial provisions for travel (Miranda et al., 2011). The provision of required and sufficient assistance to school principals working in distant schools may become more challenging due to these considerations.

In addition, before becoming principals, most novice principals had administrative jobs as teachers or heads of departments. The transition from those roles to principal is a significant departure from what they did in the past. According to Crow (2006), being a principal brings a significant and often unexpected shift in one's viewpoint, expectations, and responsibilities within the workplace. In addition, Spillane and Lee (2017) explain that inexperienced principals often feel a feeling of professional isolation and loneliness due to the complexities and demands of their leadership role.

In conclusion, it is clear from what has been discussed above that being a principal is complex. Because of this, beginner and inexperienced principals may benefit significantly from having access to a mentor with whom they can discuss their frustrations, concerns, and fears. It is reasonable to assume that many inexperienced principals will fail unless they receive support during the critical first year, as stated by Parkay and Hall (1992, p. 71), who support the mentoring of novice principals by stating that “the challenges of principalship tax even the savviest, expert leaders.” Parkay and Hall’s statement provides support for the mentoring of novice principals.

Mentoring for Novice Principals

Over the last several years, there has been an apparent increase in interest in mentor-mentee relationships within academic and professional organizations (Claxton & Smith, 2014). Only recently has the idea that novice school administrators should be given guidance as a crucial step toward more effective school administration been recognized (Claxton & Smith, 2014). Consequently, educational institutions realize that mentoring principals is an essential practice that enables aspiring and beginning administrators to have a smoother transition from the position of teacher to that of principal. There is growing recognition that mentoring is essential (Claxton & Smith, 2014).

According to the research findings, for first-time principals to be successful in the 21st century, they need to emphasize academics and be generally strong individuals (Ehrich et al., 2014). They must have this academic prowess to ensure their educational institutions’ prosperity. According to the findings of certain researchers, novice principals need the guidance of more experienced principals to overcome challenges effectively (Ehrich et al., 2014; Lovely, 2014; Parylo et al., 2012). According to several studies, involvement in a mentoring program makes the

first few years on the job of a newly hired principal far more productive (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004). According to Schechter (2022), it is advantageous for newly appointed administrators to have either an experienced advisor or an inspiring role model to support them as they transition into their new responsibilities. This support may help them become more effective in their new positions. Schechter (2022) found that the mentoring programs that enhance future administrators' capacity to manage extraordinarily complex school organizations effectively had many characteristics in common.

The following is a list of characteristics that may be found in mentoring programs: assisting mentees in the development of the skills to create mission statements, enabling novice principals to develop into transformational leaders, fostering learning about educational leaders, providing assistance to principals in becoming resource managers, and enabling novice administrators abilities to integrate with others in the community and school effectively, are some of the goals that this initiative can accomplish. Rather than learning these abilities as a stand-alone activity in isolation as a one-time event, having a mentor who can guide the mentee through the process is preferable.

According to the findings of the research carried out by Scott and Scott (2013), mentoring was a useful method that could be utilized to aid new principals in surviving their first year in the post. When Scott and Scott (2013) put this theory to the test by surveying principals, they discovered that most principals reported that receiving mentorship and coaching from their peers was one of the most beneficial things that had ever happened to them. Scott and Scott (2013) concluded that this finding lends credence to the notion that receiving mentorship and coaching from one's peers is one of the most valuable aspects of administrative training. According to the findings of Dzikowski (2013), mentoring may be of value to both the mentor

and the mentees in terms of the former's professional development, the latter's improvement, and the former's learning. According to the results of earlier research, mentoring is an effective strategy for reducing emotions of isolation, enhancing sentiments of collegiality and socializing, and allowing access to chances for networking (Dziczkowski, 2013). Mentoring is not a magic bullet for those just beginning their careers as principals, even though it could seem an excellent idea regarding what it can give inexperienced and new principals.

Educational Leadership Programs

Mullen (2012) concluded that despite several states in the United States that do not reap the benefits of administrative and teacher mentoring programs, many states and school systems have implemented such programs. For instance, the city of Albuquerque, New Mexico (United States of America) initiated official mentorship programs for newly appointed principals in the form of ESP (Extra Support for Principals) in 1994. These programs date back many decades (Killion, 2011). This ESP program matched inexperienced principals who needed direction and support with a more seasoned administrator knowledgeable about the role and with relevant expertise.

One such program was where a mentor was appointed to a specific district to provide mentoring and coaching. Another program in Santa Cruz County is called "Growing Your Own." Within this program, the principal was expected to mentor the assistant principal. Developing leaders within the public school system who are skilled at collaborating effectively is the primary focus of this approach (Bloom et al., 2003). Another program that was evaluated by Johnson (2008) claimed that the program's aims were as follows: to enhance performance; to boost retention of prospective beginning; to promote personal and professional well-being; to transfer

the culture of the system; and to meet mandatory requirements associated to induction and certifications.

Liang and Augustine-Shaw (2016) researched the Kansas Educational Leadership Institute (KELI); their findings are presented here. KELI is an organization that was founded to bridge the gap between mentees and mentors by providing novice school leaders with assistance in the areas of educational and leadership development. To better prepare participants for the 21st century in terms of professional development, networking, and collaborative effort, the program's objective is to teach beginner to intermediate-level skills in these areas. The Kansas Educational Leadership Institute fulfilled its mandate to support Kansas leaders within its first year of operation, which was a great accomplishment. During the five-year plan, they could see the dedication of professionals and partners. The KELI's mentoring and induction program provided aspiring leaders with a solid foundation to build their careers, providing them with the knowledge, abilities, and practices essential to flourish in challenging environments.

One possible component of a succession planning program is mentoring for recently appointed principals. Identifying whether present personnel within a corporation have the knowledge and aptitude to move into jobs with increasing degrees of responsibility is called "succession planning" (Oladipo et al., 2016, p.24). These programs can unite employees to establish a network of specialists. In addition, they can encourage new principals to have a strong love for their work, to be innovative, and to assume responsibility with self-assurance (Frels et al., 2013; Oladipo et al., 2016). The Arizona State Department of Education (AZDE), where the research for this study was carried out, initiated the Arizona New Principal Mentoring (ANPM) Program during the academic year 2013–2014. This program is intended to provide support and guidance to newly appointed principals. The program aims to provide direction and assistance to

principals who have just been promoted to their positions. This curriculum was designed to help new principals during their first two years in the post of novice principal and was established specifically for them. As a result of this paradigm, newly appointed principals could spend the first two years of their careers working under the direction of more experienced principals who have been provided with considerable novice training. Mentoring programs have been provided by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) to novice principals in charge of K-12 schools and secondary schools in the United States of America, Canada, and other countries since 1921. These programs are offered to novice principals in charge of secondary schools in the United States of America, Canada, and other countries.

NASSP (2022) stated that principals of the 21st century did this because they believed there was a need to promote education as a priority by ensuring that new principals got the assistance they needed to thrive via mentoring. The findings of the program's pilot year suggested that it was quite effective; nonetheless, the program was never required to be implemented. As a direct consequence of this, even though it was still in operation, school districts and novice principals were exempt from the need to take part. The conclusion that the program was a considerable success may be drawn from the findings of the pilot year.

While sticking to the culture of innovation in teaching and learning, these programs would profoundly challenge and modify the narrative of standard educational leadership programs. Young (2015) assert that program modification alone is insufficient to maintain highly effective leadership programs. Given what is known about the extent to which principals still need to receive this level of training, educational leadership programs are needed to make their

curricula meaningful and relevant for educating prospective and current leaders, focusing on the development of urban school leadership.

The Need for Mentorship of Novice Principals

Multiple studies on the experiences of novice principals contribute to formulating a situational statement expressing the necessity for program theories to build mentorship programs for novice principals (Yirci et al., 2023). By giving information on the experiences of inexperienced principals, these studies help formulate a situation statement. According to Hall (2018, p. 449), “Most new principals are thrown into the position to sink or swim. If we want to improve our schools’ quality, we must do a better job, and adopting a mentoring program is one of the best methods to ensure this occurs.” Because there are not enough well-designed programs, many principals try for ways to obtain support on their own, yet some find that the pressures and responsibilities of their jobs are too much to bear (Hall, D., 2018). Based on interviews conducted with 17 first-year principals at the beginning of the school year and again at the end of the third month, 88% of principals reported that as they transitioned into their new roles, they faced challenges and an increase in the volume, diversity, and unpredictability of tasks (Spillane & Lee, 2017). Leaders were instructed to identify the difficulties of the issue and provide their employees with orientation or mentorship (Spillane & Lee, 2017).

An eight-month study found that novice principals are discouraged from entering or remaining in the field due to governance concerns raised by district leaders, work characteristics, external expectations, internal factors such as teacher demands, and an inability to function as instructional leaders (Spillane & Lee, 2017). There was an association between the absence of mentoring and a decreased possibility of educators entering the field or assuming leadership positions (Daresh & Capasso, 2021). A study of 200 new principals indicated that 74% were

concerned about the problems in their job, and 61% were likely to leave (Spillane & Lee, 2017). According to a later qualitative study, the obstacles these school leaders faced, such as acts of violence, families' negative attitudes toward school, immigrant families, teacher unions, and teachers' attitudes and behaviors toward the principal, were commonly faced. These difficulties were often the case for numerous difficulties faced by novice principals (Bayer, 2016). However, as of 2022, only five of the fifty states had created mentoring programs in which mentors and mentees meet regularly. The National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Elementary School Principals have endorsed highly effective mentorship programs for future principals (Yirci et al., 2023).

Principal Mentorship Program Outcomes

Research on novice principals who received mentoring suggests that these principals profited from the experience (Yirci et al., 2023). Saban and Wolfe (2019) conducted a quantitative study to investigate the role of mentorship in the professional development process for school principals. Each of the study's five exemplary leadership behaviors served as independent variables. The data measured any potential differences that may have existed between the study participants. Based on the findings of this study, 19% of participants did not have a mentor. Those with a mentor reported more frequent opportunities to engage in leadership behaviors.

Positive Results

The previous study's findings were corroborated by Jones and Larwin (2020), who demonstrated that coaching improves the leadership skills of new principals. Their study utilized various research methods to examine the effects of a mentoring program on first-year principals. Pre- and post-surveys on the five leadership practices and self-efficacy and an open-ended

questionnaire to gauge participants' perceptions of mentoring activities comprised the data collected. All the leadership practice components were shown to have statistically significant differences. According to the qualitative data, the participants' remarks highlighted repeating themes, such as relationships, support through communication, and networking (Jones & Larwin, 2020). According to the study, mentoring assistance makes a difference and impacts student achievement. In addition, most survey participants supported mentorship support.

Sanders' research, cited in Yirci et al., (2023), revealed that novice principals who were paired with mentors had an easier time overcoming obstacles than their counterparts who were not. The novice principal can become more comfortable in their work with the assistance of mentoring, which has the additional benefits of building their self-esteem, reducing their stress levels, enhancing their communication skills, and increasing their motivation (Yirci et al., 2023). According to Hagler (2018), mentorship can also assist in reducing socioeconomic disparities. In addition, the authors of this research suggest that mentors open doors to various social networks through their behaviors. Additional research found that continual learning for novice principals from a licensed coach or mentor may assist these leaders to remain in their jobs and affect the district's perception of performance (Miller, 2020). The authors of the study by Simieou et al. (2010) concluded that "The aid and involvement of a mentor or coach could assist in reducing turnover rates for administrators in the primary and secondary school system and give novice principals the necessary support for success" (p. 7).

In evaluating California's CLASS (Coaching Leaders to Achieve Student Success) program, mentors employed blended coaching methodologies, moving between instructional and facilitative coaching. Lovely (2014) supported that principals reported more involvement in instructional leadership, more time spent on instructional difficulties, and greater proficiency in

addressing them than unsupported principals (Bloom et al., 2018). A second qualitative study (Gimbel & Kefor, 2018) of 12 mentors and mentees participating in Vermont's new educational Principal Mentorship Program indicated that mentors provided sound advice and asked insightful questions that prompted novice principals to consider their duties and responsibilities in depth. The novices noticed that discussing concerns with their mentors helped them make better decisions, and it became clear that the most challenging component of their jobs was dealing with other employees. Both the mentee and the mentor were aware that the objective of this mentorship program was to encourage principals to remain in the industry.

Negative Results

Hansford and Ehrich (2016) reviewed the findings of forty empirical studies published between 1987 and 2014 to construct a database of the outcomes of primary mentorship programs. The study considered just the short-term beneficial results. The practice was proven to have positive and negative effects, although most findings were favorable, including opportunities for support, networking, and professional development. Each study identified at least one advantage, with 31 identifying benefits and 26 identifying disadvantages. Inexperienced principals needed more time to participate in mentoring activities, and there were personality and expertise mismatches between mentors. According to Scandura and Pellegrini (2017), potential problems in the mentorship relationship include marginal mentoring, which does not meet the mentee's essential needs, dysfunctional mentorship, which can be destructive for one or both parties and cause stress; and negative mentoring, in which the mentee may be dishonest and competitive with their mentor.

According to Scandura and Pellegrini (2017), potential problems in the mentorship relationship include marginal mentoring. Additional research addresses the mentee's essential

needs, unstable mentoring, which can harm one or both individuals and cause stress, and negative mentoring, in which the mentee may be dishonest and in competition with their mentor.

According to a study by Bauer and Silver (2018) on 86 experienced principals in Louisiana, social support was correlated with work satisfaction. The less social support they received, such as guidance and resources from formal programs and informal networks from other professionals, the more isolated they felt and the less satisfied they were with their professions. These programs and networks may or may not be formal. The same study showed that participation in formal mentoring or coaching programs was associated with greater isolation (Bauer & Silver, 2018). Because mentors in the investigated schools were required to implement a prescribed program, these programs, seen as burdensome responsibilities, made the task of incoming principals substantially more difficult.

Effective Mentor and Mentee Relationships

There may be potential issues with the relationship between mentors and mentees and the organizational structures of the mentoring program, even though the benefits of mentoring programs have been well-researched and established. Understanding the components and methods to create effective mentoring connections was essential. According to Schechter (2022), for mentoring to be successful, the mentor and the person being mentored must be willing to participate in continual teaching and learning activities. When developing a mentoring and induction program for a new principal, the program's design must be based on best practices, defined by the need, and consider the diversity of communication styles, job responsibilities, and previous experiences, as well as the level of commitment that is required for the process (Schechter, 2022). Mentoring relationships may be effective depending on several factors,

including the aims of the partnerships, the attitudes, and actions of both the mentor and the mentee, and how the connection is built between the two parties.

In the mentor-mentee relationship, there should be communication in both directions to move away from a hierarchical top-to-bottom management system and toward a more horizontal one (Schechter, 2022). In this respect, the openness vital in the relationship between a mentor and a mentee is put in danger if a mentor is believed to function as an assessor, even in an informal capacity. It is essential to think of a mentor as an experienced craftsperson who can guide and support a leader in their endeavors (rather than evaluate him or her). The mentor facilitates a collaborative learning process and acts as a support framework (Mullen, 2012; Schechter, 2022).

The personal qualities of both partners are a crucial factor in a mentoring relationship's effectiveness. Mentees appreciate mentors' willingness to listen, offer other viewpoints, prompt reflection, and offer general support throughout the year. They also like the mentors' openness to exposing them to informal administrative networks and putting them in touch with people they may ask for advice. Mentors who were unduly harsh, judgmental, outdated in their thinking, defensive, or untrustworthy were found by mentees to have a detrimental impact on the mentoring experience. The mentors agreed with this list of qualities that make a good connection. The success or failure of the connection will also depend on the mentee's behavior and attitude.

Selecting and Matching of Mentors and Mentees

According to Hudson (2016), factors including geography, need, comparable school cultures, age, and even gender should be considered when matching mentors and mentees. According to Searby (2020), "A less than ideal mentoring relationship might come from the

mismatch of the implicit expectations between a mentor and mentee” (p. 281). According to Searby (2020), if there are cultural gaps, misconceptions, or flawed notions between a mentor and mentee, it is essential to discuss them since they might create barriers in the mentoring relationship. She also discovered that focusing on the presumptions the mentor and mentee share is crucial in mentoring.

Participants empowered by open communication will be more engaged, accountable, and open to learning and doing their jobs more successfully. The choice and balancing of those engaged are crucial. According to Grogan and Crow (2011), school districts should not assume that retiring or experienced administrators make the ideal mentors. Daresh (2011) examined this topic and discovered that the seniority of the mentor’s job was often the sole factor when choosing a mentor. His study’s conclusions emphasized the significance of mentor selection and training. Only the very finest principals can function as real mentors, according to Daresh (2011), and attention must be continually taken to ensure that the “best of the best” become role models and mentors (p. 26).

The motivation behind the mentor accepting this position is another matter that must be addressed. The mentee is doomed to failure if the mentor takes the mentorship only for personal benefit, such as job development, and shows no regard for the mentoring process or the mentee. Likewise, a mentor is responsible for denying involvement and recommending a different mentee/mentor match if they do not believe in their protege’s ability to succeed. The mentor assignment should be modified in these circumstances.

The incompatibility of the mentor and the mentee has been problematic for mentoring programs. Research shows that forced mentorship relationships did not assist new principals as required (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004). Engaging in a rigorous matching process is one

approach to ensure that the connection will work. Variables, including professional ambitions, interpersonal preferences, and learning requirements, should be considered when matching mentors and mentees. Different communication styles, work responsibilities, prior personal mentoring experiences, and degree of process commitment should all be considered (Schechter, 2022). Differences in personality, ideology, and expertise often cause mismatches. For instance, if there are differences in teaching beliefs, mentors and mentees exhibit emotions of worry and tension in their views, creating challenges to developing a constructive connection.

Eby and Lockwood (2005) discovered no conclusive proof that pairing mentors and mentees according to gender, age, or educational setting impacts mentoring relationships. This observation was particularly true when men and women were matched. According to the literature, men and women might serve as valuable mentors to one another (Eby & Lockwood, 2005). Much consideration and planning should go into matching mentors and mentees to maximize efficacy. Choosing a mentor and a mentee should be based on the individuals' interpersonal preferences, personalities, career objectives, and educational requirements. When establishing and operationalizing a mentoring relationship, Kochan (2013) emphasizes the necessity to consider and address cultural disparities connected to things like ethnicity, gender, race, and other aspects of cultural identity. As demonstrated by this study, the main problem with matching mentor and mentee is that comparable demands, professional objectives, and leadership styles must be carefully considered.

Characteristics of the Mentor and the Mentee

The capacities of the mentee in areas such as problem-solving, reflective thinking, and cognitive growth may be accelerated with the assistance of a mentor. Mentees want personal growth, professional advancement, lifestyle improvement, spiritual satisfaction, goal fulfillment,

and a solid foothold inside the organization. With the support of professional and experienced administrators, inexperienced administrators will be able to obtain the necessary skills in issue resolution. These deficiencies are because inexperienced administrators often need additional leadership skills. However, the outcomes of the mentor-mentee relationship are highly dependent on the attitudes, beliefs, and activities of both parties involved in the connection.

The Mentor

The job of a mentor involves more than just teaching mentees how to be competent professionals. According to Daresh (2004), the mentor's role is to provide practical instruction and help the mentee engage in deep reflection and thought. This role includes prompting the mentee to ask more questions and to think more critically about the knowledge they have acquired. Mentors provide the key that novices need to become professionally competent, and to do so, mentors must have a supportive and encouraging attitude (Barnett, 2020). Thus, the mentor's role is much broader than just guiding how to be a successful professional.

There are obstacles to overcome in any relationship, and the mentoring relationship is no exception. Like any other kind of relationship, a good mentoring relationship involves much effort to establish. One cannot hope for an ideal match between a mentor and their mentee (Keyser et al., 2011). Occasionally, a mentor goes into mentoring to create a clone or a carbon duplicate of the mentee. This kind of mentor encourages the mentee to rely on them rather than looking for ways to grow the mentee's thoughts and ideas (Keyser et al., 2011). Occasionally, mentors have assumptions and expectations that are only sometimes accurate. Mentors may have difficulty selecting the appropriate level of mentoring. When it comes to a mentee, a mentor may feel responsible for everything related to the mentee, even when the mentee prefers a loose connection. The mentor may have precise goals for the mentee's success that directly oppose

what the mentee envisions for their future. The dispute may never accomplish the vision or the performance standard.

According to Daresh (2004), issues might arise when seasoned principals perceive mentoring programs negatively since they handled the situation on their own. They might also believe the program is pointless and a misuse of their time and resources. The idea behind Daresh's argument was that experienced principals might look down on mentoring programs since they are used to guiding their mentees independently. They could think that any school administrator who needs this service must be deficient in some manner if they have that belief. If administrators maintain this point of view, it will be more difficult for school districts to develop successful mentoring programs (Daresh, 2004). According to a body of study, mentees are statistically less likely to feel motivated to support the idea of mentoring if their primary mentors do not accept the concept of mentoring (Daresh & Alexander, 2015). "Mentoring will not be successful and beneficial if it is not considered a legitimate means to learn," asserts (p. 511). The program may be forced to its knees if it does not get backing on this magnitude.

When mentors are so domineering over their mentees that the mentees become too reliant on them and are unable to make choices on their own, this may be a negative experience for both parties. The mentor could take on the role of facilitator to the point that the mentee cannot think critically about issues at school and come up with solutions; this would be detrimental to the mentee's professional development (Bush & Coleman, 2015). The mentor was responsible for guiding the mentee throughout the decision-making process rather than making a choice for the mentee.

When looking at the critical issues associated with mentors, some of these issues coincide with the results that other studies have discovered. They argue the following statements: Mentors

may tend to be too protective and controlling, often pushing for their agenda instead of considering what is best for the mentee. They may also impose an unrealistic standard of performance, which the mentee may need help to achieve. Furthermore, mentors may need to be made aware of the limitations of their charge.

The Mentee's Characteristics and Mindset

The definition of “mindset,” according to the 2011 edition of the American Heritage Dictionary, is “a fixed mental attitude or a habit.” According to Dweck (2009), there are two different mentality types: fixed and growth. A fixed mentality, or the notion that there is only a fixed or restricted quantity of everything, such as ability. The complete opposite is a development attitude. It encourages the idea that people may grow due to work, practice, and teaching. In other words, there are no obstacles.

Researchers discovered that successful mentees had eleven traits in common. In addition to having complimentary qualities to the mentor, they have.

Pursuit of Success. A good mentee should be motivated to achieve their goals. It is common practice to begin a mentoring initiative as a grass-roots initiative, with the mentee taking the initiative to steer the direction of the relationship (Medina, 2022). A mentee who exhibits the desire or ambition to achieve would also have clear views of what they want from a mentoring relationship.

Hard-Working. Mentees need to be hard workers. A mentoring relationship will need additional time and effort from the mentee and their regular responsibilities at the firm (Bury, 2019). A person who has shown that they are willing to put in a lot of action would be a strong candidate for a mentorship program.

Time Management. The mentoring relationship calls for abilities such as effective time management on a fundamental level. A mentee must demonstrate that they are capable of successful time management. The prospective mentee must evaluate whether they have enough time to participate in a mentoring program.

Optimistic Outlook. An upbeat and optimistic mentee will contribute significantly to the program's success. A more upbeat and optimistic perspective on life may create a more pleasant and successful overall experience (Medina, 2022). Research has shown that those with a more positive attitude toward life do better overall than those with a more pessimistic outlook.

Having Respect for Authority. A crucial attribute for mentees is respect for those in positions of power. Traditionally, the role of a mentor in a mentoring program has been played by an older employee who has more experience instructing an employee who is younger and has less experience. Therefore, respecting one another must be the foundation of the relationship (Aravena, 2018). Mentees can only succeed if they appreciate their mentor's expertise, knowledge, and authority.

Open to Learning. Mentees need to be open to trying new things and adapting the way they currently do things as necessary. The mentor's responsibility is to share their knowledge or provide guidance, but the chance will be squandered if the mentee is not interested in gaining new skills.

Clear Communication. The mentees should have the ability to communicate clearly, including the ability to listen. A mentee must be able to listen carefully and speak with their mentor when they have questions or require more explanation. A relationship serves as the primary focal point of an effective mentoring program. The mentee needs to be able to communicate their thoughts and feelings clearly to foster healthy relationships.

Initiative. People who are not afraid to try new things are excellent mentees. A crucial quality for individuals is not sitting around and waiting for someone else to solve an issue or act. Typically, mentees who desire to take the initiative for good change are willing to accept responsibility for their professional success (Adom et al., 2016). Mentees who feel they oversee their careers will do well in mentoring relationships. This outcome is because they will not wait for someone else to acknowledge their skills and qualifications.

The Capacity for Leadership. Mentors should look for mentees who have already shown they have the potential to become influential leaders. Mentees in a workplace mentoring program can gain significant experience and information even if they still need to possess all the abilities necessary to take on a leadership position.

Mentee Goals

Whether or not the mentee can accomplish the objectives they have set for themselves is a significant factor in the success of a mentoring program. As a result, one of the first steps in a mentoring relationship is establishing a set of objectives and working out a strategy for reaching those objectives. The mentees should have a solid understanding of how to develop goals and what steps must be taken to achieve those goals (Ehrlich et al., 2014). The mentee will be responsible for the bulk of the work, even though this may be done with the mentor. They ought to have a clear idea of what they want to get out of the program and how they want to get there.

A mentee must be able to establish goals for themselves effectively, but they also need to be flexible. It is essential to a workplace mentoring program's success if participants are willing to adapt to new circumstances or reevaluate their objectives. Flexibility is essential when establishing and attaining one's objectives (Adom et al., 2016). Things sometimes turn out differently than we think, so a good mentee should be prepared to alter things if they are not

producing the desired results. Good mentees have favorable traits that carry over into their mentoring relationships. However, this way of thinking seems crucial for the mentoree's success.

Training for Mentoring

Mentoring is a practical way to teach and develop leadership abilities. It must be seen as a proactive procedure by knowledgeable and skilled leaders. Some mentoring programs include mentor training while others do not; some mentees are given mentors while others pick their own; and other mentoring programs provide participants complete autonomy. Many academics are sure that mentor training is a crucial component of the puzzle, and they emphasize that insufficient mentor preparation might restrict the program's efficacy (Ehrlich et al., 2014). Researchers advise school systems to provide prospective mentors with specific training. The instruction given should be intended to foster the mentee's cognitive development. To support the mentee, the mentor should be trained to ask the right questions to encourage reflective thinking, problem-solving abilities, and conferencing.

Although the structure of mentoring training might vary, the following problems must be covered: (1) a discussion of fundamental ideas, attitudes, and assumptions about acceptable administrative practices, i.e., what is "leadership?"; (2) an examination of essential presumptions, ideas, and terminology associated with mentoring as a method for assisting newly appointed administrators. It is essential to (3) establish knowledge of personal strengths and limits that may be employed in the execution of the mentoring position; (4) examine feedback strategies and other kinds of interpersonal communication; and (5) comprehend interpersonal styles. Four essential characteristics must be met for a mentoring training program to be effective inside the school system. It is necessary to have trust, enough financial resources, open communication, and experience with adult learning approaches.

The Environment for Adult Learning

The main goal of new principal mentorship programs needs to be to assist novice principals in getting insights into trends, challenges, and societal realities that go beyond current practices. Mentorship programs should focus on helping novice principals understand the complexities of the educational system, equipping them with the skills they need to lead their schools, and providing them with support and guidance. These programs should include topics such as understanding the various stakeholders in the school system, developing a school improvement plan, and learning how to manage staff and resources effectively. Additionally, mentorship programs should emphasize the importance of critical thinking and problem solving and guide how to use data to inform decisions. Mentors should also be encouraged to share their experiences, successes, and challenges to help the novice principal develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. Mentorship programs should be designed to foster collaboration and communication between mentors and mentees. This collaboration could include regular meetings, opportunities to discuss and reflect on challenges, and activities that encourage exchanging ideas and best practices. By creating a safe and supportive environment, novice principals can feel comfortable asking questions and exploring new ideas. Finally, mentorship programs should strive to provide novice principals with a holistic view of the educational system, including the current trends, challenges, and societal realities. This holistic approach will enable novice principals to develop a more nuanced understanding of their role and the impact they can have on their school and the larger community.

Types of School Leaders

As a result of the current racial climate in the United States, there has been a movement in education reform that has developed a new sort of school leader; the anti-racist leader (Emelo,

2019). This shift occurred due to the current racial milieu in the United States. Even among the long-standing arguments against school leadership, the notion that racism and disability have evolved into similar challenges irrevocably joined at the hip stands out (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Considering these two principles, it was easy to understand how shifts in the school leadership style are tied to the changing educational situation. In response to these shifting demographics and expectations, the educational system in the United States has experienced tremendous change. The difficulty lies in illuminating the requirements of school leadership and education reform's failure to include these requirements into the requisite competencies for school leaders. For instance, research undertaken by Steifel et al. (2020) demonstrates that the New York Department of Education responded swiftly when the subpar inclusive methods they had been implementing become public knowledge and public policy demanded systemic adjustments. As a result of preparation in school leadership, backward planning for such modifications should account for the leadership competencies required to sustain such changes.

The leader of the restorative justice program is an additional example of this. According to Kohli (2019) view, restorative justice is a collaborative programming structure designed to reconcile hurt or damage. Jail systems and schools subsequently applied the framework as behavior management. According to Jones (2018), school administrator's backing restorative justice in schools follows the national strategy to reform and reinvent the harsh punishments resulting from student violations. However, this is another contextual response from school leaders. It appears to take precedence over the ongoing demands of school leadership and place them within the realm of their actions.

The job of the social justice leader evolves in tandem with diversity-focused leadership programs and restorative justice projects. The concept of social justice was advocated by

politicians, scholars, and practitioners of the field, and it was added to the list of responsibilities for school principals because these persons realized that school principals could affect learning environments that do not support the well-being of students of color (Shaked, 2020). Like the requirements of school leadership education, the development of the social justice leadership framework was inspired by the need to achieve results based on concentrated efforts to encourage the avoidance of bias and make room for diversity (Shaked, 2020). This activity precedes school leadership since it was tightly aligned and reactively conducted in response to the environment's needs. In addition, it explores the origins of the many sorts of leaders and ideas throughout history. As a result, it identifies where national investment should be made to bolster the significance of exceptional leadership when there is a continual demand for it.

Summary

Current literature on novice school principal leadership identifies the practical applications and programs provided to various school leaders throughout America (McKimm & O'Sullivan, 2015). However, formal mentorship programs for new teachers are prevalent in school districts, while such formal programs do not exist for new principals in Arizona (Goldrick, 2016). Current gaps in literature exist within the theoretical and practical value of dedicated mentorship programs for novice school principals. This research addresses the current literature gaps by examining the leadership training and mentoring experiences of novice school principals in Arizona.

Kram's mentorship model and other scholars' contributions and critiques facilitate the practical expansion of this theory's phases. In the initiation phase, mentors and mentees are paired (Ashburn et al., 1987). In the cultivation phase, standards-based ideas and differentiated practices engage mentees in the learning processes bimonthly or for a specified number of

monthly hours (Lovely, 2014). Outputs of mentorship include principal portfolios (Von Frank, 2012). However, effects like better leadership skills (Jones & Larwin, 2020) appear to be short-term, given that most studies are done within one to three years. Despite the significant number of positive-result studies, such programs may provide challenges during the separation phase if they do not adhere to these criteria (Bauer & Silver, 2018). Participation and buy-in from stakeholders are necessary for the success of projects like those analyzed in the literature.

When short-term outcomes become long-term, the likelihood of program application elsewhere or in the education community improves, according to the program theory (Bossen, 2018). The results of principals like Tommy Welch in Gwinnett County, who first benefited from mentorship and observed a significant increase in student progress in their seventh year, are why the Wallace Foundation Principal Pipeline program continues to grow (Gill, 2019). Numerous states and districts still need to implement such programs, which may be a factor in the frequent turnover of inexperienced principals and the low student accomplishment in many schools they serve (Burkhauser et al., 2019). Before conducting a qualitative study on the needs of Arizona's novice principals, it was crucial to research the inputs, methods, outputs, and outcomes of the current novice principal Mentorship programs.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the shared experiences of novice school principals' mentor training and to gain an understanding of the experience of peer educators. According to Gore (2017), education research can be conducted using various methodologies and theoretical frameworks. This chapter discusses the design, its applicability to the subject matter and the investigation, the different methods of data collecting, and the critical steps for data analysis

Research Design

This qualitative study uses a case study research technique to investigate how educational leadership training programs equip principals to be highly successful program leaders. The study looks at how educational leadership training programs prepare principals. The method to study that is focused on inquiry and explores a social issue is known as qualitative research (Yin, 2018). There are five distinct approaches, each of which may need a different form of study and research depending on the nature of the problem (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This methodology is appropriate since this study aims to evaluate professional training methods and the consequences of such practices (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This design was chosen because it allows for some degree of unpredictability in the data. This design also allows qualitative themes and patterns to emerge from interview data and other pertinent analyses. In addition, it provides the opportunity to construct a solid and exhaustive case study by including a more comprehensive range of objective research (Mohajan, 2018).

According to Barnham (2015), qualitative research methods have distinct advantages when it comes to achieving the goals of design concepts. The knowledge considered to originate

from the primary source, which cannot be contested, makes phenomenology the most appropriate approach for this study, as it includes understanding the universal experience of a phenomenon through interviews with novice principals. Phenomenology is the optimal approach (Barnham, 2015). One of the objectives of qualitative research is to arrive at a consensus on meaning by combining the viewpoints and experiences of different participants (Van Manen, 2016). This design style is effective when the focus is on gathering information about other people's experiences like one's own. This style of research shifts away from focusing on the story of a single individual and instead incorporates the viewpoints of other persons who have had comparable experiences.

Transcendental and hermeneutical procedures are the two most prevalent procedures in qualitative phenomenological research (Grogan & Crow, 2011). A vital feature of the hermeneutical phenomenological method is interpreting the significance of participants' and researchers' life experiences (Grogan & Crow, 2011). However, this study's purpose is not to examine the discussed lived experiences. The transcendental phenomenological design aligned with the study's primary objective: to collect firsthand information from the novice principals who participated in the research because it concentrated on explaining and providing meaning to the participants' experiences (Denzin, 1989).

This study applies a transcendental phenomenological methodology to evaluate the perceptions of novice principals regarding the quality of interactions in leadership development. Consequently, transcendental phenomenology enables me to describe the principal's perspective while bracketing my own experiences with a new perspective that could influence data collection and the research interpretation of the phenomenon under study.

The first stage in developing a strategy for doing objective research involves using the

epoché approach (Denzin, 1989). Also known as bracketing in phenomenological research, the epoché approach is the process by which biases and assumptions are blocked out to explain a phenomenon in terms of its own inherent system of meaning. Epoché liberates people from the chains of the primordial thinking they use as a foundation for truth and reality, even though it does not eradicate all presuppositions and prejudgments (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I then used transcendental phenomenological reduction, allowing me to consolidate several of my experiences into one. I assigned equal weight to each experience to produce the most authentic picture possible of the meaning and substance of the phenomena, and they did this while bracketing my preconceptions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The creative option allows me to listen to every first-year principal's voice.

Research Questions

This study aims to understand the meaning and experience from the participant's point of view. This comprehension is expressed in the participant's own words and detailed in exact detail to an open-minded researcher who can put their thoughts and knowledge about the event being recounted to the side.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of novice school principals undergoing mentor training in Arizona?

Sub Questions

1. How do Arizona novice principals characterize and explain their mentors' function?
2. What do novice principals in Arizona believe to be the results of their involvement in mentorship programs?

3. What do novice principals view as the aspects that made their experiences as mentees more challenging?

4. Which aspects do they believe contribute to the effectiveness of mentoring?

Setting and Participants

In this section, I explain the setting and describe the participants' profiles by articulating the criteria for participation in the study.

Setting

A public school district in Phoenix, Arizona, is the backdrop for this case study's setting. The district was chosen based on the number of novice principals and the culturally diverse population of students, teachers, and staff. A sample of 10 schools led by novice principals provides the data points. A Superintendent, a CEO, and a Student Support Director make up the leadership chain of the district. The CEO is solely responsible for ensuring that principal mentoring functions effectively (Gall et al., 2015). The novice principals who participated in the interview gave a variety of responses to the questions based on the uniqueness and grade level of their school. The one-of-a-kind nature of the questions and answers provided by novice principals gave room for adaptability.

Participants

Participants in this study were ten novice principals with less than three years of experience as school principals. No restrictions were imposed on race, ethnicity, age, gender, or years of prior teaching experience to foster the development of unique themes and patterns.

Researcher Positionality

During this study, I had no direct ties with any participants or locations except for the professional community we all participate as fellow educators. As the human researcher for this

project, my primary duty was researching the topic and the questions posed. Because of my duties, I supervised the research process, which required me to devise tactical methods to answer the research questions and analyze the data collected from each contact. It was up to me to conduct the interviews and analyze the data to generate themes, new lines of inquiry, and conflicting opinions based on the replies to the questions.

My past coursework allowed me to gain theoretical and practical experience through specific leadership training in the US Military and Harvard University. However, the direct experience I gained as a school principal led me to question the novice principals' conceptions of their roles. The experience is what inspired me to do this research. During my research, I kept a journal to help maintain transparency, maintain a sense of balance, and remain objective. This attempt at objectivity was made despite the possibility that my previous role as a principal may introduce a bias. I adhered to all ethical standards when conducting research and reporting findings according to recurring themes that surfaced during the analysis.

Interpretive Framework

The qualitative frameworks that are most conservative are post-positivism and social constructivism (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Other paradigms include disability theory, feminist theories, and critical theories.

This study makes use of social constructivism as its primary interpretive framework throughout. Through individual experiences in life and relationships with other people in their social context, individuals give their lives purpose (Gentles et al., 2015). As a result, to describe novice principals' perceptions of their ability to succeed in the demanding world of school administration, I used this research paradigm for my qualitative research. Specifically, I was interested in how those factors contribute to the participant's overall perception of leadership

training. I acquired the replies from each research participant through participant interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. I acquired the responses by adhering to the ideals of social constructivism. I concentrated on the participants' viewpoints by assessing their experiences as described in the interviews. Then I prepared the perspectives so that they would appropriately depict their experiences.

Philosophical Assumptions

It is essential to provide a learning environment that inspires school leaders to flourish and provides them with access to educational leadership skills of the highest possible caliber through the cultivation of academic and professional interpersonal interactions (Altuwairqi et al., 2021). My research into the efficacy of educational mentoring focuses on meeting novice school principals' social and psychological requirements. (Altuwairqi et al., 2021). In contrast to the research paradigms or interpretative frameworks, philosophical assumptions are more likely to remain stable throughout a scholar's career.

Ontological Assumption

The ontological assumption of this dissertation is that all individuals can learn from their experiences and share those experiences with others. It was assumed that these experiences are unique and can provide insight into the roles and responsibilities of novice school principals. My faith as a Christian compels me to believe that God has made a singular truth known to humanity. Although it is possible to believe in God's Word without question, my truth comes from a personal relationship with God. It was crucial to present and compare the many viewpoints supplied by the participants as they viewed their lived experiences utilizing multiple forms of evidence (Creswell, 2018). This core belief influences my thought and deed and inspires me to seek positive outcomes for students, teachers, staff, and school administrators.

Epistemological Assumption

An epistemological assumption is a belief about the nature of knowledge and how it can be obtained. It was an assumption about the limits or scope of what can be known and how knowledge can be acquired. This includes assumptions about the validity of specific sources of information, the reliability of certain methods of inquiry, the accuracy of specific observations, and the appropriateness of certain conclusions.

I planned to carry out an investigation that was free from bias and in which I did not influence the results in any way. Some concerns that the epistemological assumption address include what counts as knowledge, how claims of knowledge are justified, and the relationships between the researcher and the subject of the investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Experience is the most important source of knowledge, and it was necessary to understand personal experiences to gain a better understanding of mentoring novice school principals. This study uses a phenomenological approach to explore the shared experiences of novice school principals and their mentors to understand the mentoring process. This qualitative study is more open to individual interpretation. Consequently, information is likely developed from the individual experiences of novice school principals rather than necessarily coming from those considered to be experts in the field.

Axiological Assumption

The degree to which a researcher's values are recognized and implemented into their work is the axiological assumption in this context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Before I went into teaching, I served my community as an elected official after retiring from a 20-year, combat-filled military career. Now, I am an educator. In this qualitative study, my conservative, Christian values are presented to the reader concerning the background and atmosphere of the

research. These values assist me in accurately bracketing the facts while seeking the truth of the details I receive as data and generating my final report. In addition, I have arrived at my judgments while maintaining neutrality and objectivity.

Researcher's Role

As the human variable in this study, I shall refrain from exerting any control or influence on the participants in the study. I did not have employment inside the chosen school system, and I did not have any personal or professional relationships with those who participated in this research. As the most potent data collection and analysis instrument, I was aware of and acknowledged any personal bias. To better comprehend the phenomenon, I endeavored to eliminate it and any similar preconceptions and experiences (Bowen, 2009). Additionally, I have over thirty years of experience serving in leadership capacities in military and civilian organizations. I have always adopted a transformational leadership strategy during that entire period.

Procedures

In preparation for this study, I needed permission from the school district's superintendent to generate a list of possible participants. I first needed authorization from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and then I needed consent from Liberty University, which was approved, and a reply was sent (Appendix C). As soon as permission was obtained, the questionnaire and linked scale were sent to the individuals identified as participants through email and Survey Monkey. Along with demographic data and questions of a similar nature, the "statement of consent" and "special questionnaire about constraints" was included in the "electronic version," which will also contain relevant questions. The deadline was two weeks after the initial message was distributed. The deadline was in place to increase the likelihood that

as many people as possible would respond to the questionnaire. Considering the study and the criteria surrounding the project, the smaller sample size was acceptable (Boddy, 2016). The participants were novice school principals from a school district in Phoenix, Arizona. Ten novice principals were selected and sampled in the study using a convenience sampling technique.

Permissions

I investigated the matter of authorization with the IRB and the potential school district superintendent. It was clear that it was vital to start having regular conversations with the controllers of potential research sites to filter out settings that were not accessible and to discover plausible areas. In order to submit my application to the IRB, I required authorization from the prospective location of the study. After I had finished the documentation required by the IRB, I was able to get official authorization to utilize specific study locations once he had completed the paperwork required by the IRB.

Recruitment Plan

The study sought to engage a pool of ten novice school principals within a school district in Phoenix, Arizona. There are 78 schools in the selected district with one principal each. Approximately 35% (27) of school year 22/23 schools have novice principals. A purposive sample of ten novice school principals was used to capture a diverse cross-section of school demographics, school sizes, grade levels, and prior teaching experience. The number of participants depends on the qualitative research approach. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a narrative involves one or two examples, phenomenology includes three to ten examples, grounded theory includes twenty to thirty examples, and ethnography includes a single culture-sharing group. A case study has five to six examples. One advantage of using purposive sampling is the increased likelihood of obtaining various viewpoints because of the participants

in the research.

Saturation is a crucial component of qualitative research methodology, as it ensures that the data collected are comprehensive and representative of the phenomenon being studied. Without saturation, researchers risk missing key insights or perspectives, which can compromise the validity and reliability of their findings.

Saturation is seen as a crucial component of qualitative research methodology, as it ensures that the data collected are comprehensive and representative of the phenomenon being studied. Without saturation, researchers run the risk of missing key insights or perspectives, which can compromise the validity and reliability of their findings.

While saturation is often associated with grounded theory, it is relevant to a wide range of qualitative research approaches, including phenomenology, ethnography, and case study research. Saturation is also considered a key criterion for assessing the quality of qualitative research, and failure to achieve saturation can be seen as a limitation or weakness of a study. Saturation is a fundamental concept in qualitative research that refers to the point at which no new information or themes emerge from the data being collected and analyzed (Fusch & Ness, 2015). It is considered an essential component of qualitative research methodology and a key criterion for assessing the quality of qualitative research.

Data Collection Plan

Harrison et al. (2017) noted that case study research should combine multiple data sources. As part of the justification process, the gathered data added credibility to the research and its subject. At the same time, it incorporated techniques for information collection, such as interviews, focus groups, and documents (Yin, 2018). It was necessary to include variable data points to support the research and establish the validity of the case study design through

triangulation (Yazan, 2015). I consciously selected a plan that would result in the appropriate investigation to conduct qualitative research (Brooks & Normore, 2015).

Credible interviews, focus groups, and documents provided the necessary data points. Individual interviews were initially conducted through the lens of Patton (2015) to establish individual demographics and perspectives. Due to the numerous grade levels represented, choosing a purposive sampling method reduced the number of participants and the opportunity for redress.

Data Gathering Techniques

As the primary means of gathering information for this study, interviews with each participant were conducted using a semi-structured format. I prepared questions for the interview via semi-structured interviews, allowing them to go further than what was stated (Berg & Lune, 2020). The principals were allowed to go off subject at any point since this strategy created a natural, comfortable flow of conversation. Taking this technique also provided the freedom to inquire about similarities based on previously acquired information. This approach offered very extensive and comprehensive descriptions for the analysis. The primary purpose of the questions asked was to investigate the purpose of the research (Morse, 2018). After the interviews, the transcripts were sent to the group members for member verification, and any required revisions were made. Following that, I began openly coding the transcripts of the chats (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). Pattern coding is a method that I used to go through numerous repetitions of the data to identify and evaluate patterns as they emerge (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The codes were grouped according to the pertinent research sub-question in pattern coding to discover emerging patterns. Saturation was reached after the data had been sorted and arranged according to the essential sub-question categories (Strauss & Glaser, 1967).

Following this step, the categorized codes for each research question were grouped according to their common traits. Descriptive themes were assigned to each group, including a theme that required it to be cited by at least four of the ten principals to be considered. For this case study, the findings are discussed after every individual research sub-question.

Individual Interviews Data Collection Approach

Individual interviews with each participant were the primary method of data gathering. Each interview did not last longer than 60 minutes (Yin, 2018). According to Wolgemuth et al. (2015), professionals with busy schedules participated in interviews for qualitative research because the interviews provided participants with a brief opportunity to reflect. According to Yin (2018), interviews are compelling data-gathering methods that may be utilized to learn about the participants' lived experiences. Yin also advocated that interviews take the shape of structured, guided conversations. One-on-one interviews were conducted with a laptop and a digital recorder to capture and store the interactions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

Interview questions began with what Marshall and Rossman (2015) called a *grand tour question* for each participant to set a tone and direction for following directions. The semi-structured interview protocol followed the formatting below.

Individual Interview Questions

1. What is your name, where did you go to college, and how long have you been teaching?
CRQ
2. Please describe your educational background and career through your current position.
CRQ
3. What is your general experience regarding mentor training? CRQ
4. How can you define and describe the roles of the mentor? SQ

5. Explain the preparation you received specifically for your school principal role. SQ
6. How would you describe your preparation to become a school principal? SQ
7. How do you perceive the roles of school principals? SQ
8. What are the results that you attained through mentoring? SQ
9. What factors enhance the mentoring process? SQ
10. What were the challenges that you faced during the mentorship program?
11. How do mentors respond to your leadership? SQ
12. How does your role as a school principal align with your leadership style? SQ
13. What else can you add that we still need to talk about?

Experts in educational leadership and case study methodology looked at the 13 questions and provided feedback on how they should be answered. During this stage of the procedure, the experts checked to see that the questions were specific and easy to understand and that they also accomplished what they set out to do based on how they were worded. The first two questions are designed to give a “grand tour” (Hughes, 2016, p. 224). The participants were questioned to obtain background information and answer fundamental factual questions pertinent to the interview and the broader study.

Questions two through thirteen addressed the research questions, enabling comparing participants’ responses and analyzing the programs (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). These questions attempted to gain insight into the participant’s experiences.

Individual Interview Data Analysis Plan

According to researchers (Merriam & Grenier, 2019), the data processing step of qualitative research is laborious and time-consuming because the responses to the questions are extensive, detailed, and in-depth. This complexity would necessitate substantial time and work

for sorting, coding, and categorizing the responses (Oluwafemi et al., 2021). As a result, the study seeks to explore what individual support needs are perceived to be necessary to meet the challenges posed during the first few years of principalship in the State of Arizona. I used the approach of data analysis suggested by Moustakas in 1994 for phenomenological reduction. Microsoft Forms were used to collect the data, which was then imported into Microsoft Excel for analysis (Peters, 2018).

Researchers claim that the data processing phase of qualitative research is tedious and time-consuming because the responses to the questions are lengthy, rich, and in-depth (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As a result, significant effort was put into sorting through, coding, and eventually classifying the responses (Merriam & Grenier, 2019; Moustakas, 1994; Oluwafemi et al., 2021; Patton, 2015). I applied the method for data analysis that Moustakas developed for phenomenological reduction. The data was collected using Microsoft Forms and then converted and analyzed using Microsoft Excel (Peters, 2018).

I followed a method that consisted of five steps. The procedures included organizing the data, examining it, studying it, establishing codes, modifying the codes to account for themes, and cohesively presenting the codes. Every interview was recorded and transcribed so I could analyze them later (Etikan, 2017). I got everything ready and arranged the data. This stage involved printing out the participant survey replies and reading them numerous times to comprehensively understand the participants' experiences (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2015). Throughout this procedure, I maintained a record of the novice principal's questions, suggestions, and thoughts (Moustakas, 1994). This step was a critical stage since I had to refrain from making any subjective judgments while also being mindful of bracketing their opinions.

Focus Groups Data Collection Approach

Focus groups are an alternative method of interviewing. According to Krueger and Casey (2015), “The objective of a focus group is to collect data of interest to the researcher—typically to assess the diversity of people’s beliefs across several groups” (p. 7). I was responsible for moderating, listening, observing, and analyzing data (Krueger & Casey, 2015). I compiled the data based on the information received from focus group meetings. Focus groups typically comprise six to ten persons with comparable characteristics (Ryan et al., 2014). Due to scheduling conflicts, I conducted two focus groups with the five novice principals in each meeting. Yin (2018) recommends smaller group settings over a massive gathering of all members. I utilized Zoom’s online simultaneous focus groups to conduct the focus group. The focus group questions encouraged frank conversations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I used a laptop and a digital recorder to record the focus group’s conversations.

Focus Group Questions

1. What are some of the key ways in which the experiences of a teacher in their first year vary from those of a teacher in their third year?
2. What are the greatest motivators that helped improve your mentorship program?
3. What are your biggest concerns as a group regarding novice principals’ ability to lead education programs?

The first question is based on the research that Obiakor and Bakken (2016) have done, as it asks about the components of the mentorship program and the direction principals receive. On the other hand, based on the various pieces of published literature, they are all subjective (Patton, 2015). By asking this question, the principals uncovered more gaps in the requirements of principals, the requirements of programs, and the requirements for further study.

Williamson and Blackburn (2016) suggest that principals should engage in lifelong learning and establish their professional networks to further their professional development and improve their teaching. Recognizing that some principals may acquire new talents while serving in this role, the second question seeks information on the contrasting perspectives of acquiring educational leadership skills through traditional or nontraditional leadership training.

In the third question, individuals rate their performance. This study is unrelated to self-efficacy; nevertheless, Urton et al. (2014) noted that principals' perceptions of their ability to lead educational programs influence the quality of their leadership in this area. It was essential to consider their perspectives on how they might influence leadership competencies for novice principals and what would need to be considered as a part of their abilities.

Focus Group Data Analysis Plan

According to Yin (2018), data analysis depends on the researcher's style and capacity to reason and perceive several interpretations. The analysis will rely heavily on inductive reasoning (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). According to Patton (2015), patterns represent broad participant observations, whereas themes contribute to the pattern's interpretation. The research on new phenomenon uses interviews, focus groups, and document data to assess novice school principals' attitudes toward their jobs (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), "The most crucial component in data analysis is communicating and interpreting the situation" (p. 233). I evaluated the themes arising from this study's collected data.

Document Analysis Data Collection Approach

Pattern matching, cross-case synthesis, explanation building, time-series analysis, and logic models are the four most prevalent document analysis methods in the world today, according to Yin (2018). The purpose of pattern matching is to identify existing patterns in

research based on existing variables. In terms of explanation construction, the definition is the process of describing the social phenomenon being investigated. The explanation must be generally tied to a pertinent theory incorporated into the study's design (Yin, 2018). Time series refers to analyzing time patterns in studies consistent with social phenomena. In terms of the logic model, the study's objective is to make sense of social phenomena or cases. These phenomena have the potential to reveal concealed linkages within the patterns. The cross-case synthesis evaluates each instance as though it were unique. Due to this, I explored multiple cases and integrated their results to add depth and new views to the topic (Yin, 2018).

The following types of documents were collected and analyzed:

Training manuals and materials used in the mentor training program were reviewed to better understand the program's goals, objectives, and content.

In general, policies and guidelines related to the mentor training program or mentorship were examined to gain insight into the larger context in which the mentor training program was situated.

Reports and evaluations of the mentor training program were analyzed to understand the program's effectiveness and impact on the experiences of peer educators.

Meeting minutes and notes from mentor training program meetings were reviewed to gain insight into these meetings' structure, content, and outcomes.

Document Analysis Data Analysis Plan

Document examination is another method used for data collection. Documents such as organizational and administrative documents are all relevant documents to review for this study (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015; Vargas-Urpi, 2017; Yin, 2018). There is a chance that the

records may include bias, but this does not prevent them from being used to “corroborate and supplement information from other sources” (Yin, 2018, p. 115). If the information contradicts the conclusions of the other sources, it confirms the necessity for further research (Yin, 2018).

Field Notes Data Collection Approach

During the interview, I took notes and made observations to keep track of the candidates’ nonverbal communication (Creswell, 2013). I took detailed and introspective notes, including their perceptions, emotions, and ideas relating to the interviews. The notes were made while the participant was interviewed and discussed the questions. After the participant had left the room, I added any further thoughts that came to mind to the notes. Friedemann et al. (2011) states that putting down field notes throughout the research process helps better understand the interviews. During the data analysis process, this information was used to enhance and establish the interpretation of the data. I took notes while the participants spoke and recorded their most important words, phrases, and assertions so that their words could be heard. The notes were also helpful in facilitating the formulation of further questions that may be asked of a participant after the interview question was recorded, should it be necessary to do so.

Field Note Data Analysis Plan

The field notes were compiled and compared to the audio recording of the individual and group interviews to ensure context and clarity of individual thoughts were captured. Although time consuming, this process of tracking and comparing each interview with the associated notes provided a robust picture of the attitude and nuance of each participant. Creswell & Poth (2018) identify the practice of field notes as essential to validating recorded interviews with what the research observed.

Data Synthesis

The data analysis was carried out consistently with the modified van Kaam procedure. Van Kaam's phenomenology is a theoretical-methodological approach to understanding lived experience. It was developed by Adrian van Kaam, a Dutch-American philosopher and psychologist influenced by Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger (Etikan, 2017). Van Kaam's approach emphasizes the subjective experience of individuals and their unique perspectives.

Van Kaam's phenomenology methodology involves "intentionality analysis," which focuses on identifying the intentional acts that make up an individual's experience of a particular phenomenon. This method analyzes the meanings, values, and attitudes that inform an individual's world perception. The approach also involves "imaginative variation," which allows for exploring alternative perspectives and interpretations of a particular phenomenon (Etikan, 2017, p. 111). Van Kaam's phenomenology emphasizes the importance of empathy, understanding, and compassion in research. It seeks to uncover individuals' lived experiences respectfully and attentively to their unique perspectives. The approach also emphasizes the importance of context and cultural factors in shaping individual experience (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Van Kaam's phenomenology offers a structured approach to understanding lived experience, emphasizing the importance of individual perspectives and the role of intentionality in shaping perception and experience.

This strategy worked well for arranging, evaluating, and putting up a summary of the data. First, a preliminary grouping and listing of terms pertinent to the event were created (McGrath et al., 2019). I did a verbatim transcription of each audio-recorded interview. I did not leave out any remark or word from the transcript since they believed every sentence had the same significance.

Second, I decreased the data by carefully reviewing each transcript and removing remarks that did not answer the guiding questions. Expressions that recurred several times or were unclear were also removed from circulation. They compared the phrases and the themes that went along with them to the whole record of the participant in the study. I asked some questions: (a) Are they [themes] conveyed plainly in the transcription? (b) If it is not clearly stated, are they compatible with one another? and (c) If they are not explicit or compatible, they do not pertain to the co-researcher's experience [participant] and are thus removed. Third, the consistent aspects of the experience that may be grouped under a single overarching theme were categorized into subcategories. The components that have been grouped and identified represent the fundamental principles that underlie the experience. In the fourth step of this process, each transcript was examined alongside the invariant components and the themes to see whether the themes were stated openly or were consistent with the constituents.

This technique helped establish whether the participants' experiences were meaningful to them and whether they were relevant to their lives. I employed a modified van Kaam method defined by Moustakas (1994) to analyze the data collected through phenomenological interviews. The van Kaam method, as modified by Moustakas, involves a seven-step process for analyzing lived experience:

Horizontalization: In this step, I read through the interview transcripts to understand the described overall experience. This process involved bracketing any preconceived ideas or biases and attending to the words and phrases used by participants.

Reduction and elimination: In this step, I identified key themes or experiences described by participants and eliminates any extraneous or irrelevant information.

Categorization and thematization of invariant constituents: In this step, I categorized the key themes or experiences identified in step two and identified the invariant constituents, or essential features, of each category.

Application and validation: In this step, I applied the categories and invariant constituents to other examples of lived experience to validate their applicability.

Construction of the individual textural description: In this step, I detailed the individual's lived experience based on the categories and invariant constituents identified in steps two and three.

Construction of the individual structural description: In this step, I identified the underlying structures that gave meaning and coherence to the individual's lived experience.

Composite description: In this final step, I synthesized the individual descriptions into a composite description of the phenomenon being studied.

Using the modified van Kaam method, I systematically analyzed the data collected through phenomenological interviews and identified the essential features of the experiences described by participants.

I employed a systematic approach to analyze the data collected from the three sources. The first step was to code the data, which involved labeling data segments with descriptive words or phrases. This process allowed me to organize and categorize the data into manageable units. I refined the codes as the analysis progressed to ensure they accurately reflected the data.

Once all the data had been coded, I used thematic analysis to identify patterns and commonalities. This analysis involved reviewing the coded data to identify recurring themes or topics. I then organized these themes into overarching categories or concepts that captured the essence of the data.

I synthesized the data into a coherent body of evidence that comprehensively presented the phenomenon being studied. The resulting themes and categories allowed me to draw meaningful conclusions and make recommendations based on the findings. Additionally, member checking and peer debriefing helped to ensure the validity and reliability of the analysis, further strengthening the research findings.

Trustworthiness

For qualitative research to be regarded as credible, its credibility, reliability, confirmability, and transferability must be established. The ability to be relied upon ensures that the task is extensive and complete. The careful collection, analysis, and interpretation of data are among the most reliable measures. In addition, the aforementioned contributes positively to the trustworthiness of the research. A logical analysis of the data gathered from the interviews, focus groups, and documents will be conducted to ensure that the user processes were trustworthy, reliable, and transportable (Patton, 2015). “When working inductively, the analyst searches for emergent patterns in the data,” according to Patton (2015, p. 560). This process allowed me, as the researcher, to study the collected data, make comparisons, identify repeating trends, and reach conclusions.

Credibility

Nowell et al. (2017) advocate peer debriefing as a technique and methodology to cross-check the research and process to establish credibility. To add credibility to the researcher, the debriefer must analyze and evaluate several parts of the study, including the coding and analysis (Richards & Hemphill, 2018). I thoroughly and rigorously evaluated the chapter’s methodology, with the dissertation committee as the debriefer. This evaluation aimed to compare the stated technique, data collecting, and analysis with the results to assess whether they correspond. In

addition, I assessed each component and the outcome to see whether they were relevant to the stated goal of the study.

Transferability

Transferability necessitates that the research generates a detailed description of the research and the context, which can subsequently be utilized to demonstrate the study's applicability to several situations. When researchers gather all the information they have obtained about a subject during a project, they will have a full or dense description (Morse, 2018). The data collection and analysis strategies thoroughly explained the study methodology to be implemented. This strategy enables other researchers to identify quickly the study sequence and any associated extra information. To ensure that the findings are transferrable to multiple conditions, times, and contexts, I also provided critical information regarding the methodology, decisions made regarding the study's environment, and study participants. This consolidation of information enabled people to visualize how the research's findings might be utilized in various scenarios (Morse et al., 2002). Specific transcription snippets were used to enhance the descriptions and enable generalizations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). It was not my obligation as the researcher to demonstrate that the conclusions of this study apply to other circumstances; nevertheless, it was my responsibility to provide enough information so that the study could be reproduced.

Dependability

Dependability shows that the findings are consistent and could be repeated (Guba & Lincoln, 2003). To ensure dependability, the dissertation committee will establish an audit trail. This audit was done to demonstrate transparency in the management of data, as well as

reflexivity regarding my relationship within the field of educational leadership and how this research will contribute to the existing literature on the subject.

Confirmability

Individual interviews, focus groups, and document analysis that included artifacts were some of the methods utilized and reviewed within the data collection areas of the study as part of the triangulation procedures (Candela, 2019). Member checking refers to returning the data to the participants and confirming that they provided an accurate report based on the experience or, in this case, the interview (Candela, 2019). The use of member checking was used to address the issue of credibility. During this investigation stage, I attempted to verify the evidence gathered and acquire any other crucial evidence that may have been overlooked.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are tied to the study's overall infrastructure, including its goal and issue. In other words, ethical considerations should extend beyond the physical interactions between participants and researchers to safeguard the participants' and researchers' confidentiality (Montgomery & Page, 2018). Protecting the participants' safety in this study was crucial, as unsafe conditions are more likely to create biased results (Creswell & Poth, 2018). For privacy considerations, pseudonyms were issued to each participant in this experiment. No school names were used to respect the participants' right to remain anonymous; pseudonyms were used to identify the schools. To maintain confidentiality throughout the experiment, each participant will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, and guarantees will be that records will not be revealed to any parties external to this study or unconnected to it in any other way. The information was stored on an iPad that required a passcode to access and would be used in future presentations. These recordings would be stored for three years on a password-protected device,

after which they would be erased. These recordings would be accessible solely to the individual doing the research. All electronic records would be deleted at the end of the three years.

Summary

Through the transcendental phenomenological research method, the purpose of this qualitative study was to collect the perspectives of novice Arizona principals to determine the experience of informal and formal guidance and assistance they receive during their first few years on the job. This research was accomplished by determining the experience of novice Arizona principals. In the third chapter, I outlined the research design's particulars and approaches to the investigation. With the approval of the IRB, this qualitative design included researching ten principals and the educational leadership programs each manages. A document review, a series of interviews, and a focus group were undertaken to gather data to determine the degree to which the program outcomes correspond to the actualities of the experiences that the principals have had with the problem. The data analysis technique that Miles and Huberman (1994) and Morse (1995) developed was used to help arrange the data and extract essential themes and pieces of information.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

In this chapter, the results of this study are given. This qualitative research was conducted to determine mentorship's influence on novice principals working in a school district in Central Arizona. The approach of conducting interviews offered a much more transparent look into the mentorship of novice principals. The information the mentees presented during the one-on-one and focus group interviews, combined with applicable mentoring policies and guidance, helped answer the research question: What is the experience of novice school principals undergoing mentor training in Arizona?

Participants

I made an appointment for interviews with the key players at a time that was suitable for them. I communicated the study project's objective by sending the approach script to the recipient's email addresses (see Appendix A). I spoke with principals who were enrolled in the mentorship program offered by the school system in a total of eight separate interviews. Before beginning the one-on-one interviews, I obtained the participants' signatures on the informed consent forms, which they then returned to me (see Appendix B). To maintain the participants' anonymity and protect their privacy, they were given pseudonyms. Audio recordings were made of each interview so I could transcribe the data and publish their results. I analyzed the interview replies the participants provided about their one-of-a-kind experiences with their mentors, and they uncovered recurring topics and categories among the participants.

Table 1*Participant Table*

<u>Participants</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Race</u> W-White H-Hispanic B-Black	<u>Years of experience as a principal</u>
Principal A	Female	H	1st Year
Principal B	Male	W	1st Year
Principal C	Female	B	2nd Year
Principal D	Male	W	3rd Year
Principal E	Female	H	2nd Year
Principal F	Male	W	1st Year
Principal G	Male	B	2nd Year
Principal H	Female	W	2nd Year
Principal I	Male	B	3rd Year
Principal J	Female	W	1st Year

Every participant who agreed to take part in the research gave their agreement to be interviewed in person or over the phone. Participants were told that the interviews would discuss their ideas and impressions about the district-required mentorship program and how it impacts teacher retention. Participants were also advised when and where (in-person) the interviews would take place. The participants were not supplied in advance with any questions to ask during the interviews. During each interview, notes and audio were gathered to be played back and analyzed afterward.

An email was used in the follow-up meetings to provide extra clarity. I also had a notebook in which I jotted down my reflections and ideas on each interview and how they related to the research. During the interview, every participant showed themselves to be helpful, truthful, and welcoming. They showed a high level of interest in the study and said they would want to be informed of the results after being presented.

A recorded follow-on focus group provided additional clarity to the interviewees and myself as the participants were able to share common themes and challenges associated with the current mentoring process. The addition of current district mentorship guidelines, policies, and shared emails among mentors and mentees provided additional insight into the goals of the program and many of the current successes and shortcomings of the program.

Results

The following paragraphs are broken into various themes that were highlighted throughout the research process. The specific central research question and the associated sub-questions are addressed following the theme narratives.

Common Factors Leading to Program Success

The success of the mentoring program relied heavily on the interpersonal qualities of the mentor and the mentee. More than the procedures and policies associated with the program, the personal characteristics of the individuals seemed to have the most impact. As this study focused on the perceptions of the mentees, it is important to note the significance of choosing appropriate mentors to ensure the best outcomes.

Trust

Trust was the main motivating element. *Trust* is a nuanced faith in the actions of another individual. It encompasses the conviction that someone else has the best interests of another

result in mind. The mentee encounters the mentor's willingness to assist the mentee's success, which involves necessary risks. The participants' definitions of trust included a need for confidentiality and the assurance that everything they spoke with their mentor would be treated as personal, not evaluated, and free from criticism. According to the answers, trust is also the notion that one's mentor is an accomplished educational figure who can impart helpful information.

"They have to be excellent listeners and trustworthy," Principal A said when discussing what is expected of a mentor. "Trustworthiness is a crucial component of mentoring success," Principal H said. "I think the mentors I speak to are trustworthy," Principal H said. "I don't believe I need to be concerned that they could, for instance, disclose anything I have said."

"You must have faith in them to open up to them about some things," Principal B added. "You must have faith in that individual because I wouldn't have called them in the first place if they weren't knowledgeable. You must believe that they have the right answers."

The clarification was provided by Principal D, who said that "I could freely ask questions or explain what was on my mind," referring to his mentor as "very trustworthy." Principal G related an experience in which he sensed his mentor trusted him. He said his mentor made the statement, "I feel confident in speaking to you, and you have been a wonderful listener and trustworthy." Principal C agreed that her mentor was reliable enough to be trusted. "I have never felt alone or unsupported."

Support

Four Principals made an immediate connection between the assistance they got from their mentor and what they felt contributed to the success of their mentoring relationships. *Support* is defined as paying attention to, listening to, and being present for the mentee's needs. Principals

also mentioned feeling cared for and supported. The mentor support should be educated, dependable, approachable, private, and eager to help the inexperienced principal (Perilla, 2020). Eight out of the ten participants described the additional outside support as a great benefit of mentoring.

Principal C said, “I feel my mentor helped me out daily. I could feel like quitting at any moment and just give my mentor a call.” Principal C described how supportive she felt and how she had dealt with curriculum and teaching. “It is wonderful knowing they share your passion for achievement when working with others.”

Principal B concurred, saying, “Having that support was crucial to me. I felt less alone because of it.” Others said they supported them as their mentors spoke and listened to them.

Principal E suggested, “You connect with someone and inquire about their knowledge so that you might benefit from what they are prepared to contribute. Then, you don’t have to implement or adjust the items you don’t believe will work to suit your demands. You don’t enter school leadership believing you already know everything. You won’t be prosperous. You need to be able to communicate with and ask inquiries of someone.”

Availability

The mentor’s accessibility was the last facilitating element. Eight out of the ten participants spoke about the mentor’s availability. In this context, the terms availability and presence are interchangeable. The time spent talking with their mentor over the phone or in person was how principals defined mentors’ availability. Principal F expressed gratitude that a mentor was available. He said, “I assume a mentor would only be accessible from time to time.” The principal noted, “My mentor was accessible for me almost all the time,” and spoke about how he used the availability more than he anticipated. “Depending on whether I needed an

opinion on anything or if we were simply having a general talk about stuff, I would characterize it as occurring weekly. I just needed to make a call.”

Principal G concurred, saying, “We discussed issues as required. The experience is unique and causal.” When asked about a mentor’s availability, Principal J said, “I would guess we would chat at least two to three times a week. After the school day, we would sometimes get together, particularly if anything extraordinary had occurred.”

Principal J also said, “I appreciated being able to talk to her about anything and that she would always offer me frank comments. It was great.”

According to Principal C, “Meetings with the mentor are set up. My mentor and I meet once a month. We discuss daily issues and areas where I may make improvements.”

Principal G spoke about the forthcoming conferences, “I have felt free to chat with mentors. He visits my school regularly—possibly every few weeks when feasible.”

The Impact of Mentor/Mentee Relationships

It was important to establish the perceived relationship status and interactions of the participants and their mentors. A considerable amount of time was spent discussing the relationship in the confines of the confidential interviews. The personal and professional relationship had a significant impact on the individual outcomes of the mentoring process. A number of factors were identified as critical to the development of a robust relationship.

Guide

The original idea of a mentor was as a guide. A *guide* in mentoring novice principals is a person who provides support, advice, and guidance to new school principals and helps them develop the skills and knowledge necessary to lead their schools successfully. Eight of the ten principals used language that suggested their mentor served as a kind of guide for them. In

several cases, principals described their mentor as a “guide” in their responses. Principal J gave the following example, “Mentoring involves sitting down with me and explaining specific scenarios that I have not experienced and do not fully grasp. She spent 45 minutes in a lesson instead of 5-10 to record everything and provide accurate comments. Without her mentoring me, I would not be where I am now.”

Principal J expressed that a mentor’s role is more akin to a guide, considering the three mentors he had been working with and the best practices they had recommended for behaving in various situations. Principal C offered their support for the statement.

Principal F shared similar feelings, “They [mentors] are there to guide. They serve as a guide, a companion, and an encourager. They can listen and guide guidance, which I enjoyed the most.” Other mentees expressed how they were directed even if they did not use the term “guide” themselves. Many principals referred to giving counsel as “giving advice” when giving direction.

“He provided me guidance on how to lead as a leader and a principal successfully, for instance, and on how to be consistent in my work,” according to Principal A. “He would provide me various solutions to problems when they did emerge.” Guidance was recognized as providing advice by Principal I. “Most of the time when I contact them, I need advice. I’m simply giving them my narrative and explaining what occurred, what I believe, and how I would want to approach a problem. I would then ask them what they thought and felt about the situation.”

“She was extremely knowledgeable when it came to analyzing data and advising me on how to change my teaching methods based on the data.” Principal E used the mentor as a metaphor to convey the guiding role. “She served as the way at the end of the road.”

Principal G summed up by saying, “Even just having someone reach out to you is beneficial. It is advantageous to have that person. Those tough choices are a little bit easier to make thanks to them [mentors].”

Encourager

The principals used the word “encourager”—to instill bravery, spirit, or confidence—to describe the job of a mentor. It also means to excite by offering help or approval, among other things. In their mentoring process, seven out of ten principals said their mentors were motivators. Principal E said, “My mentor encouraged me to become involved in professional development and reach out to other administrators to improve my job prospects. She gave me the responsibility of creating the class schedules for the upcoming school year.”

Principal D made a similar addition. “His daily task of inspiring and motivating me was a success. He always inspired me to take risks and think creatively. He urged me to capitalize on my abilities, and I did the same for him.”

“He challenged me to develop my leadership style and encouraged me to do so, according to another principal. He pushed me to join organizations and sign up for courses that would help me in my job,” Principal A stated.

Principal G recalled, “My mentor has urged me to enter and take care of what must be done within my purview. He doesn’t micro-manage me; instead, he allows me the authority to carry out the tasks required at my school.”

Principal J said that the support she got went beyond her internship and included her application for a leadership post. Her mentor encouraged her to look for work and put herself out there in the world. “He advised me to join CLASS and attend the conference while I was still completing my residency so that I would be prepared for a career as a principal.” He would

always say, “Look, I’ll help you. If you get employment and anything comes up about which you have questions, I will be here to help you, and if I don’t know the answer, I will point you in the direction of someone who does know the answer.” “He was an inspiration to me.”

Partner

The sub-theme of a mentor as a partner came next. Webster says a *partner* is part of a business, organization, or venture with another person or entity. Partners typically share ownership, profits, and liabilities. Partnerships may be formal, such as a business partnership, or informal, such as a personal relationship. Out of ten principals, four stated their mentor was a partner. Of those four, two were Hispanic females, one was an African American male, and one was a White male. All of them took part in more hands-on mentorship activities. Principal J said, “I had a desk and an office, and my mentor treated me as a peer. She included me in every decision she made, including punishment and reviews. She was quite forthright and honest.”

“When he shared, there were times when he would ask me what I felt about particular scenarios, and we would cooperate,” Principal B said. “The position of a partner was communicated but never discussed. He respected me as a young, aspiring professional.”

“I’m always eager to learn new ideas and thoughts,” Principal G said. “I am a student in that sense, but I was also a partner with my mentor.”

Principal B said, “I believe it is a reciprocal collaboration. I can communicate in a public venue and contribute. So, it’s not like I’m just sitting there taking in knowledge. We are conversing.”

Other principals shared this belief that relationships required mutual giving and receiving. Principal E said, “Instead of me springing things on her, she would do the same for me. Nothing I brought up was ever off the table for discussion.”

Principal A and Principal B both expressed the belief that exchanging ideas and comments between mentor and mentee is beneficial as it reduces the chance of making mistakes. Principal B further elaborated that discussing ideas with a mentor can save time and effort.

“We don’t have all the answers,” Principal F said. “You still have experts with twenty years or more of expertise to whom we may pitch our ideas. One of the issues we handle is a once-in-a-lifetime problem or a novel situation. We deal with many different personalities when working with students and adults at schools. Some of the job’s requirements cannot be appreciated unless you have that position.”

A Focus on Mentorship

The overall goals of mentoring were shared by both the mentor and mentee as a common theme throughout the research. Although there were a few outlier reasons, the follow is a general consensus among the participants. There was a consistent theme of the specific traits and skills that mentors tried to instill in the mentees.

Professional Development

Professional development covered the abilities or expertise that the mentees gained to help them comprehend and carry out the duties of a principal as anticipated by their district directors. Even though professional development was a topic covered by all ten principals, each principal’s answer focused on a different aspect of professional progress. The two main categories of professional talents were management and leadership abilities.

Administration Skills

Four out of ten principals chose administrative skills as a component of their mentoring experience for professional advancement. These competencies often consist of specialized knowledge and skills that help a principal successfully manage the day-to-day operations of a

school. Principal J discussed how she had learned abilities that allowed her to manage the school. “I believe all that is needed to ensure that the facility functions as a school are due to my mentoring experience. A very high learning curve existed. To ensure that you don’t lose focus on the core task of teaching and learning while having numerous tasks and obligations, it is crucial to have a clear framework and method in place. I ensured teaching and learning continued while preserving operational, fiduciary, and school atmosphere.”

Principal D outlined a school administrator’s wide range of duties and obligations, often with competing deadlines and concerns. “We get overwhelmed by everything, and it is easier to do.” Principal D contributed to the mentoring experience by developing his administrative skills and competencies, which enabled him to handle these problems. A direct effect on the capacity for planning came to mind for Principal E. “I am structured,” she said. “I used to make mental plans for things, but my mentor has taught me to think through problems first. I now look ahead so I may have backup strategies in case the primary one proves ineffective.”

Principal A said, “In my judgment, I made fewer errors than I did at the start of the academic year. These are blunders that I would have made before the first faculty meeting.” Principal B spoke on how assessment forms may help principals organize their thoughts and create objectives for their professional development. The principal said that at the month’s conclusion, they realized, “Hey, I’ve accomplished all we set out for objectives this month.”

Leadership Skills and Abilities

The development of leadership skills was the second area of professional progress. Eight of the ten principals said their mentoring relationship had helped them develop their leadership abilities. “A principal’s job includes a myriad of administrative abilities. It calls for collecting information and making decisions, and it always shifts to leadership,” Principal C remarked.

“Having spent time with these individuals [mentors], I can attest that when they have had to reprimand, they have sometimes had to conduct investigations like those of a real private investigator. To discover the truth, a principal must investigate, interview students, and include other students. That’s what I’ve seen happen with a few principal mentors. Before then, I had no idea that was a part of the work. Being there to see it taught me what to do in a circumstance like this.”

As an additional aspect of leadership, Principal E said, “Sometimes, in my view, there simply isn’t a policy or method to manage situations, so you need to think about how you would want your students to be treated if they were in a similar scenario.”

Principal H spoke on the need for mentoring and said she had never anticipated becoming a professional leader with newly acquired duties. She went on to say that she had never expected to be in this position. She spoke on the importance of gaining knowledge that gave her a better understanding of her operating environment.

The ability to be adaptable and flexible is another leadership trait Principal E mentioned that he had worked to master. “Being able to adapt to any circumstance, although no two situations or days are ever the same, I have learned from our candid dialogues that I must adapt to those circumstances. I know you hear this advice often in education: you must be adaptable. Without a doubt, my connection with my mentor has taught me how to be adaptable and see each day as unique.”

Confidence and Self-Reliance

Webster defines *Confidence* as a feeling of assurance and self-belief that you can achieve a desired outcome. It is a sense of trust in your abilities, qualities, and judgments. It is also the feeling of being sure about your capabilities and the ability to trust that you can take on and

complete any task or challenge. *Self-reliance* is the ability to rely on one's efforts and resources instead of relying on help from others. It is the ability to be independent and make decisions for oneself—an evaluation of one's abilities or characteristics that inspires confidence (<https://www.merriam-webster.com>). Self-assurance is the state of being confident in one's abilities or traits. Six of the ten principals mentioned that their mentor had given them the confidence they needed to get through the school year.

Principal B shared how mentoring increased his self-assurance, saying, "Mentorship gave me the courage to try it and succeed. I never would have thought of applying for and taking the principalship at an elementary school. Without the chance to get mentorship, I would never have thought of doing this."

Principal H agreed that mentoring was necessary, saying, "All I need is someone to bolster my self-confidence. Since there are so many decisions to be made every day, I now approach decision-making with more confidence." Principal B remarked, "I felt like I could not do this at times." My mentor would say, "Hey, you can do it." "Your confidence grows when you get this confirmation from people whose opinions you respect and whom you trust." Principal I said, "Knowing that someone or a group of individuals has been there for me enhances my confidence in my abilities to complete my task successfully. It's given me more confidence."

Principal H said, almost identical to Principal A, "Just having someone to boost my confidence in my actions would be enough. Because I must make so many decisions and judgment calls every day, I believe the result is that I am more self-assured when making decisions."

Overall Appreciation of the Mentoring Process

Another theme evolved from principals' reflections on their mentoring experience. Ten out of the ten Principals said they had developed a strong respect for mentoring via their involvement. Although the majority had previously received some mentoring, they all voiced that they benefited from their current mentoring. They discussed how mentorship provides a principal with someone to speak to, someone to turn to with questions, and someone to depend on as they manage the demands of the position.

Principal E said, "I'd advise mentoring others. The explanation is that someone learning anything new shouldn't be like feeling alone aboard a ship at sea. You can reason things out. I think first-year principals need a mentor assigned." Principal B had a similar opinion, "I would advise mentorships since they provide a second source of responsibility."

Principal F acknowledged that having another principal as a mentor is advantageous for all principals, particularly for new principals. "A new principal is definitely more effective if given the correct mentor."

Identified Challenges to the Mentoring Process

Throughout the study, a number of participants indicated a recurring theme relating to the numerous challenges of their mentorship experience. Multiple participants voiced similar thoughts during the focus group meeting where they were encouraged to share both common and unique experiences.

Lack of Funds or Assistance

Because they had to identify or choose a mentor independently and essentially create their program, five out of ten respondents said that the lack of resources, especially financial resources, was a barrier to the mentorship experience. This obstacle dealt with circumstances

when individuals lacked the necessary or desired resources to support an endeavor or concept. Principal F remembered to address this problem, “I wholeheartedly endorse the mentoring program. You should design a program if you can get the necessary cash, time, and resources.”

According to Principal E, “The mentorship process was mostly provided when required only. We did not implement a structured mentorship program. Now I understand that being a mentor requires more specific times, dates, and locations where you must meet. However, the price was determined case-by-case since it was not established when I started as an administrator.”

“They didn’t have enough cash to compensate principals for spending the additional time mentoring and guiding a new teacher. They also lacked the means to guide administrators because the program is unsupported and there aren’t enough resources to pay for it. Since my school hasn’t had many turnovers, we’ve never needed a schedule. If there was ever a mentor program at the school before I became the principal, I’m not sure how it was run, but as far as I’m aware, there never was a formal procedure,” said Principal C.

Distance and Time

Time for mentoring emerged as another theme from the transcripts as a barrier. Several principals mentioned time as a barrier when describing the difficulties of organizing sessions with the mentor. Principals said that the problem in organizing meetings was due to the hectic nature of a principal’s schedule, and some even brought up the issue of time about the distance between the mentor and mentee.

According to eight out of ten administrators, the time demands of managing a school had a detrimental influence on their mentoring efforts. “The time component was the only drawback I could identify with my mentoring experience,” Principal H said. “Simply put, they are too busy

to interact with me as often as I want. They run even larger schools and serve as principals, as I do.”

Principal C admitted, “When the school year starts, you need your mentor the most. You need to remember they also have a school to manage with teachers, parents, and students.”

Another principal shared that on some days, he goes to bed at 10 or 11 p.m. and gets up at 5 a.m. the next morning to start again. He simply has little time to interact with his mentor.

Three principals also said they needed help scheduling in-person meetings with their mentors due to the distance involved. It might be challenging to schedule an appointment with many individuals, mainly if they are on opposite sides of the city. In-person encounters were especially challenging for busy school administrators throughout the school day.

Principal G recalled, “It has sometimes been challenging to personally contact my mentors due to our hectic schedules. The distance between us and our chaotic schedules meant that we only sometimes saw each other when attending professional development.” Principal H admitted, “We only exchanged emails and phone calls instead of setting up a meeting.”

One principal said his mentor lived more than an hour away from him, so they never met in person but would speak on the phone as necessary. Another principal said that even though he and his mentor were fairly close, they rarely talked.

Table 2

Theme Development

Topic	Themes
Mentors Role	Guide, Partner, Encourager
Mentoring Outcome	Professional Growth, Confidence, Appreciation, Leadership

Hindrances	Finance, Time
Facilitating Factors	Trust, Availability, Support

Research Question Responses

This study explored the meaning and experience from the participant's point of view. This comprehension is expressed in the participant's own words and detailed in exact detail to an open-minded researcher who can put their thoughts and knowledge about the event being recounted to the side.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of novice school principals undergoing mentor training in Arizona? The novice school principals identified a number of benefits and challenges associated with the current mentoring model. The participants freely shared their attitudes and experiences while providing insight into the process and potential improvements.

Principal A shared, "As a new principal, you already have a lot on your mind. It is only an additional degree of assistance. Before participating in the program, I had no idea or even awareness of the significance of mentorship for a new principal. Now that I have one, I wholeheartedly urge every system to implement one for new principals."

Principal D pointed out a few of the challenges of mentoring process. "I loved having a mentor available when I had a difficult day or problem. But there were lots of times when my mentor wasn't available. You have to remember; they are running their own school."

Ten of ten principals voiced that they enjoyed the mentorship experience. Principal C was quick to point out, "This school year has been so much better than last year. I didn't have a

dedicated mentor my first year and it was a struggle.” Principal E stated, “My mentor was great! He provided advice and personal guidance.”

Sub-Question One

How do Arizona novice principals characterize and explain their mentors’ function? Mentees expressed their mentoring experiences in three ways: guide, encourager, and partner. While some individuals combined the roles, each position was subtly acknowledged.

When Principal E reflected on her mentoring relationship, she spoke fondly of her mentor, noting that each conversation was centered around helping her define her role as an administrator and leader and finding a path to reach her full potential. Similarly, Principal H had a supportive mentor to turn to, encouraging her to explore new pathways for her school. “My mentor really felt like my partner in this year’s journey. In some ways, we were co-principals.”

Principal H stated, “It may be stressful if you take all of it on yourself. For instance, get full support from other principals. Because of this, you must master the most crucial skill, dividing the work. This displays a knowledge that collaboration should take precedence over directiveness in leadership. My mentor guided me throughout the school year.” Principal C said, “He continually encouraged me and he gave me advice on how to become an effective leader in my role as an administrator, as well as lots of useful information to help guide me to be successful.” He further discussed how mentoring improved his leadership capacity.

Sub-Question Two

What do novice principals in Arizona believe to be the results of their involvement in mentorship programs? Interview data indicated three critical consequences of the mentoring sessions. The first topic, professional development, was shared by all participants and included the same two components: leadership advancement and administrative abilities.

Gaining self-assurance was the second result, and developing an appreciation for mentorship was the third. Principal C said, “I am aware of the advantages that mentoring may have. For new leaders, having the information, support, and capacity to communicate and exchange ideas is comfortable. I grew personally and professionally. I’m a better principal, leader, administrator, and person. One day, I want to be able to mentor a different administrator.”

Principal G recognized the complexity of his job and the need for a mentorship program for new principals. He noted that the position’s challenges are so substantial that they cannot be learned from a course. “Having a mentorship program would help new principals understand the challenges and use the experience of others to guide them. The professional competencies I acquired will serve me throughout my academic and professional career.”

Sub-Question Three

What do novice principals view as the aspects that made their experiences as mentees more challenging? According to interview data, respondents identified a need for a more formalized mentoring program. They identified school district finances and priorities as one of the main obstacles to the mentoring experience. Additionally, they identified that difficulty finding the time to schedule meetings and conduct mentorship negatively impacted their mentoring efforts.

Principal J said, “I think we do a fantastic job mentoring teachers, but you don’t always receive the same assistance with new administrators. Giving the incoming principal a mentor may be something we should seriously consider doing in the future. Most people probably automatically think that the principal you work with as an assistant would serve as your mentor, but that is not necessarily the case.”

Principal D praised the mentorship program but shared some of the challenges. “We need to continue the mentorship program and make it bigger. A more formalized program could help alleviate some of the time, distance, and availability issues I experienced. My mentor did a great job. He just wasn’t always present. He had his own problems.”

Sub-Question Four

Which aspects do they believe contribute to the effectiveness of mentoring? Participants identified three key elements that improved and supported their mentoring success. The variables include mentor availability, assistance, and trust.

Principal H concluded that sometimes mentors might see things you cannot notice in yourself. They tell me, “You can do this. You’ll have no trouble figuring it out. The most crucial factor that enabled me to stop shivering in my boots was having that feeling of support and honest communication.” The feeling of support was shared by a multiple principals. Principal E shared, “She really made herself available to me. She was very supportive and got back to me right away. Usually within a couple hours. It was awesome.”

Principal J spoke on how having a mentor helped create respect for the relationship and the process, saying, “I believe going through the mentoring at the time I did was incredibly illuminating because I did not consider the necessity of having a personal mentor. As our system develops and more administrators are eventually going to be hired, I think we should put more of a focus on mentoring and moving ahead. Even if I don’t feel qualified to serve as a mentor, I will strive to assist the aspiring administrators.”

Principal F was very forthcoming and was quick to share. “I trust my mentor to be there. He was always available to assist in any way he could. I don’t know that I will ever be able to repay him.”

Summary

Undoubtedly, the role that school administrators play in fostering a good atmosphere for both students and instructors, as well as their influence on the quality of education provided, is of the utmost importance. As a result, principals must be prepared to lead academic and administrative accomplishments from day one of their jobs. It has been discovered that mentoring principals is an efficient technique for providing principals with the assistance that is essential for them to be successful in their roles as school leaders. The study's primary objective explored: "What kinds of formal mentorship experiences have novice principals in Arizona had?" That question was answered thoroughly by a great group of willing participants.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The goal of this study is to assess how new principals in Arizona experienced mentoring. This research aimed to explore the perceptions of newly appointed principals regarding the role of their mentor, the impact of their mentoring relationships, and the conditions that influence the success of mentoring programs. A case study approach was utilized to examine a limited group of principals who had either formal or informal mentoring when they initially started as school administrators. The study's participants were these administrators, who were classified as novice principals--having less than four years of principal experience.

Structured one-on-one interviews with principals were utilized as the primary research instrument. The interviews were designed to concentrate on four different study issues. Focus groups, document analysis, and questionnaires also provided valuable data in the research. After the data had been collected, it was transcribed, then manually coded. The interviewees were provided with the transcribed interviews so that they could participate in the member verification process. Interviews were conducted with ten principals working in a variety of educational environments. Some participated in a semi-formal mentorship program organized and operated by their respective school districts. Others were engaged in casual friendships that they had developed on their own.

Discussion

Mentoring embedded in the system, such as helping newly appointed teachers, staff, and principals, is established by administrators at the central office. Meanwhile, support network mentoring is when a mentee contacts a mentor to help them achieve their personal and

professional goals. This process is done by two of the school principals. Independent choice is analogous to the concept of a support network in that the mentee is the one to choose their mentor since they are the one who best understands what they need. These mentees were the ones that went out and found their mentors, and they did so either because they saw a gap or need in their knowledge or because they were looking for a way to improve themselves on a personal and professional level. This kind of mentorship was participated in by four principals.

According to the findings presented in Chapter 1, the state of Arizona, which served as the setting for this investigation, has a formal principal mentorship program that is supported with limited resources by the state and is administered by the Arizona State Department of Education. Mentoring may also be offered as part of the programs provided by school districts and colleges. School districts and universities can each run their programs. School districts are not required to provide mentoring programs for their principals or require principals to participate in mentoring during the early stages of their role.

In this investigation, some school administrators participated in formal mentorship programs while others did not. According to what was discussed in Chapter 4, there were four distinct categories of mentoring initiatives: understanding the roles and responsibilities of a school principal, administrative training, developing leadership skills, and implementing school/district practices and policies. This activity was obligatory for the participation of four mentees; thus, they all participated. Five principals participated in this activity due to their free will, and they picked their mentors along the way. This is a discovery that piques one's curiosity. Principals in the field generally acknowledge that they need professional assistance from others, despite their school systems not providing guidance. It is still being determined where this desire

originated or why these people took it upon themselves to establish mentoring relationships; this question needs more examination.

Interpretation of Findings

The study identified positive and negative aspects associated with mentoring novice school principals. Participants were quick to point out the added benefit of having a dedicated individual who was available to address concerns and points of administrative expertise. Although fraught with the challenges of funding, logistical, and time constraints, every participant believed the mentoring process was beneficial and should be implemented throughout the state of Arizona.

Summary of Thematic Findings

Throughout the study there were numerous observations and individual experiences relating to the mentor relationship and the mentoring process. The following interpretations represent the most significant issues according to the novice principals participating in the study.

Mentors' Roles and Characteristics. The first question of the participants in this study was, "How do novice principals in Arizona characterize and identify the function of their mentor?" Three key themes were brought forward for discussion. The positions were classified as being a guide, a partner, or an encourager. Even though there may be some overlap between these roles, the results demonstrate the existence of all three positions.

Guide. The results show that participants strongly appreciated this component of their interactions with their mentors and regarded them as guides throughout the mentoring process. A guide helps people find their way or provides advice, instruction, or assistance. Examples of guides include teachers, mentors, counselors, and life coaches. Eight out of ten principals used words that implied their mentor acted as their source of direction. Principal J, for example,

described mentoring to her in the following way: “The effort of sitting down with me to talk about certain situations that I have not been through and that I do not completely comprehend is what I consider to be mentoring. She stayed for the entire 45-minute lesson to document everything and provide accurate feedback, not just five to ten minutes of each session. All of who I am now is a result of her guidance during our sessions.”

Others described their mentor in a way that alluded to the fact that they guided them without using the term “guide.” Several principals referred to offering direction as “giving advice,” a word they employed. For instance, Principal D said that his mentor provided him with guidance on how to successfully lead as an administrator as well as counsel on how to be consistent while doing his work duties. “When an issue would come up, he would provide me with several other solutions to deal with it.”

Principal I recognized that guidance included the provision of counsel. “In most cases, I contact her only because I need guidance. I am just giving her my narrative and explaining that this is what took place, what I believe took place, or how I would like to deal with a certain circumstance. After that, I would question their perspectives and ideas about the issue.” Every principal within the study saw this mentoring position as essential to their personal growth.

The study also acknowledges the significance of having a mentor for young administrators as they grow in their roles. Schechter (2022), for instance, said that administrators transitioning into a new post might benefit from the assistance of an illustrative role model to advise them. According to Browne-Ferrigno (2021), it takes time and an awareness of effectively giving direction and assistance to achieve desired outcomes and develop the required abilities to become a successful principal. Based on the comments received from the principals, these

mentors carried out their duties effectively by acting as a guide and offering consistent assistance to assist the principals in comprehending their roles.

Encourager. The second theme that the principals employed while describing the function of their mentors was that of an encourager. This idea incorporates the potential of mentors to encourage their mentees to exhibit bravery, spirit, or confidence in their abilities. Seven out of ten principals reported or strongly hinted that their mentors were encouragers throughout the mentorship process in which they participated.

According to the findings, one of the essential aspects of the mentor job was the ability to inspire others. For instance, when asked about this topic, Principal E said her mentor encouraged her to take advantage of professional development opportunities and network with other administrators to explore different career paths.

Another principal said something similar, adding, “It was his responsibility to uplift and support me daily, and he was successful in doing so. He always inspired me to explore uncharted territory and think creatively outside of the box. Additionally, he pushed me to build from my existing talents, and I did the same with some of his strengths.”

According to Kram (2012), this kind of psychological support may be found in mentoring, which manifests as encouragement, companionship, counsel, and performance criticism. Because of this, the mentee can engage in conversation with their mentors and share knowledge, thoughts, and challenges with them. Reducing loneliness and creating a supportive, cooperative environment to share professional experiences, opinions, and materials are expected benefits of mentoring for both the mentee and the mentor. Similarly, mentoring can also help the mentee become more self-sufficient. Research confirms that a mentor’s role is significant, as mentees see their mentors as invaluable resources.

Partner. The participants ranked acting as a partner throughout the mentoring process as the third most important function a mentor may play. However, although virtually all mentees described their mentors as guides and encouragers, only four out of ten principals described their mentor as analogous to a partner in their endeavors.

The responses from the mentees suggest that the mentees saw the relationship between the mentor and mentee as a partnership. However, it is possible that the mentor did not see the connection as an equal relationship. Authors have defined *mentorship* as a connection for professional growth between a more experienced professional (the mentor) and a less experienced partner (the mentee) (Oladipo et al., 2016). In some cases, the relationship between the mentor and mentee can develop into a co-mentoring or transformative mentoring relationship, where both parties contribute to their development and growth (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2012; Mullen, 2012). However, this kind of mentoring is rare.

The mentees in the present study spoke of their mentor as a partner, indicating that the partnership was limited and may not have been an equal relationship. For instance, Principal F stated that they were both giving and taking in the relationship, while Principal C said that any topic of discussion was never off-limits. Principal H also suggested that they were engaging in conversation rather than one-way knowledge transfer. These conversations suggests that while the mentees saw the relationship as a partnership, the mentor may not have seen it similarly. Further research is needed to explore the nature, extent, and depth of the connection between the mentor and mentee.

Professional Development. Developing administrative and leadership abilities were both essential components of professional advancement. Eight of the ten principals felt that their mentoring experiences contributed to their overall professional development. There were two

main focuses of professional development. The first was a demonstrated capacity for administrative work, and the second was an ability to lead others effectively. Four indicated they significantly improved their administrative and leadership skills thanks to their mentor.

These results are compatible with those of other lines of study. For instance, Johnson (2008) defined a mentor as a seasoned professional who works with novices to offer support, help, and direction to facilitate their professional development and advancement. Similarly, Dziczkowski (2013) concluded that mentoring benefits both the mentor and the mentee regarding their career development, personal improvement, and overall learning.

Administrative Skills. Only four principals agreed that their mentors helped develop their administrative abilities. One example of how mentoring contributed to Principal A's professional career was provided by Principal A, who highlighted how mentoring benefited him by giving him the skills and expertise to organize thoughts and create objectives. One principal commented that they had developed some skills in planning that they noticed at the end of the month when they realized that they had achieved their goals. Another principal shared that they had become more organized as a result. Principal E agreed that principals must possess the necessary knowledge and skills to adjust to any situation, noting, "No matter the situation, no two days are ever the same." Through these discussions, he has also become more flexible and has learned to approach each day as if it were brand new, thanks to the relationship with his mentor.

Leadership Skills. According to the data, four out of the ten principals surveyed believed that participation in the mentorship program contributed to the growth of their leadership abilities. These four mentors knew the significance of assisting newcomers transitioning into administrative jobs and becoming proficient in the essential leadership qualities to carry out the mandated responsibilities.

Principal E noted an immediate influence on the capacity to plan. She remarked, “I have OCD; therefore, I am very structured. My mentor has taught me how to evaluate and improve my ideas before they are implemented. Previously, I would plan things in my brain. Now that I’m more experienced, I always try to think ahead to develop backup strategies in case the initial plan doesn’t work out.”

Another responder shared their perspective, stating, “I would have had to make many errors; I suppose that to make many more errors than I have at the beginning of school, I would have had to. I brought up a few topics that, under normal circumstances, I would not have brought up. To lead is to be responsible for things like that.”

In addition, this conclusion is consistent with the advanced hypotheses and the discoveries the prior study has uncovered. Browne-Ferrigno (2021) cites that organizations and states establish programs to help aspiring school administrators acquire the knowledge, skills, and values they will need to help bring about systemic changes and a renewed focus on essential teaching in today’s schools. These programs would assist aspiring leaders in developing the abilities and concepts required to support these shifts in the system (Browne-Ferrigno, 2014). As Leithwood and Steinback (2012) explain, leaders have the potential to effect change, and this is not limited to just their actions. The combined effect of their behavior, attitude, and decisions determines the outcome in any situation and environment.

Self-Assurance and Confidence. Gaining confidence and a sense of self-assurance was another benefit highlighted by six of the ten novice principals due to their involvement in the mentorship program. According to Webster, confidence may be defined as the experience or the conviction that one can depend on another person or object. Confidence may also be described as a sense of self-assurance resulting from an individual’s appraisal of his or her talents or traits.

Six of the ten principals surveyed believed that their mentor had a role in boosting their confidence and assisting them in developing a greater sense of self-assurance.

For instance, Principal J said that the mentorship program "...had had a significant effect on my life as a professional. It has assisted me in feeling more confident in myself." A similar emotion was expressed by Principal H, who said, "I just needed someone to help me feel more secure in what I am doing. As a result, I have developed more confidence in making decisions, which is helpful considering the number of decisions that need to be made daily." Mentorship, according to Principal J, "...has had a major effect on both my personal life and my life as a professional. Because of this, I now have a greater sense of self-assurance." Principal H appreciated "...just having someone to support me in being more confident in what I am doing" and stated that this was a necessity for him. "I now have a higher level of self-assurance whenever I make judgments, which is helpful given that I must make many choices daily."

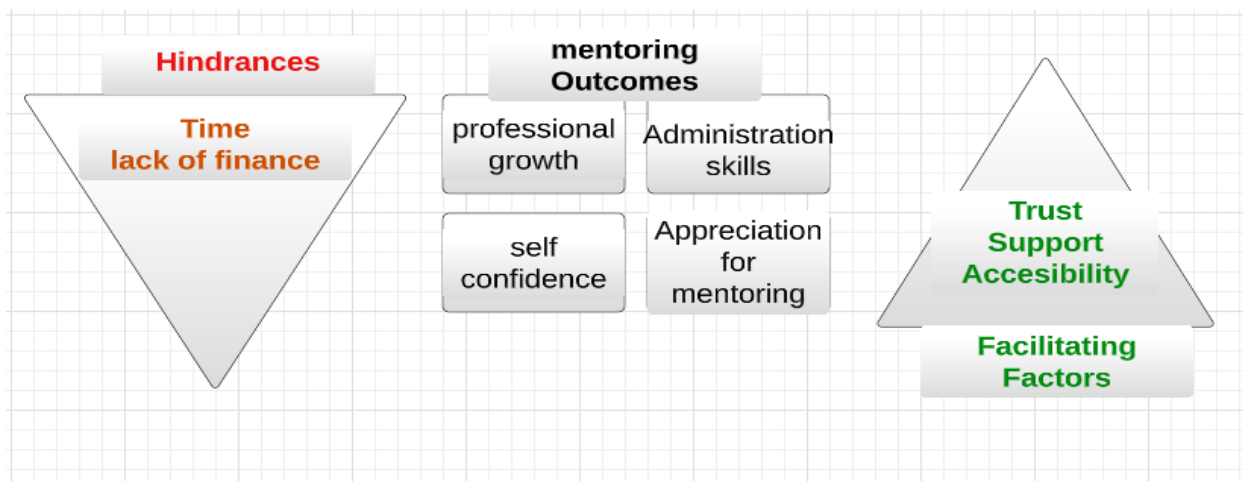
Appreciation of Mentoring. Novice principals experienced the third perceived benefit of mentoring: developing an awareness of the significance of principal mentorship. This benefit was one result that all ten principals agreed upon. Participants reported that mentoring enabled them to obtain an increased awareness of the importance of mentoring since it had been an effective outlet for them to further their personal growth and development. As Principal J pointed out, "Participating in the mentoring program at the time I did was an eye-opening experience for me since, before that, I had never given the idea of having a mentor any thought. As our organization expands and, eventually, we will have more administrators in place, it's essential to focus a greater emphasis on guiding others and propelling the organization ahead."

Principal E said, “I would suggest mentoring other people. People who are new to something do not have to feel as if they are the only person on a ship and are out at sea by themselves. You can talk things over and figure things out.”

Principal H expressed appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the mentoring program. He felt that providing novice principals with mentoring may help them avoid avoidable failure since he admitted that the mentorship experience contributed to his achievement.

Regarding this topic, Second Year Principal H was quoted as saying, “I feel first-year principals absolutely need a mentor assigned.” Another principal, Principal F, echoes this attitude: “I would advocate mentorships since it’s another form of responsibility. In addition, as a newly appointed principal, you already have a great deal of mental ground to cover.”

Conceptual Framework. In the version of the conceptual framework developed for this research, three separate figures stand in for the primary foci of the research questions. The findings of this investigation led me to conclude that the conceptual framework that was developed as an extension of this study should be simplified so that it is simpler to comprehend. Figure 2 below illustrates the results and are incorporated inside the framework in their effective form. It covers topics such as the roles played by the mentor, the consequences of the relationship, the challenges faced, and the causes that helped overcome those challenges. The conceptual framework represents the results.

Figure 2*Conceptual Framework***Implications for Policy or Practice**

Mentors who participated in this research were found to have both formal and informal mentoring relationships. Most scholarly research indicates that a successful mentoring relationship requires assistance and support. Samier (2020) asserts that a mentoring connection contributes to professional development. Hansford et al. (2003) discovered that personal and confidential interactions with mentors aid in professional and personal growth. All the mentors in this research knew their roles and did not try to impose their beliefs. It is unclear why this is the case; however, it could be due to some formal training in a mentoring process, a positive relationship with another mentor, or even a good reputation for effectively mentoring others.

Implications for Policy

The findings of this study indicate a significant appreciation for the personal and professional development associated with a mentoring program. Although the study did not produce any quantitative evidence supporting better student or administrator outcomes, the

anecdotal evidence supports serious consideration of more robust mentorship programs by administrators at the district level.

Surprisingly, all principals who described the mentoring role as a partner were involved in formal mentoring relationships. These mentors may have been trained to recognize the importance of mentoring as a partnership. Furthermore, compared to White cultures, African American and Hispanic cultures generally place more emphasis on fostering community (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2012), which could explain why only minority mentees responded to their mentors as partners.

Training mentors to recognize their roles as encouragers, collaborators, and trustworthy partners is essential to successful mentoring programs, as these connections are essential for developing newly appointed principals. In addition, individuals who train instructional leaders should ensure that those who may require mentors and those who may become mentors understand the importance of these roles. This knowledge will ensure that individuals who may require mentors and those who may become mentors seek mentors who have these qualities and that those who may become mentors understand the significance of these responsibilities. This research supports the idea that newly appointed principals need the opportunity to form professional ties by participating in mentoring programs. O'Brien and Jones (2017) also emphasize networking among mentors and mentees as essential for professional growth.

Implications for Practice

Ten out of ten novice principal participants identified the mentorship program as beneficial to their personal and professional performance as a school principal. The practice of mentorship has a long history of producing positive results (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2012). Although the research was unable to gather the necessary qualitative data to support a definitive

need for an official mentoring program with the school district, the study clearly demonstrated added benefit among the participants.

Research has found that encourager and partner roles are necessary for a successful mentoring process. Cohen (1995) states that mentoring involves a reciprocal learning link between mentor and mentee. For it to be effective, it must consist of reciprocity, learning, and the relationship itself. Mentors in this research had these capabilities, and their mentees confirmed that their relationships were beneficial and positive.

The results of this research indicate that the current mentorship program among novice principals within the school district is a preferred practice in the minds of the participants. This practice, in its current form, should continue to produce positive training and professional development among future participants.

Theoretical and Empirical Implications

The theoretical and empirical implications of the study support much of the previous body of work on the subject of mentorship in the education industry. The related literature of Chapter Two served as a platform to compare and contrast the validity of mentorship training. The following paragraphs discuss identified subtopics that corroborate and diverge from previous research.

Theoretical Aspect - Relationships Matter

This study expanded the body of knowledge concerning the relationship aspect of the mentoring process. This revelation is an essential factor to consider when trying to pair mentors and mentees. The consideration of the relational aspect of the process new information. I was unable to find related literature that emphasized the importance of the mentor-mentee relationship. Future programs would benefit from an increased focus on the practice of seeking

to establish a personal and professional relationship between mentors and mentees. Additionally, mentors and mentees should be able to make changes to the pairing if relationships don't mesh. This research clearly indicates that the mentorship process is far more than a professional exchange. The implications of this specific finding can likely impact the success of the mentorship process among novice principals.

Additionally, mentoring was an effective means of boosting confidence for six out of the ten participants in the study. Confidence levels increased to varying degrees among those who participated; nonetheless, the three participants who did not use the term "confidence" were all male. They participated in mentorship relationships, of which two were informal and one formal. Nobody knows why these individuals did not choose confidence as one of their outcomes. It is possible that these individuals were already self-assured and did not see the need to work on expanding their self-assurance. Their mentors did not see the need to emphasize the importance of this quality to their students. After receiving further information, it may be possible to establish the rationale for this discovery.

An increased appreciation for mentorship is a fascinating discovery not discovered in the literature. According to Schechter (2022), for mentoring to be successful, the mentee and the mentor must be willing to participate in an ongoing teaching and learning process. The fact that five of the ten mentees established mentoring ties demonstrates that they valued these collaborations and wanted to participate. The other five people participating in a structured mentoring program saw their interactions with the mentor as relationships. All the mentees had a crystal-clear belief about the advantages of mentoring and had encounters with their mentors that deepened their appreciation of this process. All the mentees' experiences with their mentors were good, proving this.

These principals participated voluntarily, contributing to their accomplishments, and developing a genuine appreciation for the mentoring process they went through. It is also possible that these mentees went into the mentoring relationship with the right frame of mind, which helped set them up for success in their endeavors. Thinking like this encompasses one's knowledge, abilities, and dispositions.

The theoretical implications of mentorship do not appear to support the need for emphasis on the relational aspect of mentorship among education professionals. There may be additional literature supporting the critical aspect of personal and professional relations among mentoring participants. However, I was unable to find supporting research within the educational mentorship readings.

These overall findings support both the theoretical and empirical aspect of mentorship. However, there is a distinct possibility that my current theoretical framework for research may have introduced some limitations into the study. I do not know that I addressed the relationship factor to the fullest extent. Future research should more robustly explore the implications of the relational aspect of mentors and mentees.

Empirical Aspect - The Importance of Professional Competence

It is essential to remember that a successful school principal, in addition to having strong leadership skills, must also have the ability and knowledge to run the school's operations by implementing strong administrative skills. The work of Mullen (2012) identified the need for competency among the mentoring process. The topic of professional competence was a recurring theme throughout the research. Participants were quick to point out the added benefit of a particularly talented or experienced mentor. These professional skills are an essential requirement for a successful school principal. Some principals and mentors understood the

significance of the talents and capabilities mentioned earlier. They made it a point to discuss them and ensure that their mentees could acquire the know-how necessary to put them into practice.

Growth in one's professional abilities was cited as a result of five of the ten principals. Four principals claimed they learned either leadership or administrative abilities, while three said they picked up both sets of skills simultaneously. In recent years, an increased emphasis on the function of leadership within the principalship has been seen both in the literature and through leadership development programs (Daresh, 2004; Rhodes, 2012).

It is possible that the mentees who did not address this were under the impression that they already had these talents and did not require them; nevertheless, if this is the case, it is challenging since everyone has room for improvement in these areas. The mentors should have placed more emphasis on these. The reasons why the emphasis was uneven remain unknown.

As with most other aspects of professional competence, many studies have shown that mentoring may assist principals in growing their sense of self-assurance (Killeavy, 2006). Mentoring, according to Oladipo et al. (2016) and Parylo et al. (2012), not only encourages new principals' desire for job performance, innovation, and the confident embrace of responsibility, but it also brings employees together to develop a network of experts inside the firm (Rhodes, 2012). These researchers presented their findings on specific aspects of mentorship that contribute to increased confidence. Even though these principals did not specifically address the issue of developing communication networks among themselves, they considered their ties with their mentors as a type of networking. These relationships reinforced the principals' confidence in several different areas. There is a good chance that principals working in rural schools acquire different skills and knowledge than their colleagues working in urban and suburban schools. This

assumption is because the function of principals in urban and suburban schools is often somewhat different from the position of principals in rural schools (Lock et al., 2012). For example, Principal J addressed a school administrator's many responsibilities and obligations, including the fact that there were often conflicting deadlines and concerns, when he said, "We become buried with all those other things going on, and that is easy to do." It is not feasible to evaluate if the talents these principals need differ from those necessary in other situations since this study did not compare the two.

Limitations and Delimitations

There were a number of limitations encountered during the data collection phase of the research. The research was conducted near the end of the academic school year. The availability of principal candidates was severely limited by the availability of time. The principals were preparing for end-of-year activities. Graduations, standardized testing, and teacher evaluations were a small sample of the challenges faced. The original intent of the research was to conduct all interviews face-to-face and to conduct a focus group with all of the participants.

Based on the challenges encountered, the individual interviews were conducted in person or over the phone. This did not impact the quality of interaction or the level of answers. The focus group split into two Zoom calls. One call had four principals while the other call had the remaining six. Although not optimal, the calls were productive and the candidates shared freely.

Challenges incurred by the candidates during the mentoring process account for the remainder of this section.

Challenges of the Mentoring Process

"What do novice principals in Arizona regard as issues that impeded their formal mentorship experiences?" is the third study question. Principals mentioned only two problems as

obstacles in their mentoring relationships. The major obstacle they faced throughout their mentoring experiences was the need for more assistance and financing. The second problem was insufficient time for mentoring relationships to develop.

Lack of Financial Assistance. Although five of the surveyed principals indicated they had a mentor, the school system did not provide an official mentor. Nonetheless, all the mentees reported that their relationships with their mentors were productive and improved their abilities, understanding, and assurance. The absence of a formal mentoring program impeded the mentees' capacity to gain the most out of the mentoring experience since they had to find or select a mentor independently. According to school administrators, the lack of a structured mentoring program was due to a lack of support and resources. For example, Principal F noted, "I advocate for a mentoring program when resources and money are available. My school does not have a program for working with any organization because they lack the necessary resources."

Principal C noted that mentoring was provided on an "as required" basis for the most part. "We did not choose to implement a conventional mentorship program in this circumstance. Now that I have more experience as a mentor, I know that more tangible responsibilities accompany the role and specific times, days, and locations where you must meet." Principal C identified the absence of available role models, mentors, and sponsors as the most significant obstacle for individuals seeking to ascend the administrative ladder in their district. Frumina (2021) further noted that the budget only sometimes reflects the need for mentorship programs, leaving those who wish to engage in such activities in a difficult position. This lack of support for mentorship programs was a sentiment echoed by the five participants in the research, who had nonetheless implemented their own mentorship programs. Thus, many principals need more resources and backing to access the same assistance.

Time Constraints. Another theme that has been brought up as a barrier is the lack of available time to participate in a mentoring relationship. Seven out of the ten administrators cited the constraints of time that come with operating a school were a problem, making it difficult to plan meetings. Even one-on-one discussions over a school day proved challenging for administrators already busy. Regarding this topic, Principal H said, “The only drawback I could find in my mentoring experience was the time element.”

“Simply put, I cannot connect with them as much as I would want because they are always so busy. They hold the same position as me but are responsible for far larger schools.” “Once school began, it was difficult to create time for mentoring,” remarked Principal H.

When asked about this, a principal in their first year said, “At times, it seems like I’m navigating in a minefield, and I escape from the hole just in time.” Based on this account, the first year of becoming a principal has several difficulties. Lovely (2014) said that the “long hours, enormous workload, and overwhelming demands from numerous conflicting groups may lead to uncontrollable stress” while discussing the first year of a principalship (p. 55). According to Lovely (2014), these pressures affect practically all principals, but inexperienced first-year principals have an especially difficult issue due to their lack of prior administrative expertise. This obstacle, a lack of money and institutional support for mentoring, was cited in a significant amount of research (Dweck, 2009).

Principal C had to cope with the fact that the distances between him and the mentor served as hurdles to their connection. This obstacle was in addition to the fact that the work demands caused challenges regarding the time available to meet. According to what he had to say about this topic, “The schedule that each of us had and the distance between us meant that we only met a handful of times when we were both attending a professional development. We

never intended to meet in person; instead, we communicated via email and phone.” When it came to resolving this matter, Principal F recalled that it appeared as though they never committed our Saturday to drive and meet up. Another principal noted that his mentor was located nearly an hour’s drive away; as a result, they never met in person but instead spoke on the phone whenever necessary.

Hindering Factors

Kochan and Pascarelli (2012) brought up the point that a lack of time and money may be a barrier to the effectiveness of mentoring. They also emphasized the importance of having physical and financial resources for mentoring to function effectively. Variations in the number of funds influenced many choices, notably the daily operational challenges that superintendents encounter. These challenges were present regardless of whether the funding came from the state or the local government. It was a surprise and was cause for concern to learn that more than half of these schools lacked any organized mentorship program. It is possible that the fact that all these schools were in a semi-rural school district is to blame for this. Historically, Arizona’s rural school districts have received less financing per student than many of the state’s urban school districts. These funding challenges are due, in part, to the fact that a portion of the financing for schools comes from contributions made by the community, and many rural school systems in the state need more cash.

Another noteworthy discovery was that five principals who had chosen the mentors independently and who had been mentored in schools that did not have formal programs recognized obstacles that stood in their way of achieving success. This observation appears to imply that mentees did not perceive any hurdles to the effectiveness of mentoring in those circumstances where the school took the effort to establish a program and offered mentors, as

well as maybe some financing to execute it. This commitment is a strong endorsement of more structured programs.

E-mentoring offers a possible solution to the problem caused by the limitations of both time and geography. According to Nguyen and Rhodes (2019), e-mentoring is both cost-effective and efficient because it permits a large group of mentors and mentees to be matched and coached continuously through blogs, conference calls, skype, face time, and email. This use of technology allows for a more significant number of mentors and mentees to benefit from the program. Because of this, we can include a much larger number of mentees and mentors. “E-mentoring is another technique to develop an innovative concept of mentoring,” as Tinoco-Giraldo et al. (2020, p.34) stated. This innovation may be of assistance in extending mentoring, particularly in rural settings where the distance between mentors and mentees may be quite large, where the number of mentors accessible in the rural environment may be modest, and where the financing for face-to-face interactions may be restricted.

Even though Arizona has established a formal mentoring program for principals known as Arizona New Principal Mentoring (ANPM), the state has not mandated this or any other mentoring program for novice principals. The high degree of dedication that the mentees and mentors who participated in this research had for ensuring that their connection was going to be positive was supported by the fact that five of these principals designed their mentoring program and that the mentees discovered just two hurdles to their success, both of which were outside of their control. Even those whose schools supplied assistance still needed more resources for the program and had to deal with the challenges of financial and time restrictions. After learning that their mentors mentored multiple teachers and principals, two mentees offered to assist their

mentors. These mentees went above and beyond for their mentors, demonstrating initiative and a genuine interest in their growth and the growth of other principals.

On the other hand, it is still being determined how many other novice principals may or may not have participated in a practice of a similar kind. It is conceivable that CLASS is unaware of the problem since the data is not tracked at the state level. They may need to bring on more mentors and tracking measure to establish whether the pairings are effective. Arizona once invested a significant amount of time and energy into researching mentorship programs, and at one point, they appreciated the importance of these programs. However, Arizona still needs to give the required financial support and humanitarian assistance to either school districts or its state organization to make principal mentoring a priority. This neglect is problematic because of the principal's importance to the student's success and the few people interested in filling these administrative roles.

Even though all the mentees in this study claimed that they improved their skills and knowledge because of their experiences and that they developed a greater appreciation for the mentoring process, it is concerning that so many of them were in schools that did not officially support their efforts. There needs to be more knowledge of the value of the benefits provided. It is both encouraging and exciting to read about the amazing outcome that took place despite the paucity of resources that were accessible. Reading about this result is encouraging. The state has accepted the value and advantage of mentoring, but neither the state nor many districts have spent resources on this endeavor. Although Arizona has acknowledged the significance and benefit of mentoring, it would be good for both sides to assess this since the outcomes of all these mentoring experiences imply that the novice principals improved their personal and professional abilities and could apply what they learned to achieving higher standards.

Facilitating Factors

The fourth and last question that was investigated was: “What do novice principals in Arizona view to be the characteristics that facilitate their success with formal mentoring?” The principals identified three primary variables contributing to and maintaining their mentoring success. Trust, support, and availability are the relevant considerations in this section.

Trust. Trust is the first aspect to be explored within the mentoring relationship context. Confidentiality was the term that was used to characterize trust by four of the ten principals. They described trust as the ability to speak freely without fear of being judged or evaluated and the conviction that what they said with their guide would remain secret. According to Webster online dictionary, *trust* is “a comprehensive belief in the actions of another person.”

The principals emphasized addressing the many trust difficulties that might arise while working with mentoring relationships. A principal provided the following quote as an illustration: “I feel the mentors whom I speak to are trustworthy. I don’t believe there is any need for me to be concerned about them.” Principal I provided the following description of the qualities required of a mentor: “They have to be trustworthy and excellent listeners.” Principal H agreed with the statement that, “...trustworthiness is one of the most significant factors for the success of mentoring.” Principal B elaborated that he felt comfortable asking the mentor questions and expressing anything on his mind. He referred to the mentor as “extremely trustworthy.”

Merriam-Webster (2016, p. 798) defines a mentor as “a trusted counselor or adviser.” Webster dictates that formal mentoring involves a mentor. According to the findings of other studies, an effective mentor must be reliable (Koki, 2021). McKinley (2017) characterizes a mentor as a trustworthy and experienced person interested in developing novice individuals. He

remarks that this part of being a mentor is equally important, and he describes a mentor as someone interested in the growth of novice people. Oladipo et al. (2016) and Frels et al. (2013) state that mentoring is a helping relationship based on mutual trust and respect and involves the mentor providing psychological support to the mentee. These individuals believe that many people seek the advice of this individual, and the mentor offers advice and suggestions.

Interestingly, the mentees acknowledged they could place their faith in their mentors, and this trust was essential to their belief in the mentoring process. Consequently, this trust was crucial in ensuring the relationship was successful. It is noteworthy that the mentees acknowledged that they could trust their mentors, even though trustworthiness is widely acknowledged as an essential trait in a mentor. The following result, which focuses on the concept of mentors as a kind of support, also has a significant link to this trust. No clear pattern exists in who uttered the word “trust,” even though just four leaders did so. Four Principals were actively involved in formal mentoring programs, two were mentored in an informal capacity, and two had access to a network of mentors.

Support. The assistance provided to the principals during the mentoring process was another theme brought up as a potential component in the procedure’s ability to run smoothly. According to Webster, *support* includes listening to, attending to, and being accessible to the mentee’s needs. Support was considered essential by eight out of the ten principals. The capacity to successfully navigate the mentoring relationship was one aspect of the help provided. The fact that they were supported and knew someone was nearby or only a phone call away was significant to the principals.

Availability. The mentor’s availability throughout the mentoring relationship was the last aspect addressed as a component that facilitates. Nine of the ten participants brought up the

mentor's availability in conversation. Everyone felt that it was essential to maintain availability throughout the mentoring relationship. The lone principal who disagreed with the majority, never had the chance to see his mentor due to the distance between them, and they only spoke sometimes since the mentee did not believe they formed a connection. The principals defined the availability and accessibility of mentors as the amount of time the mentee could spend with their mentor, either in person or over the phone, while addressing the mentee's issues. This availability was expressed in a variety of ways. Principal F's gratitude for the availability of a mentor was stated. He conveyed his thoughts by saying, "I believe if a mentor were required on a day-to-day basis, she would be accessible." The principal recounted how he used availability whenever necessary and said, "My mentor was accessible to me. Every week, depending on whether it was anything about which I needed some opinion or whether we were having a general talk about general topics."

Additionally, Principal B said, "My mentor and I meet once a month for a meeting. During these talks, we discussed weekly problems and areas in which I could improve my performance."

According to Schechter (2022), mentees reported that the most valuable aspect of their mentors was their availability throughout the year to listen, provide a variety of viewpoints, ask reflective questions, and give general support. These mentors had experience in doing these things. By doing so, they exhibited dedication to the mentoring process and their respective mentors. According to a statement made by Mullen (2012), "When professional support networks employ a collaborative mentorship approach, new possibilities become open for relational and intuitional improvement" (p. 11).

A supportive mentor willing to offer guidance is essential for any successful business. As evidenced by Michael Watkins in his book “The First 90 Days,” published in 2013, having a mentor is a crucial ingredient for success. Research by Keyser et al. (2011) suggests that even when the mentor has a favorable attitude towards mentoring, it is impossible to guarantee a perfect relationship between the mentor and mentee. Daresh (2004) notes that mentoring is only effective if perceived as a genuine learning method. Furthermore, Browne-Ferrigno and Muth (2004) found that novice principals must be provided with the necessary support when mentoring relationships are imposed on them against their will.

However, most principals in this study did report that their mentors helped them somehow, and the level of support could vary. For instance, Cohen (1995) suggested that “A mentor may offer help just by checking in with the mentee between sessions to give the mentee nice reminders and aid them in maintaining on track” (p. 73). Seven participants had the opportunity to choose their mentors, while the remaining three had mentors assigned to them. Neither the type of program nor the participant’s race significantly affected the outcome.

It is evident from the results that nine out of ten mentees viewed their mentors as available, even though they often had difficulty finding time, had many responsibilities, and were geographically distant from the mentees. This view implies that the mentors were dedicated and willing to give their time and expertise to their mentees. Additionally, research has shown that good mentees share specific characteristics, such as being ambitious, risk-takers, initiative, energetic, trustworthy, optimistic, emotionally intelligent, and having integrity (Ensher & Murphy, 2005). The mentees in this study likely displayed these qualities, as well as dedication and a positive attitude, which likely prompted the mentors to be accessible and available.

Overall, this study provides strong evidence of the importance of mentorship in developing new school administrators.

Recommendations for Future Research

The viewpoint of the mentee, as seen through the eyes of the researcher, was the primary emphasis of this study. Conduct interviews with the mentors to get their ideas and points of view about the mentoring program or the mentoring relationship. The purpose of this research was to look at the mentorship relationships that are available to new principals in rural Arizona. Looking at the problem in urban and suburban contexts with the state's help may provide valuable insights.

Given that these mentoring relationships looked effective, more study into how these mentors developed their abilities and knowledge of the mentoring job might reveal some valuable new insights. It would also be fascinating to find out if any of the mentors had had training on how to be a mentor, whether they had been in a successful mentoring relationship with another person, and whether they had modeled such a relationship for others. The presence of information, skills, and positive dispositions are all indicators of a healthy attitude. Researching how these mentors perceived these features in their mentees might be beneficial.

In future studies, it may be possible to investigate why school administrators support or do not support mentoring relationships for new school principals, even though all the principals who participated in mentoring developed an appreciation for it.

Additional quantitative and qualitative data could be gathered from new principals to understand better the extent to which time and distance impede their involvement in a mentorship program and what strategies could be used to address these issues. This data could be collected through in-person interviews or phone conversations. Moreover, this study could be

repeated to examine the perceptions of the components of mentoring programs among new principals and assistant principals in other states, such as Arizona, to determine if the conclusions of this study are similar or distinct from those in the original study. The results of this research could be enhanced if a quantitative survey was utilized to attain more details about the state of mentorship programs.

Given the challenges of time and resources principal mentees face, school districts should prioritize providing resources tailored to novice school principals' needs. These resources could include the development of online modules, virtual mentorship programs, and instructional resources that can be accessed remotely. Additionally, school districts should create flexible scheduling options to ensure that mentor training and professional development opportunities are accessible to novice school principals, regardless of availability.

School districts should invest in providing technology and other resources to facilitate remote learning and collaboration. This technology could include the development of virtual meeting platforms, video conferencing tools, and other digital resources that can be utilized by novice school principals and their mentor teachers. School districts should ensure novice principals have access to the latest technology and digital resources to manage their schools effectively.

School districts should provide support and guidance to novice school principals to help them navigate the complexities of their role. This support could include coaching, mentorship programs, and advice on building and maintaining effective stakeholder relationships. Additionally, school districts should create a support network for novice school principals to help them access resources.

Novice principals should be provided with more comprehensive mentor training to help them navigate the complexities of their role. This mentor training should include school culture, school administration, curriculum, and instruction. Additionally, the training should consist of activities and discussions that help novice school principals develop a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities and strategies for successfully managing their school.

Conclusion

There is a need to strive to establish programs for new leaders to form leadership behaviors and attitudes that promote fundamental change in school culture and emphasize excellent teaching (Browne-Ferrigno, 2021). In this circumstance, the state where the school districts operate, and the school districts themselves are only partially dedicated to this process. The need to offer financial support for mentoring activities shows this lack of dedication, which may play an essential role in forming professional growth. However, the individuals who participated in this study uncovered a method for developing and maintaining effective mentoring relationships, ultimately resulting in significant objectives. This success is a testimonial to the caliber of the persons participating, and it reflects the commitment of these instructors to one another as colleagues. In addition, it demonstrates, once again, the power and practicality of mentoring relationships.

This study explored the experiences of novice school principals in Arizona who underwent mentor training. Using a phenomenological approach, the study highlighted the perceptions of novice principals regarding the role of their mentor, the impact of their mentoring relationships, and the conditions that influence the success of mentoring programs. The study results indicated that the novice principals experienced professional development, increased self-confidence, and a deeper appreciation of the value of mentoring because of their involvement in

mentoring relationships. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that the mentors played the roles of guide, partner, and encourager throughout the mentoring process and that the availability and support provided by the mentor were essential components of the mentoring process. The findings of this study highlight the importance of providing guidance and support to novice principals, who may benefit from mentoring programs that involve guidance from experienced mentors. Furthermore, the study also provides implications for the training of mentors and the development of mentoring programs, which should include providing support, guidance, and resources to ensure the successful growth of novice principals.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Approach Script

You are cordially asked to participate in a research project in which your opinions about the teacher mentorship program offered by the school district will be gathered. The researcher wants to conduct the study with starting teachers from the School District who have already participated in the teacher mentorship program. Before selecting whether to participate in this research project, you must go through this form, which is included in a procedure known as “informed consent.” A researcher by the name of Bryan Martyn, who is now pursuing his doctorate at Liberty University, is the one who is carrying out this investigation. If you decide to participate in this research project, you will be requested to participate in an oral interview that lasts between 30 and 45 minutes. The interview will be recorded using an audio device. There will be a further meeting with you to review the interview transcripts and verify that the material is correct. Please let me know if you want to participate in this research study by responding to this email.

I thank you in advance for your involvement, and it is appreciated.

Bryan Martyn

Appendix B

Consent

You are cordially invited to participate in a study on novice teachers' opinions of their mentoring relationships' success. You were chosen as a potential participant since you have only been a principal for three years and had a mentor. Before accepting this offer to participate in the research, please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have.

A Liberty University Ph.D. student named Bryan Martyn is behind this research.

Background:

The goal of this research is to understand the experiences of novice school principals' mentor training:

Procedures:

If you accept to participate in this research, you will be requested to schedule an interview time, date, and place. 13 open-ended questions will be asked during the taped interview. The length will be flexible and determined by the participant.

Study's Nature:

Your participation in this research is completely optional. Your participation or lack thereof won't impact your relationship with the Phoenix School district, either now or in the future. Even if you first choose to participate, you are always free to leave at any moment without impacting those relationships.

There are no risks or advantages to taking part in this research, and neither the short-term nor the long-term effects.

You are free to stop taking part at any moment if you feel stressed or anxious while participating in the research.

There won't be any compensation made in return for your participation in this research.

The results of this study's records will be kept private. The researcher will not use any data that might be used to identify you in any report of this study that could be published. Only the researcher will access the study records, which will be maintained in a secured file.

The researcher will provide you with a copy of this form.

Declaration of Consent:

I've read the information you've provided. I have made inquiries and received responses.

I agree to take part in the study.

Printed Name of Participant

_____.

Participant Signature

_____.

Signature of Investigator

_____.

Appendix C

Letter of Approval from Liberty University IRB

Liberty University SOE IRB

3/27/2023

Dear Researcher,

I approve you carrying out the study named “ SHARED EXPERIENCES OF NOVICE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS’ MENTOR TRAINING: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCE OF PEER EDUCATORS” within the Mesa and Phoenix Unified School district based on my examination of your research proposal. I give you permission to contact and invite members of my organization to participate in the study as interview subjects. I will provide you with their names and contact information. They will choose whether or not to participate in their initiative. If our situation changes, we reserve the right to end the study at any time.

I know that the information gathered will be kept completely private and cannot be shared with anybody outside the research team without the liberty University IRB’s approval.

Sincerely,
Authorization Official

Appendix D

Questionnaires for Novice School Principals

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information on the mentorship provided to novice (new) school administrators in Arizona. You can be certain that this information will be held in strict confidence and will only be used for the purposes of study. You are strongly urged to provide the best answers you can to these questions, based on the information and insight you now possess.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

1. What Is Your Professional Qualification? _____
2. Years of experience as a school principal? _____
3. How Long Is Your Teaching Experience? _____

B. CHARACTERISTICS AND PERCEPTION OF THE MENTORS

4. What is your definition of mentors?

5. What is your perception of the mentors?

C. THE OUTCOMES

6. What is the importance of the mentors?

7. What did you gain from the mentors?

D. LEADERSHIP NEEDS

8. What are the most significant requirements (challenges) in terms of leadership that novice (starting) principals come up against during their initial years in the role?

9. In your opinion, what is the cause of these challenges?

E. ADDRESSING LEADERSHIP NEEDS

10. How do novice (novice) principals meet their leadership needs (challenges)?

11. What kinds of assistance or support are provided to novice principals to assist them in meeting the needs (challenges)?
