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**Teacher Professional Learning
in Mentoring Relationships:
Lessons from a Cooperative-Reflective Model
in Ghana**

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**Submitted to the University of Sussex for the degree of
Doctor of Education**

July 2011

Statement

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature.....

DEDICATED TO

My dear wife

Olivia

My darling children

Elvis

Edna

Docia

Lily

For their unfailing and unwaning love and support

And

To the memory of my caring father

Joseph Barimah Mensah

Who left too early

To see the Fruits of his Labour

And the harvest of his Dreams

And

To God

Be the Glory

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UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX**Edward Kwame Asante****Doctor of Education****Teacher Professional Learning in Mentoring Relationships:
Lessons from a Cooperative-Reflective Model in Ghana****Abstract**

In Ghana, two government commissioned committee reports and a major research study raised concerns about the quality of the country's teacher education programme. The quality deficiency was attributed to a disjuncture between the theory and practice of teaching. To bridge this theory-practice gap, the University of Education, Winneba, adopted a one-year school-based student internship as an innovative component of its 4-year teacher education programme for upgrading in-service teachers to replace the traditional 4-6 weeks teaching practice, with classroom teachers serving as mentors for student teachers. Since the heart of mentoring is the mentor-mentee relationship, this study explored in depth the mentor-mentee relationships of a Cooperative-Reflective model of mentoring adopted by the University of Education, Winneba, (UEW), Ghana, for its student teachers in an attempt to understand the nature of these professional relationships and how they facilitate teacher professional learning, growth and development.

A qualitative ethnographic case study approach was used to study five cases of mentor-mentee relationships from the lived experiences of mentors and mentees involved in the University's student internship programme. The data were collected from interviews, observations, and document analysis. Trustworthiness of the research was ensured through the multiple sources of data, peer review, member checks, as well as the description of themes in the participants' own words.

The study revealed that although the involvement of classroom teachers in the professional training of student teachers is a novelty in teacher education in Ghana,

and a great departure from the old teaching practice, the programme has some conceptual and implementation challenges.

First, the old conception of a hierarchical relationship between student teachers and their supervisors still persists contrary to the collegial, collaborative, reciprocal and critical reflective conceptions that underpin the UEW mentoring model. This is attributable to the lack of sensitivity to the socio-cultural and professional contexts in which the model is being implemented. The Ghanaian society is hierarchical; age is, therefore, equated with experience, respect, authority, and reverence. Fostering collegial relationships among mentors and mentees in this cultural context becomes problematic. Again, even in the Ghanaian teaching profession, inherent in the professional ethics is the respect for rank and social distance. It is, therefore, difficult for teachers of lower ranks to forge collegial relationships with those of higher ranks.

Second, there is a dearth of direction and guidance on the selection of mentors and the matching of mentors and mentees. This results in the mentors and mentees going through the mechanics of the relationship without there being any substantive professional learning from their interactions. The current practice where the responsibility for the selection of mentors and the matching of mentors and mentees is vested in the heads of partnership schools/colleges results in instances of mismatch in terms of age, gender, experience, and personal chemistry.

Third, the programme targeted the wrong type of student teachers; hence the superficial nature of the professional learning that occurred in the relationships. Since they were not novice teachers, but had teaching experiences ranging from five to twenty-seven years, they did not find the professional learning experience challenging enough.

Finally, the programme did not envision that the collegial, collaborative and participatory learning strategies that are supposed to characterise the mentoring relationship are to have their parallels in the teaching and learning contexts of the mentoring dyad in schools and colleges in terms of a shift in pedagogy.

The findings suggest that theoretical positions alone cannot provide sufficient basis or framework for the development of a mentoring programme. It must be based on the socio-cultural as well as the professional factors within the context of implementation since it is the interaction between particular mentors and particular mentees in their particular contexts that determines the type of relationship to be established and the type of professional learning that will result.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The concern about teacher quality
in many parts of Africa
and the role teacher education should play
in its improvement is becoming an important subject
in education development on the continent' Akyeampong (2003:1)

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I give an overview of the study by first, describing my personal positioning as far as this study is concerned as part of the background. This study sought to understand teacher professional learning in mentoring relationships from the lived experiences of mentors and mentees involved in mentoring relationships in the Student Internship Programme (SIP) of the University of Education, Winneba (UEW), Ghana from their own perspectives. I also indicate briefly why and how UEW adopted this model of preparing in-service upgrading teachers. I then identify the purpose and focus of the study, state the specific problems to be investigated and address why it is important to study and understand the dynamics of the mentoring relationships of mentors and mentees of the programme. I suggest that there is a 'knowledge gap' in the conceptualisation and implementation of the programme as well as in the mentoring literature that this study provides insights into. I have included research questions, answers to which may illuminate understanding of the dimensions of the mentoring relationships and their influence on teacher professional learning and growth in educational cultures in developing countries such as Ghana. I end the chapter with a brief summary of the content of subsequent chapters.

1.2 Background and context of the study

In this section, I explain my role with respect to UEW's mentoring programme and my personal reasons for embarking on this study. To place the study in a wider context, I present concerns raised about teacher quality in Ghana, which, in the main, is attributed to a lack of a nexus between theory and practice. I then briefly

describe UEWs attempt at bridging this theory-practice gap with the adoption of a school-based model of teacher training.

1.2.1 Situating myself

I wish to state from the onset that this research was motivated by my interest in the mentoring system, generally, as a teacher preparation model. Specifically, it reflects my professional practice and interest as the first Director of a Carnegie Corporation of USA funded Student Internship Programme for UEW; the Head of the University's Centre for Teacher Development and Action Research (CETDAR) for the past five years as well as UEW's Coordinator for the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) Open Educational Resource (OER) project (www.tessafrica.net). During these years, I interacted extensively and intensely with mentors and mentees and organised numerous training workshops for mentors, University supervisors and heads of schools partnering the University in the programme. I was fascinated by the enthusiasm and commitment of the stakeholders mentioned above to this innovative teacher preparation programme.

1.2.2 The socio-cultural context

Ghanaian society tends to be hierarchical. People are respected because of their age, experience, wealth and/or position. The elderly are deemed to be very wise and are rarely challenged by anyone except someone of the same age group or even older (Quainoo, 2000). There is the notion that, with age come experience and wisdom. This is generally the opposite of western societies which appear to be lateral. For example, the practice of calling an older person by their first name where even children call adults directly by their first names, just as they would call their friends, will be unacceptable in Ghanaian culture. In western societies, the lines between adult and peer appears blurred (to the child). In Ghanaian society the boundaries are sharper. For example, the creation of the institution of the Council of State in Ghana and the criteria for its membership (loosely based on age and accomplishments) is meant to reflect the ideals of this 'Elder Respect' system (Geest, 2002).

Invariably, the Ghanaian teaching profession embedded in this socio-cultural context where the career progression structure is based on years of experience and indirectly linked to age, can come under similar influences of age, seniority and deference. In other words, teacher identity and professionalism can hardly escape from this strong socio-cultural influence, and may be significant in explaining teacher behaviour in the context of mentoring relationships. The conjecture of the thesis is that, because the cooperative - reflective mentoring model, which is underpinned by collaboration, collegiality, reflection and reciprocal learning, operates in this socio-cultural context, research which analyses the professional relationships should explore the extent and nature of such influences, if indeed these are prominent.

1.2.2.1 Reflective questions

In the course of managing the programme, some of the questions that kept on engaging my mind were, do Ghanaian teacher education policy makers and implementers really understand this concept so that they can take full advantage of the opportunities it appears to offer? Are there different conceptions of mentoring relationships in other educational cultures such as Ghana? Do mentoring relationships take on the same developmental importance in Ghanaian educational contexts as has been reported in research about developed countries? What do mentors and mentees learn in mentoring relationships in school-based contexts? Student teachers are accustomed to the culture of learning to teach in institutional contexts and are used to the ‘lectures with [lecturers] tutors dictating notes’ method of teaching how to teach (Akyeampong, 2001: 52), with hardly any active participation by them. So, what learning strategies do the mentors and mentees adopt to negotiate the learning experience in mentoring relationships? How do mentors and mentee forge collegial relationships in hierarchical social and professional contexts? What is the nature of the professional expertise of the mentors that they may share with their mentees? How are student teachers adapting or adopting the active learning pedagogies of the TESSA materials in their teaching practice and how are they sharing this rich teaching resource with mentors?

Much has been learned about the functions and benefits of mentoring in developed countries. How well do the widely accepted functions and benefits of mentoring identified in the literature apply to the Ghanaian situation? Above all, does this novelty in teacher preparation hold any potential for transforming teacher development in Ghana for the better? These are critical issues that, in my view, had to be investigated to guide policy makers, implementers and educational researchers in Ghana. I, therefore, nursed a desire to understand the nature, contexts, conditions, strategies and processes of the mentoring relationships among the mentors and mentees of the programme and looked for an opportunity for this investigation.

1.2.2.2 The Professional Doctorate (Ed.D): A window of opportunity

I saw the opportunity to fulfil this desire when I embarked on the International Professional Doctorate Programme (Ed.D) at the University of Sussex, Brighton, UK in 2005. This programme seeks to equip professionals with knowledge and skills to research their professional contexts with the aim of improving their professional practice. I, therefore, decided to research mentoring in teacher education, especially at UEW. To this end, I did all the course work assignments around the mentoring programme of UEW. These, in fact, gave me some insights into some of the issues I raised above and further deepened my interest and fired my passion to embark on this study.

1.2.3 Concerns about teacher quality in Ghana

Apart from my professional interests in the study, public concern about the quality of teachers had drawn attention to the quality of the teacher education programmes that prepare teachers (Good, McCaslin, Tsang, Zhang, Wiley, Bozak, & Hester, 2006; Akyeampong, 2003; Akyeampong & Stephens, 2000; Akyeampong & Lewin, 2002). Research shows that the quality of teacher preparation programmes can have a significant impact on teachers' teaching and the philosophies underlying their practice (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002; Cochrane-Smith, 2001). Further, there is evidence that one of the most

important factors that influence student learning and achievement is teacher expertise (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002; Cochrane-Smith, 2001).

In view of this, any time falling standards are suspected in a country's educational system, the quality of teacher training becomes suspect, although it is one among many other factors.

In 1987, the Government of Ghana (GoG) embarked on a major educational reform aimed, among other things, at improving the quality of education; teaching and learning, as well as pupil achievement, and its relevance to the socio-economic development of the country (GoG, 1987). Six years after the reforms there were still concerns about the lack of impact of the reforms. Consequently, a National Commission on Teacher Education was set up by the Ghana Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1993 to review teacher education in the country. The Commission raised doubts about the efficacy of the teacher education system. They laid much of the blame on the lack of sufficient exposure to practical teaching during pre-service training. As they pointed out:

[The Teacher Training Institutions] are inefficient in producing effective teachers since the trainees and the tutors have so little exposure to actual schools and classrooms, and academic content is taught and tested above practical teaching methodology (MOE, 1993:23).

The Commission's worry was that teacher training had not placed sufficient emphasis on developing teaching expertise from a school-based context.

This finding was confirmed ten years later by the Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER) coordinated by the Centre for International Education (CIE) of the University of Sussex, UK. It also identified lack of integration of theory and practice in authentic contexts as a major setback to preparing quality teachers in Ghana (Lewin & Stuart, 2003).

This meant that about ten years from the 1993 review, there were still concerns that not enough integration was occurring in teacher training between theory and practice, and that this was considered to be at the heart of the problem of educational quality in Ghana. This prompted the government to set up a Presidential Commission to review the whole educational system for a comprehensive reform. On teacher education, the Commission reported that:

There is disjuncture between theory as taught in teacher education institutions and practice in the field ... there is disconnection between schooling (the needs of schools) and teacher education (the preparation of teachers) that deprive teacher education of its mission (The Republic of Ghana, 2002: 94).

Thus, the MUSTER study and the reports of the two commissions mentioned above identified inadequate practicum as a major deficiency of teacher education in Ghana. Why these concerns about teaching practice? It is because the teaching practicum is considered one of the most influential aspects of pre-service teacher education (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Cole & Knowles, 1993; Hobson, 2002; Stanulis, 1995). According to McGee, Ferrier-Kerr, & Miller (2001:1) teaching practice offers student teachers the “experience to gain knowledge of how teachers go about the many and complex tasks involved in actual classroom practice”. If such a critical component of learning to teach is played down in teacher preparation programmes then this must raise questions about the effectiveness of training in terms of professional knowledge and competence. It means teacher education is irrelevant to the real world of teaching. Why is this gap between theory and practice?

1.2.4 Theory-Practice gap

Much of the gap between theory and practice in Ghanaian teacher education is attributable to the fact that undergraduate teacher education programmes for the past four decades had been based on a model of teacher education which focused attention on training on the theoretical aspects of teaching on campus and less attention on developing practical knowledge in school contexts (Akyeampong, 2001; Akyeampong & Stephens, 2000). In fact, student teachers had just 4-6 weeks’ teaching practice experience in a 3-year pre-tertiary and 4-year tertiary

teacher education programme. Thus, students did not have enough exposure to the real demands of teaching. It did not give the student teachers the opportunity to engage adequately in reflective thinking and to learn from hands-on experience.

Apart from the short duration for the teaching practice, its objective was to evaluate student teachers' teaching skills instead of it being an opportunity to help them develop appropriate skills, techniques and dispositions in real school contexts over time (Akyeampong, 2001; Akyeampong & Stephens, 2000). This was seen in the summative nature of teaching practice supervision.

It was the use of this model that had been the major concern of educational researchers and many teacher educators in Ghana as it failed to help student teachers develop the right skills, attitudes, and dispositions to teaching. As Lewin and Stuart (2003:87) succinctly put it "...most trainees saw [teaching practice] as inadequate, and interviews revealed just how unprepared they felt for the reality of Ghanaian classrooms". From my experiences with supervising teacher trainees on teaching practice, I realised that the traditional teaching practice lacked the ability to help student teachers learn through reflecting on practice. Students were only interested in pleasing supervisors for marks. In most cases, as soon as students got the required minimum of supervisions, they stopped preparing lesson notes and, in some cases, teaching. Evaluation of students on teaching practice was undertaken solely by the training college tutor without consultation with the class teacher.

Most newly qualified teachers, therefore, gained confidence and acquired their practical knowledge in the schools they were posted to teach in a very hard way. They entered their classrooms to be confronted with what Lewin & Stuart (2003: 87) refer to as the 'reality shock'. The reality of the Ghanaian classroom is that there are large classes of children with mixed abilities, children who cannot read and write, children with poor command of the English language; which is the language of instruction for most part of school life, teaching resources are very limited and some children are just not ready to learn (Lewin & Stuart, 2003).

In view of the worrying nature of this situation, a call has been made for the re-conceptualisation and restructuring of teacher education in general and pre-service teacher education in particular to address teacher preparation deficiencies especially, the theory-practice gap (Akyeampong, 2002).

1.2.5 Addressing the concerns

In response to the findings of inadequate practicum and calls to address the issues raised, several initiatives have been introduced in Ghana such as curricular revision and the upgrading of teacher training institutions. However, the most radical, in terms of locating a greater part of teacher professional training in schools, has been the student internship model of teacher education at UEW. This teacher training model uses experienced teachers to develop in-service upgrading teachers' teaching with a view to bridging the theory-practice gap.

1.2.6 The student internship programme (SIP) of UEW

In the 2002/2003 academic year, the University of Education, Winneba, which is one of the two tertiary teacher training institutions mandated to train teachers for Ghana's pre-tertiary education, adopted a year-long internship model of teacher preparation as part of a larger re-conceptualisation and restructuring of the University's teacher education programme. The Student Internship Programme, (SIP) is a yearlong intensive school-based, supervised, clinical field experience that constitutes the final segment of a four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) teacher preparation programme. This extended practicum hopes to provide the teaching profession with graduates who are more aware of the many roles performed by the practising teacher, having been exposed to the conditions encountered by these teachers in a supportive, collegial environment over a whole school year of nine months. In this model, University supervisors monitor the practicum, but the responsibility for the practicum is handed to the mentors in the partnership schools.

1.2.6.1 The UEW 4-Year B.Ed programme

The UEW B.Ed programme has three routes and admits both serving teachers who hold an initial teachers' qualification Certificate 'A' (they have pursued a 3-year initial teacher training programme after completing a Senior High School) and those who have completed a Senior High School and have not had any teaching experience. The first route is the regular 4-year route, which consists of a 3-year on campus academic (theoretical) training and a yearlong internship. The second route is a 3-year teachers' Diploma programme by distance education. It is followed by a 2-year Post-Diploma (B.Ed) programme, still by distance education. This route is normally for serving initial Certificate 'A' teachers. The third route is a sandwich programme (like a Summer School) which is organised for both serving Certificate 'A' teachers and holders of Senior High School Certificates. It normally runs during school holidays for two semesters of eight weeks each for a teachers' Diploma and four semesters of eight weeks for the B.Ed degree.

Programme offerings are:

- i. Art Education (regular)
- ii. Business Education (regular)
- iii. Agriculture Education (regular)
- iv. Theatre Arts Education (regular)
- v. Mathematics Education (regular)
- vi. Music Education (regular, sandwich)
- vii. Special Education (regular, sandwich)
- viii. Home Economics Education (regular)
- ix. Basic Education (regular, distance, sandwich)
- x. Early Childhood Education (regular, sandwich)
- xi. Vocational and Technical Education (regular, distance)
- xii. Languages Education (English, French, Ghanaian Languages (regular))
- xiii. Science Education (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Integrated Science (regular))

Arguably, the differences in the academic and professional background of those who access these programmes are likely to impact on how they learn to teach. While the Certificate ‘A’ student teacher has some years teaching experience and, therefore, familiar with classroom routines, the complete novice, may find the experience daunting.

1.2.6.2 Aims of the SIP

Generally, the programme aims to (a) provide quality academic and field-based training for student teachers (b) provide meaningful professional development experiences for teacher mentors (c) create a school culture where inquiry, action research, and reflection are ongoing and valued professional practices (CETDAR, 2009).

1.2.6.3 Components of the SIP

The University’s internship programme consists of the following activities/experiences for both teacher mentors and mentees. These were missing from the traditional teaching practice model.

School Activities: The student teacher is expected to participate in all phases of the professional life of a teacher: observation of teaching and other activities of regular teachers of the school/college; classroom teaching, staff meetings, and other school routine assignments. The various pedagogical experiences such as lesson planning; teaching large, under-resourced and mixed ability classes; the manipulation of teaching tools; the resolution of real teaching and learning problems; and the reflection on the political, social and ethical aspects of teaching are examples of the richness and variety of the content in this field experience that trainees are expected to go through in close collaboration with their mentors.

It seeks to provide student teachers the opportunity to be part of a classroom over time to help them see and understand curriculum progression and pupil/student development over a full school year. Thus, the longer period is to help them to understand the theory and practice of teaching as they are lived in classrooms and

other educational settings instead of the shorter period of teaching practice during which student teachers act teaching to please supervisors.

Teaching Portfolio: Each intern is expected to build a teaching portfolio to showcase their professional accomplishments and serve as the basis for reflection during the internship.

Statement of Teaching Philosophy: Interns are expected to write their philosophy of teaching statements. These reflect each intern's personal teaching values and vision and how their concepts about teaching and learning and goals for pupils/students were transformed into classroom activities.

Reflective Practice: Interns are to write their reflections on their teaching. This aspect of the programme emphasises the importance of thoughtful analysis and continual revision of effective approaches to teaching and learning.

Action Research (Inquiry Project): In addition to the above, interns are to design and complete a major classroom action research project in their practising schools with guidance from their mentors. The projects are to address issues of genuine interest and concern to the schools and communities in which they are working. The final reports are to be shared with the partnership schools and communities.

Evaluation

A variety of evaluation formats are used in assisting and assessing the professional growth and performance of interns. These include:

- Pre-observation conference guide (Appendix 1)
- Post-observation conference guide (Appendix 2)
- Intern teaching evaluation form (Appendix 3)
- Teaching evaluation comments form (Appendix 4)
- The reflection log form (Appendix 5)
- Mentor's termly evaluation of student performance (Appendix 6)
- Head of institution's evaluation form (Appendix 7)

Post-Internship Activities

Interns spend the last 4 weeks of the internship year on University campuses. It is during this period that they meet panels of lecturers in departments to present and discuss their teaching philosophies, reflective practice, teaching portfolios and action research projects. It provides the opportunity for student teachers to share their mentoring experiences with colleagues and staff of their departments.

1.2.6.4. Mentor training

In furtherance of these activities, for the past six years, the internship programme has received substantial financial and technical assistance from the Carnegie Corporation of USA for the training of mentors and the establishment of partnerships with schools and colleges. Currently, the University has established partnerships with over 700 schools and trained about 4,500 teacher mentors.

Structure and content of mentor training

To equip mentors with the requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes/dispositions for effective mentoring, UEW designed two training programmes for them. The first training programme, which is generic, seeks to equip them with knowledge and skills of mentoring, generally. This is normally a 5-day residential workshop facilitated by resource persons from the University. Topics treated include:

- i. the concept of mentoring
- ii. types of mentoring relationships
- iii. mentoring practices
- iv. benefits of mentoring
- v. challenges of mentoring
- vi. counselling the mentee
- vii. clinical supervision
- viii. building a teaching portfolio
- ix. statement of teaching philosophy
- x. reflective practice
- xi. conducting action research
- xii. using the evaluation formats

The second training, which is also residential, is a 3-day workshop on subject specific mentoring skills. It is facilitated by subject experts in the various Faculties. It is aimed at equipping mentors with knowledge and skills in the teaching of specific subjects such as mathematics, English, science and music.

It is envisaged that these training programmes will dispose the mentors well towards helping mentees in their school-based professional experiences. They will, for instance, come to realise that mentoring is not an event but a professional learning process that should be negotiated by both mentor and mentee. The training also focuses on providing the mentors with basic knowledge and understandings about mentoring with the expectation that they will be able to use these negotiating learning between them and mentees.

There is another Carnegie support to institutionalise the mentor training system by helping UEW to establish a one-year Post-graduate Diploma programme in mentorship, using multi-media packages to offer accredited training programmes for mentors. It is offered through the distance mode. This is to improve upon their training and also serve as a form of motivation to mentors since teachers who go through the programme would get a pay rise from government.

1.2.7 Rationale for school-based models in teacher education

The development of school-based teacher education models is an international development (Geert, Dam, & Blom, 2006), with countries such as USA, Canada, Britain and Netherlands having developed strong school-university partnership models for the preparation of pre-service teachers (Edwards, Gilroy, & Hartley, 2002). In Portugal, for example, their five year Initial Teacher Education programme for secondary school teachers has a one year teaching practice component (Caires & Almeida, 2005). Cobb (1999) reports that student teachers in Germany do two full years of internship, which include seminar and classroom experiences.

The assumptions that underlie the school-based model of teacher education are that (a) it will ensure attention to the theoretical as well as the practical aspects of teaching through the coming together of the school and the university, (b) this mode of preparing teachers ‘create learning opportunities that are both different from and richer than the opportunities either the school or the university can provide alone’ (Cochrane-Smith, 1991:109), (c) such collaborative efforts hold the promise of achieving simultaneous change and renewal in both schools and universities (Rice, 2002). These views are also shared by Berk, Howard & Long (1999) who see teacher learning as involving far more than just acquiring content knowledge of a particular subject, or classroom management techniques. To them, the skills and strategies that pre-service teachers need are exhibited in the everyday actions of practising teachers. Therefore, it is they who are able to give insights into the cultural context of the classroom and how to apply appropriate pedagogical techniques befitting a situation.

As can be gathered from the accounts above, extended periods of school-based training are not new, yet in the Ghanaian context, there is limited knowledge about teacher education with a school-based component. So, as I pointed out earlier, research into this phenomenon in its new context of practice is needed.

Of course, the concept, in terms of it as a learning relationship, to me, is not entirely new in Ghanaian contexts. Before the advent of formal education, traditional education was conducted using the master-apprenticeship model, which is similar to the mentoring model. Young people who wanted to enter into trades and vocations such as blacksmithing, carpentry, farming, fishing, traditional medicine, teaching and pastoral work were in most cases taken to stay with renowned men and women in these fields to understudy them. The kind of relationship established between them enabled the young men and women to be initiated into their chosen trades and vocations. As Shiohata & Pryor (2007: 12) note, this type of training ‘presents learning not as an individual achievement but as a social practice.’ The learners participated directly in the activities or tasks of whatever trade or vocation they were learning as ‘members of communities of

practice.’ How it works in the modern day context of teacher education in Ghana is what is yet to be understood?

1.3 Purpose and focus of the study

Although school-based teacher education appears to be the favoured model of teacher education in the developed countries, and student teacher mentoring has been widely researched in the developed countries, it is a relatively new phenomenon in developing countries such as Ghana. As a result, very little research, if any, has been carried out to investigate how it works in developing country contexts. The purpose of the study, therefore, was to explore in depth and understand the dimensions of mentoring relationships among mentors and mentees of UEW’s teacher mentoring programme with a view to examining how the dyad perceive the whole concept of mentoring, and how they value and negotiate the mentoring relationships. Establishing a professional relationship is considered a crucial aspect of the practicum experience and critical to the learning that occurs within it (Ferrier-Kerr, 2009).

Specifically, this study sought, first, to investigate the mentors’ and mentees’ perception of the concept of mentoring and mentoring roles that guided the relationship. It is argued that mentors and mentees who have a deeper understanding of mentoring and are able to identify and understand their own and each other’s roles are more likely to establish functional relationships during the practicum (McGee, Ferrier-Kerr, & Miller, 2001). Conceptual confusions may lead to the establishment of mentoring relationships that may not meet the goals of the mentoring programme as different roles give rise to different relationships, responsibilities and tasks. Hezlett (2005) cites Singh, et al (2002) as arguing that learning has been recognised as an important objective and outcome of the mentor-mentee relationship. Since it is this professional learning that is crucial to bridging the gap between theory and practice, researching professional learning in mentoring relationships is important for mentoring programme implementers, as well as mentors and mentees themselves.

Second, with this study, I sought to examine factors that influenced how the relationship evolved and developed, and how these influenced the professional learning process. Tang (2004) observes that in the socio-professional context, student teachers interact with their mentors and other professionals in the school community to get a sense of what it means to be a teacher. This learning process is shaped by such factors as personalities, styles of teaching and learning styles of learners, goals and values. These interactions are a major determinant of what is learned and impacts on the professional learning and identity of the new teacher. As I indicated above, establishing a good professional relationship is considered a crucial aspect of the practicum experience and critical to the learning that occurs within it (Ferrier-Kerr, 2009; Wang, 2001). A relationship that cannot support effective professional learning will defeat the aim of using the mentoring model to bridge the theory-practice gap in Ghana's teacher education.

Third, I wanted to elicit from mentors and mentees how they perceived of their mentoring experiences in relation to their professional growth and development. That is, I wanted to find out how well the widely accepted functions and outcomes of mentoring identified in the literature apply to the Ghanaian situation. For example, in the internship model of teacher preparation, an expert teacher or mentor is supposed to lead student teachers toward the design and development of learning activities. Nicholls (1999) in Jarvis (2002) has suggested that mentoring is an excellent tool for professional learning both for the mentor and the mentee through systematic critical reflection. However, the expertise and experiences required of such a mentor are not always well defined. An individual may be more knowledgeable or experienced, but may not necessarily be able to develop and extend other teachers' practical and professional competences. As Tickle (2000) argues, good classroom teachers do not automatically make good mentors. So, it should not be assumed that once a mentoring system has been established, useful teaching knowledge will necessarily flow from the mentor to the mentee.

Student teachers are used to the traditional institutional learning practice. Now, they are expected to learn on-the-job. These two learning cultures present different

challenges to students. If the traditional culture of learning whatever is taught without any critical examination continues in mentoring relationships, it is likely mentees will just imitate their mentors' professional practice and will never try out any novel teaching approaches. This will defeat the internship programme's aim of developing reflective teachers and encouraging reciprocal learning that may lead to general school renewal (SIH, 2009). With this study, I hoped to investigate how student teachers learned and how they developed practical knowledge in the face of the ramifications of the learning process.

Further, I wanted to explore how this professional relationship contributed to the formation of professional identity. It is recognised that the relationship and experiences that occur between mentors and mentees during the internship period influence the development of the professional identity of teachers (Tang, 2004; Everston & Smithey, 2000). That is, because there is such close interaction between the mentor and the mentee during this significant phase of learning to teach, the mentor exerts an important effect on the beliefs and future teaching practices of the mentee. The development of effective practice through collaboration, experimentation and reflection in authentic school contexts is expected to greatly contribute to the bridging of the theory-practice gap as mentees can gain better insights into teaching and mentors can also retune their teaching practices. In light of these, it is imperative to investigate the factors that shape the mentoring relationships and the extent to which those factors influence the professional learning process. As Bradbury & Koballa (2008:21) note,

“The importance of field experiences as a source of knowledge for teachers entering the profession demands a fuller exploration of the complex relationships between interns and their mentor teachers”.

1.4 Statement of the problem

As stated earlier, the UEW mentoring programme is informed by the practice of teacher education in the developed countries. However, Ghana and these countries differ markedly socially, culturally, and economically, among others. So, although a shift towards learning in practice has been made, it is not known the kind of

context characteristics that could be impacting on the model. Further, in professional relationships where mentors and mentees are supposed to establish professional learning cultures that result in collaborative enquiry, critical reflective activities and creative or innovative teaching approaches, it is not clear what exists in the Ghanaian situation. It is likely that the programme may have certain unique Ghanaian context characteristics that may impact on the efficacy of this model of teacher preparation.

Again, no study has been conducted to ascertain the nature of these professional relationships and how they contribute to growth in teacher professional learning and development since UEW adopted this novel teacher preparation model in 2002. It is, therefore, not clear how these critical relationships are developed, established, and sustained; and the factors that facilitate or hinder their smooth functioning. There is also little understanding of what mentors and mentees learn in the relationships and how they learn what they learn. This study, therefore, seeks to explore issues surrounding these gaps.

For the study to address the research problem of the lack of understanding of how teacher professional learning takes place in mentoring relationships and achieve the purpose of the study, which was to understand the professional relationship between mentors and mentees and the professional learning that results from it, the following questions formed the basis for the investigations.

1.5 Research questions

1. What are the mentor-mentee conceptions about mentoring and their respective roles in the mentoring relationship?
2. How do mentors and mentees develop, establish and sustain their mentoring relationships?
3. How do mentors and mentees negotiate professional learning in mentoring relationships?
4. To what extent does the relationship between mentors and mentees shape their professional identity and practice?

5. What are the implications of the findings for re-conceptualising and re-structuring the UEW mentoring programme?

1.6 Significance of the study

1.6.1 Theoretical significance

The UEW student internship programme is a shift from the old teaching practice of teacher professional learning in a developing country. Therefore, the importance of this study is its potential to contribute to the mentoring literature to enhance the understanding of mentoring relationships in teacher education and development in the Ghanaian context.

1.6.2 Practical significance

An inquiry into how the mentor-mentee relationships in the Cooperative-Reflective Model of mentoring in UEW are operating in the partnership schools will allow investigations into the factors that facilitate or impede the relationships. It will reveal how partners within the relationships perceive their mentoring experiences and thus provide insights into the forming and nurturing of mentoring relationships.

The study, again, serves as a guide to heads of partnership schools in the selection and matching of mentors and mentees. It also provides guidelines to the University in the type of mentor training to give mentors to enhance their interactions with mentees. To the mentors and mentees, greater knowledge and a better understanding of what actually happens in mentoring relationships will help them create and maintain functional relationships with opportunities for professional learning and change.

Another significance of this study is that it can guide the 38 Initial Teacher Training Colleges (now called Colleges of Education) in Ghana that are also using the internship model as a component of their teacher education programme to pay particular attention to the dynamics of the mentoring relationship and see how they affect the quality of the learning experience.

Apart from these, this study will inform any re-conceptualisation and restructuring of the teacher mentoring programme at UEW since I play a key role in its development and practice. My key point here is that mentoring is a growing and important model of teacher professional development. As such, it is important to develop a greater understanding of the mentoring process if teacher educational institutions are to improve teacher preparation in Ghana that bridges the gap between theory and practice. It will ensure we have a better understanding of the processes involved and, hopefully, lead to better practice.

1.7 Organisation of the study

I organised this study in six chapters. Chapter 1 provides the background and context of the study. It also sets out the purpose and focus of the study, states the central problem of the study and gives its theoretical and practical significance.

Chapter 2 reviews literature on mentoring. I, first, explain the procedure used to get literature on mentoring and then discuss in detail literature on the historical perspectives of the mentoring concept, its various definitions, the theoretical underpinnings of the mentoring concept and the mentoring relationship. Other areas that the review tackled are the dynamics of the mentoring relationship, types of mentoring functions, and types of mentoring relationships. The review closes with an examination of how learning takes place in mentoring relationships.

Chapter 3 situates the study within a qualitative interpretive theoretical framework. It describes and explains the theoretical assumptions underpinning the study, the study design and methods. Since it is a case study, it explains the selection criteria for the cases, methods of data collection and rationale for the data collection methods. It then describes how the data were analysed and credibility and trustworthiness were ensured.

Chapter 4 presents the analysis of the cases studied. I presented the analysis case by case based on the first four research questions. Chapter 5 discusses the cross-case findings to help build a logical chain of evidence.

Chapter 6 presents the summary of findings and suggestions based on the stories from the relationships of the Cases. It indicates what and how this study contributes in terms of knowledge to the field of teacher mentoring. These are organized under the following headings: (1) Implications for mentoring theory (2) Implications for policy (3) Implications for practice. It calls for the re-conceptualisation and restructuring of UEW's teacher mentoring programme. The chapter closes with my reflections on the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

If mentoring is to function
as a strategy of reform,
it must be linked to a vision of good teaching,
guided by an understanding of teacher learning,
and supported by a professional culture
that favours collaboration and inquiry
Feiman-Nemser (1996:1)

2.1 Introduction

To gain insights into the specific concerns of the study as stated in chapter 1, in this chapter, I review relevant literature that will address those issues. Specifically, the review focuses on (a) how mentoring is conceptualised (b) the nature of the professional relationship dynamics (c) the varying understandings of the practice and functions of mentoring and (d) how professional learning in mentoring relationships is negotiated.

Insights gained from the literature will shape the understanding of the mentoring concept, in general, and the mentoring relationship as a professional learning relationship in particular.

2.2 Procedure

In order to access relevant information on the study, I carried out a literature search in materials from a variety of articles in academic journals, books, research reports and policy documents. These include *Action in Teacher Education*, *Educational Research*, *Journal of Teacher Education*, *Journal of Education for Teaching*, *Teachers and Teaching: Theory into Practice*, *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, among others.

I also searched the *Educational Resource Information Centre (ERIC)*, using the terms, *Mentor*, *Mentoring*, *Mentor + Teachers*, *mentoring + Teachers*, *Mentor + Relationship*, *Mentor-Mentee Relationship*, *Mentor + Learning*, and *Mentee +*

Learning. I complemented these with my own professional experiences as a teacher educator and Director of UEWs in-service teacher mentoring programme.

For a better understanding and appreciation of the dynamics and complexities of the mentoring concept and the mentor-mentee relationship, I considered it helpful to explore the original concept of the term ‘mentor’ which supposedly guides modern mentoring practices. The purpose is to clarify the meaning of the concept of mentoring by examining its multi-dimensional conceptualisations to inform this study into mentoring relationships in an in-service upgrading teacher education programme. As Chao (1998) advised, one cannot research mentoring without first defining it; as this would create doubt as to what was being researched.

2.3 The mentoring concept: Historical perspective

Traditionally, the concept of mentoring can be traced back to ancient Greece where in Homer’s epic, *The Odyssey*, Odysseus asked Mentor, his loyal and most trusted friend, to take care of his home and the total development of his young son, Telemachus, while he (Odysseus) left to fight the Trojan Wars (Hays, Gerber, & Minichiello, 1999). Mentor was given the charge of raising Telemachus from adolescent into manhood. The close, personal relationship which developed between the two provides the genesis of the mentor-mentee relationship.

2.3.1 Issues with the original conception

It is revealing to find that some researchers have raised issues with the old conception of mentoring as derived from the *Odyssey* account. Roberts (2000: 32), for example, argues that there is no description of the mentor as ‘a wise, nurturing, counselling, guiding and enabling figure’ and that King Odysseus did not entrust the education of his son Telemachus to Mentor. According to Roberts (2000) it was one Fenelon who ascribed the qualities and attributes of advisor, guide, nurture, teacher, on Mentor in a book entitled *Les Adventures de Telemaque* written in 1699. Gallimore, John-Steiner & Tharp (1992) also posit that Mentor’s relationship to the household already existed. The relationship was based on his companionship with the King. So, he was a familiar figure in the household and known to Telemachus already. In addition, Ayawa, McEwan, Heyler, Lynky, Lum &

Wukukawa (2003:49) also argue that the idea of hierarchy or status is perhaps more difficult to establish from the account given of the relationship in the *Odyssey*. In their view, ‘as a friend of the King, Mentor can hardly be said to outrank Telemachus, the Prince’. Thus, the relationship, from the account, can be understood as one that was not based on rank but on Mentor’s greater experience, may be, as a responsible family man and a trusted friend of the King. The issues raised above have implications for the theory and practice of mentoring.

2.3.2 Implications of the historical conceptions of the mentoring

The historical conceptions of mentoring have implications for the practice of mentoring. First of all, since the attributes assigned to the mentor are said to be mere inference, it means that the attributes of a mentor may differ according to the context and purpose of mentoring. Second, if no specific roles were assigned to Mentor by Odysseus, then it means that mentoring roles may also vary depending on the mentoring context or situation. What this implies is that mentoring roles may vary according to professional orientation. For example, mentoring in teacher education, business mentoring, mentoring in engineering, religious or youth mentoring may not demand the same roles from the mentor and mentee. This may account for the many interpretations of mentor roles found in the literature on mentoring such as teaching (Roberts, 1998; Little, 1992; Carruthers, 1993; Anderson & Shannon, 1991); guiding (Stephens, 1992; Shea, 1996); role modelling, (Little, 1992; Carruthers, 1993; Furlong & Maynard, 1993); coaching, (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 1995); counselling (Carruthers, 1993; Anderson & Shannon, 1993) and others.

Further, the mentoring relationship was a natural one as opposed to a planned one. Aspects of the relationship between Mentor and Telemachus evolved in the context of everyday life of the royal family. Planned or deliberately created mentoring relationships, therefore, may not function as natural ones.

2.4 The conceptual and definitional debate

It has been argued that there is a lack of a comprehensive, consistent, functional and universally agreed upon definition of mentoring (Healey & Welchert, 1990; Noe, 1988; Jacobi, 1991). Jacobi (1991) confirms that the definition of the term ‘mentoring’ is not consistent across studies. She conducted a comprehensive review of mentoring literature in three categories: higher education, management, and developmental psychology and concluded that although there are some areas of overlap, there is little consistency in the way mentoring is defined both within these categories and across them.

For example, while some writers emphasise the relational dimension and focus mainly on the relationship between the mentor and the mentee (Gehrke, 1988), others emphasise the developmental dimension, focusing on mentoring functions and behaviours aimed at promoting the professional and personal development of both the mentor and mentee (Healy & Welchert, 1990; McIntyre & Hagger, 1993; Maynard & Furlong, 1993). Still others emphasise the contextual dimension and focus on the importance of recognising the power influence of the school culture on teacher learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

This implies that, there is no agreed conceptualisation of mentoring even among teacher educators and educational researchers (Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Feiman-Nemser, 1996; Gehrke, 1998; Healy & Welchert, 1990; Little, 1990; Merriam, 1983; Roberts, 2000; Barrett, 2000). For the purpose of this study, however, I consider the following three definitions insightful and will serve as my working definitions.

Anderson and Shannon (1988:40) define mentoring as:

a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter’s professional and/or personal development.

Healy and Welchert (1990:17) also see mentoring as:

a dynamic, reciprocal relationship in a work environment between an advanced career incumbent (mentor) and a beginner (mentee) aimed at promoting the career development of both.

Barrett (2000:34) describes an emerging concept of mentoring as:

...a reciprocal relationship between mentor and mentee, based on mutual respect, care for one another, and a belief that both parties have benefits to offer one another.

A closer look at the operational definitions above, reveals that mentoring is conceptualised with respect to either its relational, developmental or contextual dimensions. But that mentoring is a 'relationship' is common to all the definitions. A key issue that emerges from Anderson's and Shannon's (1988) and Healy's and Welchert's (1990) definitions, is the assumption of significant difference between mentor and mentee in terms of both age and life or work experience. Thus, the relationship being the focus in the definitions is that between a young, inexperienced mentee and an old, experienced mentor.

In fact, as far back as the 70s, Levinson (1978: 99) had also indicated that:

The mentor is ordinarily several years older, a person of great experience and seniority in the world the young man is entering. This person acts as teacher, sponsor, counsellor, developer of skills and intellect, host, guide, exemplar and one who supports and facilitates the realisation of the young man's dream.

This hierarchical transfer of knowledge and information from an older, more experienced person to a younger, less experienced person may no longer be the prevailing mentoring paradigm, especially in the context of tertiary teacher education in Ghana where a large number of experienced teachers choose to pursue further training after their initial training, as pertains in UEW, and may find themselves paired with a younger inexperienced teacher. In fact, more recent suggestions for sources of mentoring include peers, groups, and even subordinates (Russell & Adams, 1997; Higgins & Kram, (2001). So, for mentees who are already experienced teachers, negotiating the mentoring relationship with their younger mentors may be problematic.

Again, while Healy and Welchert (1990) and Barrett (2000) see the mentoring relationship as offering learning opportunities for both mentor and mentee, Anderson and Shannon (1988) and even Levinson (1978) see it as a one-way relationship in which only the mentee benefits. They also allude to power differentials and dependency. These further confirm the definitional and mentor role confusion in the literature on mentoring. In the UEW mentoring programme, both mentor and mentee are supposed to grow personally and professionally through the relationship.

2.5 Who then is a mentor?

Considering all the issues raised above, I will describe a mentor as any person who has some amount of experience, knowledge, skill in a specialised field such as teaching, accounting, management or law and is ready to share this expertise with anyone (a mentee) who needs that expertise. The mentor enters into a special relationship characterised by mutual care, respect, collaboration and collegiality. Through encouragement, guidance, counselling, support, reflective activities, and any other means of sharing the expertise, the mentor enriches the life of the mentee and in return the mentor gains a sense of renewal.

From this, the teacher mentor will be a teacher with some teaching experience or expertise to share with either pre-service or in-service teachers. The mentor enters into a professional relationship with the mentee with the aim of sharing their professional knowledge for professional growth and change.

2.6 What then is mentoring?

In the light of the definitions and the critical issues raised from them, mentoring could be described as either an informal or a formal relational process between a mentor and a mentee which is characterised by mutual care, respect, collaboration and collegiality aimed at the personal and professional development of both. In teacher education, both mentor and mentee gain from the relationship by exploring and sharing their professional knowledge through co-operation and

collaboration. This implies that each individual brings a different expertise and experience to the relationship where neither party dominates.

This is unlike the old conception of mentoring which evokes paternalistic, protectionist and dependency tendencies. The key characteristics of mentoring indicate that significant assistance is given in a warm and nurturing environment. It is focussed on sharing of experiences and realities on areas of personal and professional interests and concerns. It must recognise that reflective practice has tremendous power because it helps the mentor and the mentee to grow through self-discovery.

These dimensions of conceptions and definitions are critical to this study as they help to illuminate the path of the investigation. Anderson and Shannon (1989:41) argue that most of the conceptualisations of mentoring are vague. As a result, to develop a teacher mentoring programme without first conceptualising mentoring is to “run the risk of developing programmes that are incomplete, lack integrity, and duplicate programmes that in some form have already been tried”. In other words, a good teacher mentoring programme should be guided by a well defined conceptualisation of mentoring. Closely related to the definitional problems is the theoretical framework that informs mentoring practice. An understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of mentoring, in my view, will help define the roles, functions, activities and outcomes of the relationship. For example, a theory of mentoring should help define how learning takes place in mentoring relationships.

2.7 The theoretical debate

Just as it has definitional challenges, it is argued that mentoring has not as yet developed its own body of knowledge or evidence (Gibb, 1999; Jacobi, 1991; Healy & Welchert, 1990). For instance, Gibb (1999:1) has commented that ‘a substantive theoretical analysis of mentoring has been absent, implicit, limited or underdeveloped’. For their part, Healy and Welchert (1990) think that the absence of a mentoring theory is due to the inability of researchers to firmly locate their work in appropriate theory. Jacobi (1991:1) has also confirmed that ‘...the

weakness about research about mentoring is the lack of a unified theoretical or conceptual base’.

Despite the seeming lack of a clear theoretical framework for mentoring, a critical examination of the many definitions of the concept from the various perspectives above reveals implicitly the following conceptions, among others: (a) reciprocity (Maynard & Furlong, 1993): that is, both mentor and mentee benefit from the mentoring experience, (b) social and adult learning theories (Townley, 1994): this is where role modelling, active construction and enculturation are considered key to the mentoring experience. (c) developmental (Edwards & Collison, 1996): this identifies stages of professional and personal development, (d) power relations (Foucault, 1980; Townley, 1994): this involves considerations of gender, age, culture, ethnicity and socio-economic status of the parties involved in the mentoring relationship and (e) reflective practice (Schon, 1987): this contributes to new understandings and refinement of practice.

One of the problems of this lack of a clear, consistent theoretical/conceptual framework is that mentors may not have clear role definitions and, therefore, act according to their own conception of their roles or the roles prescribed for them by the particular mentoring programme. Again, as I indicated earlier, how to negotiate the learning that should take place in the relationship becomes unclear.

All the same, having a clear, explicit theoretical framework for mentoring may be difficult since the mentoring concept, relationships and processes are complex as the review has so far shown. It is a multi-faceted phenomenon that cannot fit into a straight jacket theory. The stakeholders, the mentee, the mentor, and the organisation bring on board several dynamics that defy the use of one theory to describe it. There is, therefore, the need to draw from various theories and principles as they relate to the phenomenon.

For example, Vonk (1994) requires mentors to meet certain prerequisites including understanding of the process of teacher professional learning and development,

mastering of interpersonal skills and how to use them appropriately, and mastering of a range of technical skills such as counselling, observing, providing feedback, among others. These prerequisites, apparently, are drawn from fields such as adult learning theories, human relations principles and human psychology. Hansford, Tennent, & Ehrich, (2003) also discuss a conceptual framework for mentoring which combines a range of adult learning theories such as Brookfield's (1983) and Daloz's (1986) theories of adult learning, Kolb's (1984) experiential learning and Schon's (1987) theory of reflection on learning.

One fascinating thing about these frameworks is that apart from Vonk (1994) who considers interpersonal skills as relevant, the others are more concerned about the learning component of the mentoring experience. What is missing here is the context for an authentic mentoring relationship. What makes for an effective partnership between mentor and mentee? How does the relationship develop? How is the relationship sustained? I believe answers to these questions should form the basis of any theoretical framework for mentoring since as pointed out earlier, mentoring is essentially about a relationship and not an event.

2.8 Mentoring as a relationship

Hale (2000) cites Collin (1988) and Block (1993) that mentoring is a relationship rather than an activity. Clutterbuck (1991: 14) refers to mentoring as a 'relationship'. Clutterbuck & Ragins (2002) regard mentoring as a relationship in which both mentor and mentee learn. In my view, mentoring is a professional relationship rather than a social relationship; although some characteristics or principles of social relationship may show up. The import of the mentoring relationship is to afford the participants opportunities for professional learning. Ragins (2000) considered the mentoring relationship from a relational perspective and noted the mutually, interdependent, empathetic and empowerment processes that create personal growth, development and enrichment for mentors and mentees. That is, it is a relationship of mutual benefits, collegiality and reciprocity. Clutterbuck (1991), Hayward (2002) and Gardiner (1996) call this relationship professional friendship.

Looking at mentoring from a relational perspective, Ragins & Verbos (2007:92) define mentoring as ‘a developmental relationship that involves mutual growth, learning, and development in personal, professional, and career domains’. This again emphasises the mutuality of the relationship. It is a partnership. As a partnership, it requires the commitment of both mentor and mentee to be functional. If mentoring is a relationship, then understanding the dynamics of the relationship and how they influence the professional learning is important. To elucidate this professional relationship, I now review literature on a theory of mentoring relationships.

2.9 A theory of mentoring relationships

Pawson (2004:9-18), drawing from extant studies and commentaries offers a theory of mentoring relationships, which for me, is illuminating in respect of understanding the factors that make for a successful mentoring relationship. Pawson’s (2004:9-18) proposition for a theory of mentoring relationships is based on three core concepts of: (a) status differences (the respective social standing of the partners), (b) reference group position (the social identity of mentor and mentee), and (c) mentoring mechanism (the interpersonal strategy that affects change).

The status difference conceptualisation, for instance, considers the implications of having a ‘lateral’ or ‘hierarchical’ relationship (Eby, 1997) where in the former the mentor and mentee have the same status, and in the latter the mentor is in a senior position, or sometimes in a junior position (Merriam, 1983; Coutu, 2000). As indicated earlier, this is one of the critical issues I will address in this study.

The reference group position or social identity conceptualisation seems to sit well with mentoring in the social services because the ‘social self’ is normally defined in terms of group loyalties (Rosengberg, 1979; Merton, 1968). However, the core idea of ‘orientation to change’ is applicable to educational mentoring too. The ‘hopes’, ‘motivations’, ‘aspirations’, ‘wants’ and ‘expectations’ that the dyad bring into the

relationship have far reaching consequences for its success or failure in terms of what is learned.

The other concept that I find more radical is the mentoring mechanisms which Pawson (2004) considers as ‘the resource that is intended to bring about change.’ These are categorised into (i) positional resources (advocacy); (ii) attitudinal resources (coaching); (iii) cognitive resources (direction setting); (iv) emotional resources (affective contacts).

I will here quote copiously Pawson’s (2004:11) poetic rendition of the explanations of the schema for the mentoring mechanisms.

‘Starting at the bottom, it is apparent that some mentors see their primary role as offering the hand of friendship: they work in the affective domain trying to make mentees feel differently about themselves. Others provide cognitive resources, offering advice and a guiding hand through the difficult choices confronting the mentee. Still others place hands on the mentees’ shoulders – encouraging, pushing and coaxing their protégés into practical gains, skills and qualifications. And in the uppermost box, some mentors grab the mentees’ hands, introducing them to this network, sponsoring them in that opportunity, using the institutional wherewithal at their disposal. In all cases the **mentoring relationship** takes root, and change begins only if the mentee takes willingly the hand that is offered’ [emphasis mine].

The mentor, from this, encourages, advises, guides, befriends and sponsors mentees. Pawson’s (2004) mentoring mechanisms, as explained above, correspond to Kram’s (1988) two broad functions within mentoring: career functions, including sponsorship and coaching and psychosocial functions, including friendship, counselling, and role modelling. The difference here is that while Pawson (2004) refers to these as strategies, Kram (1988) discusses them under functions. An understanding of these is critical to this study since it should be clear what strategies the dyad would use to bring about ‘change’; that is, learning in the relationships. This leads to the examination of types of mentoring relationships as the relationship type determines how learning is negotiated in the relationship.

2.10 Types of mentoring relationships

I will discuss the types of mentoring relationships along what Maynard and Furlong in Kerry, T. & Shelton Mayes (1995) refer to as models of mentoring and Storrs, Putsche and Taylor (2008) call metaphors of mentoring relationships. These relationship types will in turn determine the type of support that will be available in the relationship and the type of learning that will take place between the mentor and the mentee.

2.10.1 Apprenticeship or transmission mentor-mentee relationship

This resembles the traditional master craftsman-apprentice relationship. Wang & Odell (2007:476) refers to it as the ‘situated apprenticeship’ perspective of mentor-novice relationships. In this relationship the mentor is considered a repository of academic and professional expertise (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, in Wang & Odell, 2007). The mentee is to study the mentor’s teaching style and emulate or imitate it. So, this relationship is characterised by ‘some degree of hierarchy and paternalism (Mac Kinnon, 2004) cited in Storrs et al, (2008:178). That is, position and power dominate the relationship. This type of relationship if not handled well may result in a dependency situation and will not allow the mentee the opportunity to take initiatives and try new strategies. There will thus be a teacher professional identity problem. As Wang & Odell (2007) also note, this type of relationship serves to sustain existing teaching practices and norms instead of transforming the existing culture and practice.

In practice, from my professional experience, this type of relationship cannot be avoided entirely. It must always be the initial learning stage. This is what Maynard and Furlong (1995:10-24) refer to as the ‘learning to see’ stage in their ‘Apprenticeship model’ of mentoring. While the mentor tries to let the mentee get the sense of what is there, it must be done collaboratively; joint planning, teaching of identified components of lessons, and then discussing these actions together. This is what Lave & Wenger (1991) call peripheral participation in pedagogic practices and criticise the practice where mentees once placed in a mentor’s classroom are frequently expected to participate rapidly and independently as

teachers with responsibility for the delivery of the curriculum to children. This relationship, in my view, is critical in helping the mentee gain some confidence and self-esteem before being left to explore. This relationship, if properly managed will eventually lead to an ‘interdependency’ type of relationship (Storrs et al: 2008:180) or the ‘competency model’ of Maynard and Furlong (1995:10-240).

2.10.2 The collaborative mentor-mentee relationship

Young, Alvermann, Kaste, Henderson, and Many (2004:32) defined mentoring relationships as ‘interdependent’ when both mentors and mentees support and learn from one another.

According to them:

‘interdependency suggests a mentoring relationship in which the mentor and mentee are connected, while at the same time they are working to maintain or develop a sense of autonomy’.

In this relationship, the traditional mentor-mentee hierarchies are broken down. There is a sense of collegiality and reciprocity; mentor and mentee learn from each other. So, there is joint planning, co-teaching of lessons, and discussion of actions together. This relationship allows experimentation by the mentee. From experience, one of the major challenges facing mentees is how to develop their own styles of teaching.

2.10.3 Reflective mentor-mentee relationship

This relation derives from the collaborative relationship. When this relationship is properly managed, the mentee gradually grows towards autonomy. At this stage the relationship should be characterised by constant dialogue and reflection on teaching and children’s learning. This allows the mentees to develop their own style and philosophy of teaching. As I mentioned earlier on, mentees have to develop their own professional identity. So, the mentor should give emotional and psychological support to the mentee while “leaving the content and approaches to teaching in the hands of ...pre-service teachers” (Wang & Odell, 2007:478). The mentee should be guided to try his/her ideas and approaches to teaching, while constantly reviewing these approaches with the mentor.

According to Glazer et al. (2000), reflective practice requires that teachers reflect on the daily experiences in the classroom, the changes or experiments that they want to implement in the classroom, and their effect on children's learning. The notion of teachers being reflective practitioners has been informed by Schon's (1983), and Eraut's (1994) ideas. Zachary (2002:28) sees mentoring practices shifting from 'a product-oriented model, characterised by transfer of knowledge, to a process-oriented relationship involving knowledge acquisition, application, and critical reflection.'

It must, however, be noted that reflection does not take place in a vacuum. Again, it is not done haphazardly; clear guidelines have to be given on what interns must reflect on as found with UEW's mentoring programme. This makes the reflective activity more systematic, focused and meaningful. This implies that cordiality between mentor and mentee is critical in this relationship to enable mentor and mentee to have constant interactions for reflection and dialogue. In effect, the relationship should be functional with mentor and mentee exhibiting the required behaviours and playing their required roles.

As Ragins, Cotton and Miller (2000:1183) admit, mentoring 'relationships are far more complex and intriguing than [they] originally hypothesised'. That is, there are other hidden dynamics, including human, social and organisational. Tauer (1998) refers to these as the variables of the context of the relationship. What she means here is that mentoring does not occur in a vacuum.

How do these variables impact on the mentoring relationship? I discuss the dynamics of the mentoring relationship and how they may influence the relationship in the section that follows.

2.11 Dynamics of the mentor-mentee relationship

Several variables within the mentoring relationship affect the mentoring process (Hale, 2000). The dynamics of the mentor-mentee relationship are, therefore, worthwhile to investigate because of their importance and problematic nature, and

the potential insights they provide into the concept of learning to teach (Graham, 1997). For instance, as noted by Hansford, et al, (2004:30) “...concerning [mentoring] relationships, incompatibility between the mentor and mentee can clearly undermine the mentoring process’. They continue, ‘It seems evident that successful mentoring relationships are more likely when mentors and mentees are carefully matched in terms of professional expertise and personality’.

Although I do not fully subscribe to a ‘fit match’ of mentor/mentee for a successful mentor-mentee relationship; since no two individuals may have exactly the same personal traits, the point made is valid that there are dynamics in the mentor-mentee relationship that can make or mar it. In circumstances of conflicting values and expectations, for example, a positive and productive mentoring relationship cannot be established. Without a relationship where each person values the other, and makes a connection with the other, the quality of the mentoring will be affected.

Thus, successful mentoring relationships have been recognised as central to mentee learning (Ricks, 1997). Ferrier-Kerr (2009: 290) emphasises that the relationship between mentor and mentee is a ‘crucial aspect of the practicum experience in pre-service teacher education’. In other words, the quality of the relationships between student teachers and mentors is of crucial importance in mediating the quality of teaching practices. But as Hawkey (1997:325) has noted, many studies do not focus on the ‘intricacies’ of the relationship between mentors and mentees which is what this study proposes to do.

Admittedly, some studies have examined and analysed the intricacies of mentoring interactions; how mentoring relationships operate between the mentor and the mentee, how and what mentees learn from their mentoring experiences, and the various stages that relationship goes through (Glickman & Bay, 1990; Kram, 1983; Martin, 1994). But again, as Hawkey (1997) argues, mentoring relationships are much more complex than these studies suggest.

Tauer (1998) conducted a thorough study on mentor-mentee relationships in the school setting, using case study methodology and gathering data through multiple interviews, observations and attendance at mentor-mentee meetings. She found that the mentor-mentee relationship is complex and unpredictable, varying according to the design and structure of the particular mentoring programme with the context of the relationship being very critical to the health of the relationship. As far as the context is concerned Tauer (1998) identified three variables impacting on it as (1) personalities of the participants (2) the structure of the mentor programme and (3) community, district and school environment.

From my professional experience, this to a large extent, has some truth. For instance, in a programme where the mentor is at the same time an assessor, the type of relationship that will be negotiated will be different from the one where the mentor is only a guide. In the former, it is likely that some amount of power and dependency dynamics will be exhibited (Scandura, 1998). In what follows I explore the implications of each of the variables on the mentoring relationship.

2.11.1 Mentor programme variables

Clutterbuck (2004: 27) argues that formal mentoring programmes involve (a) a clear purpose (b) a sense of direction (c) specific goals (d) support for mentor and mentee (e) training for mentor and mentee (f) an appropriate environment and (g) on-going review. Mentor programme variables that affect mentor-mentee relationships include the purpose or goals of the programme, guidelines for the stakeholders of the programme (Ganser, 2000; mentor training (Evertson & Smithey, 2000; Ganser, 2000; Sweeny, 2000).

Goals of the programme

The purpose or goals give direction to the stakeholders. UEW has clearly spelt out in its revised Student Internship Handbook (SIH, 2009:9-10) the goals and objectives of the programme which are to: (a) establish a reciprocal, collaborative, and developing relationship with schools/colleges (b) foster the development of a professional learning community where everyone involved can benefit through

collaboration, cross-fertilisation and reflection (c) facilitate school improvement through the development of a mentoring force in schools, whereby teacher mentors become change agents (d) provide opportunities for interns to develop practical understanding of the major teachers' roles as well as the skills required to perform them (e) provide opportunities for interns to broaden their experiences, understanding and awareness of the realities of teaching, among others. The aim of making explicit these goals is to give focus and direction to the programme so that participants and programme implementers will not be in doubt as to what is expected to be achieved by the programme.

Mentor-mentee roles and qualities

Guyton (1989) and McGee (2001) agree that mentors and mentees who know and understand their own and each other's roles are more likely to support the growth of the professional relationship during the practicum. This is based on the fact that different roles give rise to different relationships, responsibilities and tasks. In the light of this, UEW has specific guidelines for all the stakeholders of its internship programme (mentors, mentees, heads of partnership schools and University supervisors (SIH, 2009: 20-27)). The guidelines cover qualities and responsibilities of a good mentee, qualities and responsibilities of a mentor and guidelines for heads of partnership schools and University supervisors. It is envisaged that with these clearly spelt out, the mentee, the mentor and the personnel in the partnership schools will be clear in their minds about the roles they have to play to achieve the stated goals.

Mentor training

Mentor training has been found to be very critical to successful mentoring (Evertson & Smithey, 2000; Ganser, 2000;). The University of Education, Winneba's mentor training programme is informed by the goals of the programme. As such the training focuses on skills development in the areas of counselling, supervision, reflective practice, the mentoring role, active learning strategies, conferencing skills and action research. As explained in the introduction, the training is to ensure that the programme does not lack direction and commitment

from its stakeholders. How effective the training is and how mentors and mentees see its benefits in relation to their relationship, however, is unclear.

Programme evaluation

As Ostroff (1991) comments, evaluation of the effectiveness of programmes is critical because without it, organisations have no good way to know whether programme objectives are being achieved or not. Phillips (1991) also points out that, evaluating the effectiveness of programmes has several benefits. For instance, it can serve as a diagnostic device to allow the revision of programmes to meet programme goals and objectives. Thus, evaluation is the cornerstone for any programme improvement. It is a powerful tool that can be used to inform and strengthen innovative educational programmes such as a school-based mentoring programme. It can be used to find out, for instance, whether interns are better prepared now for the teaching profession than before. Apart from mentor programme variables, mentor and mentee characteristics are also important variables that determine the quality of the mentoring relationship.

2.11.2 Participant variables

No matter how well programme aims and objectives are stated and how well mentors are trained and motivated, certain personal factors of the dyad determine to a large extent the quality of mentoring that will be offered. Key among these from my professional experience are the needs of both mentors and mentees, role definitions, perceived benefits of mentoring for both, and personality characteristics (Ganser, 1996; Feiman-Nemser, 1996). The literature acknowledges that mentors sometimes act in their own interests and employ distancing and manipulative behaviour (Scandura, 1998; Feldman, 1999; Eby, McManus, Simon and Russell, 2000).

From my professional experience of managing an in-service teacher mentoring programme, I have come to see the need to focus on the dynamics of the personalities in the relationship. It is, for instance, important to explore the perceptions of the mentors regarding their mentorship of old and experienced

mentees and how old and experienced mentees feel being mentored by young and relatively inexperienced mentors. It will also be instructive to find out the intricacies of same-sex and opposite-sex mentoring.

Gender

The literature suggests that gender is a potentially important determination of the quality and nature of mentoring relationships (Kram, 1984; Ragins, 1999; Noe, 1988; Pompper & Adams, 2006; Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). According to Kram (1985), mentors and mentees in cross-gender relationships may try to avoid the appearance of intimacy by restricting social roles that involve informal activities after work. Since the relationship will be constrained to formal relationship, the friendship element in mentoring relationships will be absent. They will also try to reduce sexual tensions and concerns by reverting to parental roles of father-daughter. Clawson & Kram (1985) and Noe (1988a) also assert that role modelling may be restricted in cross-gender mentoring relationships.

In trying to explain the situation, Ragins & McFarlin (1990: 324) think cross-gender relationships are subject to public scrutiny, gossip and discrediting sexual comments or suggestions. As a result, these sexual concerns may make mentors and mentees in such relationships restrict the friendship role, which involves trust, support and intimacy. Shea (1992) also suggests that cross-gender mentoring is a potential problem area because of the issues of gossip, envy, suspicion, speculation, false assumptions, sexual stereotypes and charges of sexual harassment. Similarly, in the Ghanaian society, relationships between the opposite sexes are normally characterised by suspicion and gossip. Again, in some parts of Ghana, there is this male dominance culture. Men being mentored by women in such areas may feel losing face.

According to Pompper & Adams (2006:309) ‘...relationship quality tends to suffer when gender difference is inconsistent with social norms. They are supported by Armstrong et al (2002) who also argue that the female mentor – male mentee dyad seems to yield the least comfort for both mentor and mentee because this cross-

gender dyad reverses traditional gender roles. Here, I think, they are alluding to gender stereotyping that regards males as superior to females.

Cross-gender mentoring is the norm of UEWs mentoring relationships since there are more male mentors than female mentors. It is significant for this study to find out how it plays out in the mentoring relationships of this programme. However, I think it is worthwhile to consider this proposal put forward by Clawson & Kram (1984: 25). For them, ‘taking an active part in the growth and development of a subordinate can result in growing concern, liking and admiration. Channelling these feelings into a productive professional relationship without falling into the pitfalls caused by excessive intimacy require thoughtful management’. What they imply here is that the dyad needs to be tactful, mature and transparent in their dealings with each other.

Age

Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & McKee (1978) suggest that if a mentor is much older than the mentee, the relationship may assume qualities of parent-child relationship and encourage dependency. If the mentor is too close in age to the mentee, the relationship may assume that of intimate friends and affect the mentoring role. They, therefore, suggested that for effective mentoring the mentor should usually be older than the mentee by about 8-15 years to avoid too much psychological distance. Nevertheless, Levinson et al (1978) did acknowledge that a successful mentoring relationship involving a younger mentor is possible, but that such a relationship may demand special qualities.

Again, Kram (1985) identified the dynamic of distance between mentor and mentee (hierarchical distance (Hale, 2000)) as a dynamic in the mentoring relationship. Mendleson, Barnes, & Hong (1989) have also found age to be a dynamic in the relationship. Finkelstein, Allen & Rhoton (2003) add that in mentorship with greater age diversity, less psychosocial mentoring (friendship, counselling, role modelling) may be provided than in those with less age diversity. This relationship scenario pertains in UEWs programme. Young graduate teachers

mentor old experienced in-service teachers who are now pursuing undergraduate programmes because a first degree is a requirement to qualify as a mentor.

My position on this age dynamic is that I agree with (Zachary, 2002) that commitment on the part of the dyad to make the relationship work is crucial to the success of the relationship. Age and status, as well as experience barriers can be overcome by a determined dyad with clear goals for the relationship.

2.11.3 School environment variables

Apart from the mentor programme and participant variables, school environment variables such as mentor selection/matching, proximity of the mentor/mentee (Tauer, 1996), access to resources (Chester, 1992), role of the school personnel especially, the head of the partnership school (Brock & Grady, 1998), and opportunities for collaboration (Feiman-Nemser, 1996) all impact on the mentor-mentee relationship.

Mentor-mentee matching

From my professional experience, matching of mentor and mentee is critical to the mentoring relationship. I have had situations where mentors and mentees had to be changed due to incompatibility. Feiman-Nemser (1996) has questioned whether mentees must choose their mentors or mentors must be chosen for mentees by third parties. In programmes that mentees do not have the opportunity to select their mentors as UEWs, it will be difficult to match mentor/mentee personality trait by personality trait. In UEWs programme, the school-based mentors are selected by their respective head teachers. This appears to be problematic. The observation by Hansford, et al, (2004:30) is very critical in such circumstances. As they note, "...concerning [mentoring] relationships, incompatibility between the mentor and mentee can clearly undermine the mentoring process'. They continue, 'It seems evident that successful mentoring relationships are more likely when mentors and mentees are carefully matched in terms of professional expertise and personality'.

Proximity of the mentor-mentee

The distance between the classroom of the mentee and the mentor may determine the level and quality of collaboration and support provided. Tauer (1996) indicates that physical proximity and grade level proximity are important variables in the mentoring relationship.

Access to resources

As regards access to resources, Ghanaian classrooms are virtually bare. Mentees are, therefore, as part of their enculturation into the school system, required to improvise teaching/learning resources as much as possible. It is part of the preparation to prevent them going through what Lewin & Stuart (2003) refer to as the ‘reality shock.’ If these dynamics are properly handled, the mentoring relationship should fulfil its various functions. What are the intended functions of mentoring then?

2.12 Types of mentoring functions

Mentoring functions are variously classified. Levinson (1978: 99) sees the mentor as:

[A] person [who] acts as teacher, sponsor, counsellor, developer of skills and intellect, host, guide, exemplar and one who supports and facilitates the realisation of the young man’s dream.

Levinson (1978) from the description above sees the mentor’s primary function as providing counselling and support to the mentee when necessary. The mentor is also a teacher, sponsor, and a host of the mentee. In addition, the mentor is to guide the mentee while in the new occupation or profession. The mentor should be an exemplar or role model for the mentee and help facilitate the realisation of whatever dream or ambition the mentee might have.

To Zey (1984: 7), the mentor:

‘...oversees the career and development of another person, usually a junior, through teaching, counselling, providing psychological support, protecting and at times promoting or sponsoring. The mentor may perform any or all of the above functions during the mentor relationship.

The only difference between these roles and those of Levinson (1978) is that Zey (1984) gives the mentor the option to choose which roles to perform. The same emphasis is on the mentor advancing the career and professional goals of the mentee.

To me, the most comprehensive and pioneering study of mentoring functions was the one done by Kram (1988) who broadly classifies mentoring functions under (a) career functions, which involve sponsorship and coaching, protection, exposure-and-visibility, and challenging work assignments and (b) psychosocial functions, which include friendship, acceptance-and-confirmation, counselling, and role modelling. Kram (1988), commenting on the career functions states that career function benefits, including enhanced career advancement come about largely from the experience, seniority, and the rank of the mentor in the profession. This assertion, to me, is problematic since as has been alluded to elsewhere, there are younger mentors who are mentoring more experienced and older mentees.

Anderson and Shannon (1988) also propose five mentoring functions as (a) teaching (b) sponsoring (c) encouraging (d) counselling and (e) befriending. These seem to agree with Kram's (1988) functional categories. Aryee et al. (1996) in McDowall-Long (2004) distinguish between (a) functional aspects and (b) outcomes. The functional aspects are further classified into career-oriented functions and psychosocial functions. The career oriented functions include sponsorship, coaching, protection, challenging and exposure (Ragins & Cotton, 1999), while the psychosocial functions include confirmation and acceptance, counselling, friendship and role modelling. Ballantine & Nunns (1998), and Parnell (1998) also identify sociological and cultural organisational functions where experienced mentors ensure that new entrants to professions meet high quality standards (Covan, 2000).

Corresponding to these functions are the (a) career-oriented outcomes, which include, career maturity, better job performance, and improved career satisfaction (Barnes, 2002) in McDowall-Long, 2004), (b) psychosocial outcomes, which include

improved self-concept, improved interpersonal relationships, better psychosocial adjustment to career and life transitions (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002, in McDowall-Long, 2004), and (c) organisational outcomes, which include the maintenance of a skilled labour force and internal culture (Parnell, 1998, in McDowall-Long, 2004).

These functions and outcomes are what one should expect to find in an ideal mentoring situation. But what are the realities? It is not known how applicable these are to teacher education programmes in sub-Saharan African contexts like Ghana. It should, therefore, not be surprising if it emerges that not all these functions could be found in a mentoring experience. This is confirmed by Yau (1995:48) who says “There is no one model of mentoring” because “the role of the mentor carries a variety of definitions within different contexts; and that “the role of the mentor and the whole meaning of the process of mentoring is indefinite and unlimited”. Hansford et al (2004) report that in an Australian study by Ballantyne, Hansford and Packer (1995:303) they noted that mentors “were out of touch with and antagonistic towards the progressive techniques that (students) had learned during their pre-service education”.

What I want to draw attention to here is that we should remember that these role definitions are coming from practitioners and theorists with different occupational backgrounds. For example, Zey and Clutterback are from the business world. As such, they define the mentoring role from the business perspective. A youth mentoring practitioner or theorist will also define the roles differently. That is why one finds in one context that the mentor is a surrogate parent (Clutterback, 1991: 47) and in another context the mentor is not a parent or crypto-parent (Levinson, 1978: 99). The implication is that mentoring roles are dynamic and contextual. In teacher education, as explained in 2.5. and 2.6, the mentoring relationship should be a collaborative one, which fosters collegiality and sharing of experiences.

Another area of interest in this study is that although the mentor functions identified above give a good picture of the roles mentors play and their outcomes, it is argued in the literature that little is known about how mentors actually

perform these roles in mentoring relationships. Rix & Gold (2000), for instance, argue that there should be a greater focus on the process of mentoring instead of the roles of mentors. This, to them, will enable us understand what actually goes on in mentoring relationships. They argue:

Despite the growing popularity of the idea and practice of mentoring, there remains continuing ambiguity over the meaning of the term and mystification about what actually happens within the process (Rix & Gold, 2000: 48).

This is in agreement with this study which seeks to find out from the perspectives of mentors and mentees what actually goes on in their relationships. How do they establish the relationship? What do they learn and how do they learn what they learn?

Learning has been recognised as an important objective and outcome of the mentor-mentee relationship (Singh, et al, 2002, cited in Hezlett, 2005), how then do mentees learn in the mentoring relationship? What learning strategies do mentees adopt and what learning opportunities do mentors offer mentees? In the section that follows, I explore mentoring practices or strategies that the mentor and mentee adopt to negotiate activities in the relationship.

2.13 Mentoring practices

Among the mentoring practices identified by some studies that have investigated what mentors actually do in mentoring relationships are the following: (a) open self-disclosure (Galbraith & Cohen, 1996; Johnson, 2003) (b) respect and concern for mentees and their growth (Cunningham & Eberle, 1993; Fassinger, 1997; Galbraith & Cohen, 1996; Johnson, 2003) (c) listening to the mentee (Galbraith & Cohen, 1996; Johnson, 2003), (d) initiating and maintaining regular contact (Morrison-Beedy, Aronowitz, Dyne, & Mkandawire, 2001; Jackson et al., 2003) and (e) being accessible to the protégé (Cunningham & Eberle, 1993).

Good mentoring practices require that the mentor should be an expert with rich content, practical and pedagogic content knowledge (Berliner, 2000). Mentors are, therefore, regarded as sources of knowledge for the mentee (Roberts, 2000). As far

as interpersonal relationships are concerned, good mentoring practices must be characterised by trust, mutual recognition, collaboration, care and support (McIntyre & Hagger, 1996). Clutterback (1991) argues that the mentor must be ready to invest time and effort into the relationship.

Kerry & Mayes (1995) identified the following strategies that mentors use to facilitate mentee's professional learning, depending on the type of relationship that has been established. These include, modelling, informing, confirming, disconfirming, prescribing and questioning mentees' practices. Tomlinson (1995) also identified the following learning strategies that mentees use in the relationship; observation of mentors' teaching, teaching and reflecting on their own teaching, and collaborative teaching with mentor. These strategies depart from the traditional teaching – learning strategies used in traditional institutional contexts. These mirror active learning strategies, which require active engagement with and reflection on the teaching – learning process by mentor and mentee.

What informs the teaching–learning strategies adopted in mentoring relationships? I review literature on some theoretical considerations that inform how learning takes place in mentoring relationships.

2.14 Learning to teach in mentoring relationships

As indicated above on learning in mentoring relationships, Zachary (2002:28) also underscores the important place of learning in mentoring. “Learning is the fundamental process, purpose, and product of mentoring”. Roberts (2000) also recognises that mentoring is a teaching and learning process. What they mean is that learning underpins mentoring. To get an insight into the nature of learning to teach in mentoring relationships, it will be worthwhile to consider what Borko & Mayfield (1995:501) say about the experience.

According to them:

Learning to teach is a complex process determined by the interaction of personal factors, such as the prospective teachers' knowledge and beliefs about teaching, learning, and subject matter; and situational factors such

as expectations, demands, and feedback from key actors in the university and public schools settings.

In practice, in a teacher mentoring programme, student teachers interact with their mentors and other professionals in the school community to get a sense of what it means to be a teacher. This learning process is shaped by personal factors such as personalities, styles and values (Tang, 2004). This agrees with Putman & Borko (2000) who find interactions with people to be the major determinants in what is learned. But, as Graham (2006) noted, the role of the mentor in bringing about this learning is not fully understood. What pedagogic principles underlie the learning relationships? What is the content and process of mentee learning?

Zachary (2002:28) argues that, “If mentoring relationships are to be truly learner centred, the mentor must facilitate learning by applying what is known about how adults learn to enhance the mentoring experience”. The implication is that mentors need to be aware of adult learning principles since mentoring, in most teacher mentoring cases, involves a learning relationship between adults. Mentoring, based on adult learning principles, can be viewed as guided learning. A critical examination of the career and psychosocial functions of mentoring and the roles mentors are expected to play to provide career and psychosocial support for mentees as discussed earlier require a combination of a range of adult learning theories. A brief examination of some of these theories will aid the understanding of the issues involved.

2.14.1 Andragogy

Andragogy is an adult learning theory widely attributed to Knowles (1980) and Knowles, Holton, & Swanson (1998). In this theory, they claim that adults learn best in a cooperative or collaborative relationship; that is, when they are involved in joint diagnosing, planning, implementation, and evaluation of their own learning; that adults need a supportive environment that promotes learning; that they should be self-directed in the learning process; that adults learn best when they know why they need to learn something; that they have a richer resource of experience than children to guide them in the learning of new experiences; that

adults desire immediate application of what they learn; and that adults learn best when they are motivated both extrinsically and intrinsically. So how can these theories be applied to the real world of mentoring?

Implications of the principles for mentoring

Andragogy as an adult learning theory has been criticised in the literature for its assumption that all adult learners will accept the participatory learning approach (Pratt, 1993); for not considering the gender perspective of the theory (Tisdell, 1998) for whether the principles are evidence-based (Rachell, 2002). Despite these criticisms, it can be deduced that the principles are in consonance with best mentoring practices. For example, mentors are supposed to guide their mentees to acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions they need to become what they want to become. Joint planning, team teaching, regular conferencing for task diagnosing should characterise the learning process. Mentors should create the needed climate for mentees to learn; such as approachability, availability, rapport and friendliness. There should be sharing of experiences for refinement, enrichment, growth and generativity. These tie in with UEWs mentoring programme goals and guidelines (SIH, 2009).

2.14.2 Social learning theory

The social learning theory of Bandura (1977) emphasizes the importance of observing and modelling the behaviours and attitudes of others. Among its principles are that ‘individuals are more likely to adopt a modelled behaviour if it results in outcomes they value; and that individuals are more likely to adopt a modelled behaviour if the model is similar to the observer and has admired status and the behaviour has functional value’ (Bandura, 1977:22).

Implications for Mentoring

This theory has been argued to offer a theoretical rationale for the positive outcomes observed in mentoring relationships (Gibson, 2004). According to Hezlett (2005), observational learning is consistent with research on the nature of assistance mentors give to their mentees. Mentees observe the professional

behaviours of their mentors who are supposed to be their role models and learn from them. Role modelling, which fulfils a psychosocial function in mentoring, therefore, features prominently in this theory. But two issues arise here. First, for high quality learning in such a situation, the role model must be competent (Bandura, 1977). Second, there is the tendency for mentees to end up just imitating their mentors without subjecting what they observe to critical reflection. This tendency seems to have been taken care of in Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning.

2.14.3 Experiential learning

Kolb (1984) developed the experiential learning theory. It is composed of four elements; concrete experience, observation of and reflection on that experience, formation of abstract concepts based upon the reflection, and testing the new concepts. Experiential learning theory defines learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984: 41). In other words, experiences provide the basis for observations and reflection. These observations and reflections are then assimilated into abstract concepts that result in new implications for action which, in turn, create new experiences. In effect, it is cyclical.

Implications for mentoring

Jarvis (1992) quoted in Garvey & Alred (2000) argues that Kolb's experiential learning model is too simplistic because in reality learning may be far more complex than what the cycle suggests. Garvey & Alred (2000:219) think 'conditions and environment needs [sic] to be conducive to learning'. They again cite 'the influence and power of the social context in the learning processes, as factors that can impact on the learning. All the same, this theory is relevant to the mentoring process in that, observation of actions and reflection on action and in action (Schon, 1984) are key activities for the dyad in the mentoring relationship. Observation and reflection, in my view, are authentic ways of constructing and deconstructing knowledge (Bruner, 1966).

Another adult learning theory that I find relevant for the mentoring process is Brookfield's (1986) theory of facilitation.

2.14.4 The theory of facilitation

This theory states that 'Facilitators of learning see themselves as resources for learning, rather than as didactic instructors who have all the answers' (Brookfield, 1986:63). For this theory, facilitators must (a) establish a climate conducive to learning (2) involve learners in planning how and what they will learn (c) encourage learners to formulate their own learning objectives (d) encourage learners to identify and utilize a variety of resources to accommodate their objectives and (e) help learners implement and evaluate their learning (Zachary, 2002:28). Thus the heart of facilitation is about the process of helping people to explore, learn and change.

Implications for mentoring

This theory is consistent with the other adult learning theories which stress the self-directed nature of adult learning. Mentors creating a functional working relationship and utilising the power of questioning, listening and giving feedback, can speed mentees on in their learning in mentorship.

What all these theories seem to suggest is that the mentoring process is characterised by self directed learning, critical reflection and experiential learning. As experts, mentors provide authentic, experiential learning opportunities as well as an intense interpersonal relationship through which social learning takes place. The psychosocial function of mentoring is a form of relational learning, the value of which is increasingly being recognized in a less hierarchical, team environment. Mentoring supports much of what is currently known about how individuals learn, including the socially constructed nature of learning and the importance of experiential, situated learning experiences (Kerka, 1997).

From the discussions above, learning in mentoring relationships should be underpinned by an integrated adult learning theory informed by Knowles' (1980)

Andragogy; Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, which incorporates aspects of Vygotsky's (1978) Social Development Theory, Lave's (1991) Situated Learning Theory, as well as Bruner's (1966, 1986, 1990, 1996) Constructivist Theory; Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, which also mirrors aspects of Schon's (1984) reflective practice; and Brookfield's (1986) Theory of Facilitation.

Summary

In the light of the review, mentoring in teacher education may be conceptualised as a professional relationship between pre-service/newly qualified teachers/upgrading student teachers (mentees) and practising teachers (mentors) in which they share their professional knowledge and skills. The relationship is characterised by mutual care, respect, cooperation, collaboration, collegiality, reciprocity, approachability, availability, rapport, and friendliness, among others. The mentoring process associated with this conception is characterised by self-directed learning, experiential learning and critical reflection through mentor guidance, counselling, and support, joint planning, team teaching, observation, conferencing and reflection. The relationship experience enriches the professional and personal life of both mentor and mentee and leads to professional growth and renewal, as well as identity formation and transformation.

Thus, the conceptual framework for mentoring for this study as revealed by the literature review may be represented as follows.

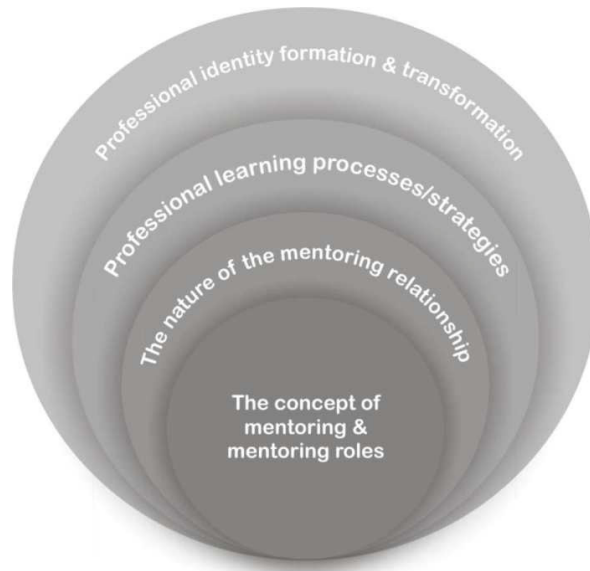


Fig. 2.1 The conceptual framework for mentoring

From the figure above, the conceptions of mentoring and mentoring roles determine how the mentoring relationships develop, evolve and are sustained or maintained. The type and health of the relationship will, invariably, determine the professional learning activities in the relationship. All these, ultimately, lead to professional learning and growth by both student teachers and teacher mentors.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Mentoring is the dance of spiralling generations,
in which the old empower the young with their experience
and the young empower the old with new life
Parker J. Palmer (1998)

3.1 Introduction

This study aimed to investigate mentors' and mentees' perceptions of their experiences of teacher professional learning in the mentoring relationships they established during their internship period. From the previous chapter it was argued that in mentoring, the quality of the relationship is critical since mentoring is essentially about learning in a social context (Garvey & Alred, 2000). In the light of this, there is the need for research into the complexity of the mentor-mentee relationship to unravel the intricacies of the relationship and how they impact on the professional learning of both mentor and mentee. To achieve this, a research methodology that can handle all the ramifications of mentoring relationships in relation to teacher professional learning is needed.

This chapter, therefore, describes and explains the considerations made to develop a research methodology that is appropriate in answering the research questions posed earlier. It provides the rationale for the choice of a methodological framework, research design, criteria for the selection of the cases, methods of data collection and analysis. It also describes the research process in terms of research site and informants, data sources, strategies used to collect data, data analysis processes, measures taken to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the data and other ethical implications.

3.2 Methodological framework

In developing an approach to this study, it was important to clarify the theoretical perspectives underpinning it. As Crotty (1998:10) states, '...each theoretical perspective embodies a certain way of understanding *what is* (ontology) as well as a certain way of understanding *what it means to know* (epistemology)'. In light of

this, Lincoln & Guba (2000) express the need for researchers to make explicit both their ontological and epistemological assumptions before embarking on any research project. These assumptions will shape the nature of the problems perceived, the questions that will be posed, and the decisions that will be made throughout the research process. Pryor & Gharney Ampiah (2003) and Dunne, Pryor and Yates (2005) ask for even micro political, macro political, practical and ethical issues, to be considered as they invariably influence a researcher's methodology. In what follows, therefore, I briefly discuss my epistemological as well as my ontological stance as these influenced the conduct of the study and the interpretations of the results.

Epistemology

Epistemologically, I adopt the position of interpretivist constructivism (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Erickson, 1990). This perspective is concerned with subjective knowledge and understanding which is personally experienced and, therefore, unique to the individual. The emphasis in this study is the interpretation and understanding of mentors' and mentees' lived experiences, their actions and the contexts in which they are acting. The common themes of the interpretivist constructivist assumptions are that knowledge is constructed by individuals through interactions in the social context (Glaserfeld, 1989; Pope, 1982), and that there is much to be learned from identifying and analysing people's perceptions of their experiences and the meanings they give to them.

With this orientation, as a researcher researching mentoring relationship experiences of mentors and mentees, I am aware of the crucial role that the views of this mentoring dyad play in understanding their world. In trying to understand the nature of the mentoring relationships of the mentors and mentees, I need to ask them to share their subjective perspectives about their mentoring experiences for my interpretation. Also, in the mentoring practices, activities such as pre-observation conferences, observation of teaching, analysis of observation data, and post-observation conferences draw largely on social constructivist learning theory (Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989). So, in terms of epistemology, the interpretive paradigm assumes that people employ interpretive schemes which must be

understood and that the character of the local context must be articulated (Parker, 1999).

Ontology

In respect of ontology, the interpretive ontological assumption is that social reality is contextually and specifically constructed (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). The existence of social reality depends upon human perception (Patton, 2002). This means that there are multiple realities, socially constructed by individuals. Ontologically, I consider a mentoring relationship as a phenomenon or experience which is contextually constructed by each mentor and mentee, and that each mentor may recount a different experience (reality) of the same phenomenon (mentoring relationship) from the other, depending on the context of their experience. In other words, I expect each mentoring experience and the interpretation of each experience to be different because the mentor and mentee are unique individuals in the relationship.

In addition, the representation of meanings takes various forms from verbal symbols such as language to non-verbal symbols such as body posture, gestures, and tone of voice, artefacts and other textual documents. These would be important elements in the interpretation of the meanings and implications of their interactions. It is this which led me to have interest in symbolic interactionism as well. The central theme of symbolic interactionism is that human life is lived in the symbolic domain. Through language and communication, symbols provide the means by which reality is constructed (Mead, 1934; Cooley, 1902; Blumer, 1969). So, symbolic interactionism is well suited to this study.

3.3 Design and methods

In order to study mentoring relationships to understand how they evolve, develop and contribute to teacher professional development, it was necessary to adopt a research design that would give me access to information about the relationships from the people involved in the relationships. Apart from this, I also had to ensure congruity between research methods and techniques and the substantive focus of

the research questions of the study (Tesch, 1989). With these in mind, I chose a qualitative ethnographic case study approach (Yin, 2003) to explore and understand the nature of the mentoring relationships.

3.3.1 Design

Case study design

Case study is variously defined as a method, methodology, or research design (Merriam, 1988; Orum, Feagin, & Sjoberg, 1991; Yin, 2003). In this study, I consider it a research design following Eckstein's (2002:124) definition of a case study as:

a phenomenon for which we report and interpret only a single measure on any pertinent variable.

By this definition, the mentoring relationship is the 'phenomenon' under study and the 'single measure of the pertinent variable' is the dynamics of the relationship.

Yin (2003:13) also sees a case study as:

an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

Yin's (2003:13) definition implies that a case study is a naturalistic ('real-life context') study to delineate the nature of a phenomenon, in this case, the mentoring relationship, through detailed investigation of individual cases and their contexts.

According to Creswell (2003:61), a case study is:

a problem to be studied, which will reveal an in-depth understanding of a "case" or bounded system, which involves understanding an event, activity, process, or one or more individuals.

Creswell's (2003: 61) definition also indicates that a case study is about studying a problem that can lead to the understanding of the system in which the problem is found. The system becomes the case and the researcher chooses 'an event, activity, or process or one or more individuals within the system to illuminate it.' In this

study, the mentoring relationship is the system and the factors that impact on the relationship are the problems within the system which should be investigated to help illuminate the nature of the relationship.

Qualitative research

Several writers have identified what they consider to be the major characteristics of qualitative, or naturalistic, research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990; Eisner, 1991). Among these are that qualitative research places emphasis on understanding phenomena by examining people's words, actions and records. It also seeks to identify the deeper structure and common elements in experiences while valuing the uniqueness of each person's experience. As Berg (2001:3) explains, "Quality refers to the what, how, when, and where of a thing – its essence and ambience. Qualitative research thus refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things." Since my aim, in this study, is to capture a rich and detailed representation of participants' perceptions of the nature of their mentoring relationship and how it impacts on their professional development in the relationship, a qualitative approach is appropriate.

Ethnographic approach

Woods (1998) suggests that as the construction of social interaction is a process, it is important for it to be studied over a period of time. This informed my choice of an ethnographic approach for this study. It provided a framework to examine detailed and contextualised information grounded in a specific context, and provided opportunities to follow up on new directions and new strategies. Ethnographic research is based on the assumptions about the world that multiple realities are socially constructed (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). These views are in tune with social constructivist, interpretivist and symbolic interactionism mentioned above. Ethnographers attempt to understand social phenomena from the perspectives of the participants. The aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. Judged against the characteristics above, this

study falls within the ethnography approach. It aims to understand the meaning mentors and mentees give to the realities of their interactions in their relationships from their own words in their own contexts.

The length of time spent in ethnographic fieldwork, is considered a crucial element for the in-depth ethnographic approach in order to understand and interpret social phenomena (Stake, 2000; Denscombe, 2003). However, it is difficult to determine an ideal length of time to be spent in the fieldwork. Jeffrey and Troman (2004: 26-31) have suggested three ‘ethnographic time modes’: (a) a compressed time mode which ‘involves a short period of intense ethnographic research in which researchers inhabit a research site almost permanently for anything from a few days to a month’ (b) a selective intermittent time mode, where a longer period of time is spent in fieldwork ‘from three months to two years but with a very flexible approach to the frequency of site visits’ and (c) a recurrent time mode, which ‘may aim to gain a picture by sampling the same temporal phases’ such as beginnings and ends of terms and school celebratory periods.

For this study, I adopted the ‘selective intermittent time mode’ as described above by Jeffrey and Troman (2004:26-31). Thus, from Mid-September to Mid-December 2007, I made brief visits to the research setting every other week when the mentees were supposed to settle in and get acclimatised to their schools and familiar with their mentors. Each visit lasted about five hours. From February to June 2008, I visited the school weekly for the interviews and observations. Apart from this, in my position as the Director of the mentoring programme, I have spent substantial time in personal contacts with mentors and mentees in the partnership schools through regular visits to ascertain the health of mentoring in the schools.

3.3.2 Methods

Selection of the cases

Some qualitative researchers state that sample size and sampling are not issues in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Schwandt, 2000) and that case study research especially, is not sampling research (Yin, 2003; Stake, 2000). Erickson

(1990), for instance, argued strongly that the logic of inquiry for interpretive researchers is from the concrete particular to the universal.

However, Leech & Onwuegbuzie (2005) disagree, arguing that most qualitative studies involve some type of analytical generalization. Thus, choosing a sample size and sampling scheme represents an active process of reflection. In support of this view, some researchers have provided sample size guidelines for most of the common qualitative research designs and techniques (Cresswell, 2003). Creswell (2003), for example, recommends that 3-5 participants be used for case study research. I took note of Sandelowski's (1995) advice that sample sizes in qualitative research should not be too small that it is difficult to achieve data saturation, theoretical saturation, or informational redundancy. At the same time, the sample should not be too large that it is difficult to undertake a deep, case-oriented analysis. In other words, selecting cases must be done so as to maximize what can be learned in the period of time available for the study.

Consequently, I selected five pairs of mentor/mentees, using the purposive (Merriam, 1998) sampling method to select participants who match the focus of the study. This enabled me to get what I term 'information-rich' cases to study. In purposive sampling, the researcher selects specific individuals to participate in the study based on identified variables under consideration. Respondents are chosen because they have particular features or characteristics which will enable detailed exploration of the research objectives (Patton, 1990).

In this study, inclusion criteria required that (a) mentors must have been trained by the University (equipped with knowledge, and skills, of mentoring, as well as a positive disposition towards mentoring), (b) mentors must have had, at least, two years' mentoring experience, (c) mentors must have taught for, at least, two years, (d) one of the mentees has more teaching experience than the mentor, (e) one of the mentees is older age-wise than the mentor, (f) there is a same sex and cross sex mentoring relationship.

Data collection

Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis (1976) in Wooldridge (1994) point out that case study is an umbrella term for a family of research methods that come under the tradition of sociological and anthropological fieldwork. In other words, case study methodology is eclectic. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) posit that case studies rely on interviewing, observation, and document analysis. In view of this, the methods that I used for the data collection in this study were semi-structured and unstructured in-depth interviews, personal observations with field-note taking, and review of mentors' observation comments. These methods produced rich information that illuminated the overall aim and focus of the research. This confirmed Merriam's (1998:137) assertion that 'no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective...' The table below shows the data collection methods as they relate to the research questions.

Research questions	Method	Source of Data
1.What are the mentor-mentee conceptions about mentoring and their respective roles in the mentoring relationship?	Interview	Verbal reports from interview
2. How do mentors and mentees develop, establish and sustain their mentoring relationships?	Interview Observation Documentary (Appendix 1-7)	1.Verbal reports from interview 2. Observation
3. How do mentors and mentees negotiate professional learning in mentoring relationships?	Documentary (Appendix 1-7) Interview Observation	1. Verbal report from interview 2.Observation
4. To what extent does the relationship between mentors and mentees shape their professional identity and practice?	Interview Observation	1.Verbal reports from interview 2. Observation
5 What are the implications of the findings for re-conceptualising and re-structuring the UEW mentoring programme?	Data analysis	Findings

Table 3.1 Data Collection Methods

3.3.3 Rationale for the data collection methods used in the study

Interviews

Understanding the experiences of mentors and mentees involved in mentoring relationships from their perspectives required the adoption of a data collection instrument that would allow their voices to be heard. This is consistent with Kvale (1996: 1) who asked, ‘If you want to know how people understand their life, why not ask them?’ Thus, if a researcher wants to hear, to understand an individual, they must provide a way for the individual to speak in a genuine voice.

Patton (1990:196) puts it more succinctly thus,

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe...We cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions. We cannot observe behaviours that took place at some point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of the observer. We cannot observe how people have organised the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective.

Since my aim was to understand the experience of mentors and mentees in their mentoring relationships from their perspectives, the scenario described by Patton (1990) above, mirrors this endeavour and demands the use of interviews as a data collection instrument. The interviews gave me the chance to probe responses and solicit further details from the mentors’ and mentees’ views and perceptions and to follow lines of inquiry that were introduced by them in the course of the interview. They also afforded me the opportunity to provide prompts or cues to assist mentors and mentees in answering the questions and enabled me clarify questions, where and when necessary, and correct any misunderstanding. The interview was, thus, focused and at the same time conversational.

I derived the interview questions from the issues that emerged from the literature, as well as the research questions. According to McCracken (1988) one of the major purposes of the literature review is to aid in the development of the questions to be used in the interview. For example, the mentoring dyad was asked to define mentoring and also comment on the effect of gender, age, and mentor-mentee

proximity on the mentoring relationship as these emerged in the review as variables in the relationship.

Observations

According to Bernard (2000:318), participant observation ‘involves going out and staying out ...and experiencing the lives of the people you are studying as much as you can.’ Bernard (2000:324-325) says that this approach over a period of time has the advantage of collecting valid data as the researcher becomes familiar with the language of the participants. Furthermore, sufficient trust is built up through prolonged and consistent presence at the site. This, according to Bernard (2000:324-325) leads to ‘lower reactivity’; the process whereby informants change their behaviour because they know they are being studied.

In this study, I visited the mentors and mentees at the research site intermittently as explained earlier; observing their teaching, taking part in their conferences and conversations and observing their interactions even outside the classroom and making meaning from what I observed.

Documentary evidence

Woods (1986) and Berg (2001) recommend the judicious use of written materials to support observation and interview. Mentors’ written comments of mentees’ performance both within and outside the classroom on feedback forms used in connection with the internship programme (Appendix1-7) were examined and discussed. The motive underlying the use of documentary evidence is that, for example, reasons may be sought as to why certain comments were written and mentees’ reaction to those comments. From my professional experience, the language used in the comments and the nuances of interpretation underlying the language used, in some cases, will be very significant in pointing out the health of the mentoring relationship and also the kind of professional practice concerns that mentors dwell on.

The researcher's reflective journal

Berg (2001:158) advocates that the researcher should record 'complete, accurate, and detailed field notes' as soon as possible during the field visits as this is the key to successful participant observation. Bernard (2000:364) also suggests the keeping of 'analytic notes' in which 'you lay out your ideas about how you think the culture you are studying is organised.' It was to achieve these purposes that I used the reflective journal. The notes were examined for overt and covert information. I, for instance, noted down how one mentee gave very short answers to questions and was hesitant to give details. This same mentee appeared aloof during post-observation conferences, signalling a non-commitment to what was going on. In the analysis of the interview data, it was revealed that she was in a dysfunctional mentoring relationship.

3.4 The research process

Choosing the research site

The research site for the study was the University Practice Junior High School (formerly, Advanced Preparatory School) at the North Campus of the University of Education, Winneba. It was established in 1984 as a demonstration school for the former Advanced Teacher Training College (ATTC) and adopted by the University in 1992. It is one of the two demonstration schools for the University. Junior High Schools in Ghana are normally accessed by children between the ages 12/13 to 15/16. Because of the proximity of this school to the North Campus of the University, the school draws most of its students from the University Community (children of lecturers, top level and middle level civil/public servants). Significantly, all the teachers in this school are graduates (holders of BEd. degrees) and are either wives or relations of lecturers or other civil/public servants. The unique catchment area and the calibre of staff give the school an edge over other schools in Winneba in terms of student quality resulting in higher student learning achievements.

My motivations for choosing this school, however, were that, first; it is one of the oldest partnership schools of the University. In fact, it was one of the few schools

that were used for the pilot mentoring project. The mentors have, therefore, had quite considerable experience in mentoring UEW student teachers. Also the mentors have been trained and retrained and are, thus, quite well disposed to the mentoring experience. Further, the school is close to the University. Because of this, I could visit the school regularly. Moreover and more importantly, the school has the largest number of mentors and mentees from whom I could select participants who would meet the mentor-mentee selection criteria.

Negotiating access

Because of my close working relationship with the teachers in the school, they are used to my frequent visits to the school as the Director of the University's internship programme. This, therefore, puts them at ease and forestalls any artificial posturing or pretence on the part of both mentors and mentees. More significantly, since most of them are related to lecturers, they are familiar with the research culture. It was, therefore, easy to get their cooperation. Moreover, I had already established rapport through the regular visits to the school. As a result, no formality, even, had to be followed in gaining consent and access to the research site. I only informed the head of the school that I had chosen the school for the study. But for record purposes, I wrote for permission to use the school and the participants for the study. Two issues arise here; one is the seeming power associated with my position which made it easier for me to have access to the site, and the other is the informal nature of dealing with some issues in the Ghanaian context.

Selecting the participants

Since I chose purposive sampling for the selection of the mentors and mentees for the study, I had to get some background information on them. I first consulted our intern placement database to find out how many interns were in the school and how they had been paired. The age and experience could not be found in the data since these are not normally captured. I, therefore, interacted with them informally to get the information. Using the selection criteria indicated earlier. I got the following pairings from the mentors and mentees in the school.

1. A male-female pair, with the mentor older and more experienced than the mentee
2. A male-female pair with the mentor older and more experienced than the mentee
3. A male-male pair with the mentor older and more experienced than the mentee
4. A female-female pair with the mentor younger and less experienced than the mentee.
5. A female-male pair with the mentor younger and less experienced than the mentee

The table below is a summary of the profiles of the participants.

Case	Participants*	Gender	Age	Teaching Experience	Characteristics	Mentoring Experience
Traditional 1	Frank	Male	59	40	Older mentor; Opposite sex; Large experience gap	5
	Hannah	Female	30	9		N/A
Traditional 2	Elvis	Male	42	15	Older mentor; Opposite sex; Moderate experience gap	5
	Edna	Female	33	5		N/A
Traditional 3	Kingsley	Male	51	26	Older mentor; Same sex; Little experience gap	2
	Hanson	Male	43	20		N/A
Non-Traditional 4	Olivia	Female	30	10	Younger mentor; Same sex; Large experience gap	3
	Naomi	Female	42	27		N/A
Non-Traditional 5	Lily	Female	33	11	Younger mentor; Opposite sex; Moderate experience gap	4
	Eric	Male	42	20		N/A

Table 3.2 Mentor-Mentee Profile

***Not real names**

The profile revealed two relationship types; a traditional mentoring relationship of an older more experienced mentor and a younger less experienced mentee, and an emerging relationship of a younger less experienced mentor and an older more

experienced mentee. The age and experience mix is to allow for the possible exhibition of different or diverse relationship characteristics among the participants.

Seeking participant consent

After settling on the pairings, I officially wrote to them through the Headmaster for their consent to participate in the study. The Headmaster was to receive the feedback from them. I later contacted the Head who informed me that they had all consented to participate. I then arranged a meeting with them to let them know more about the study and also to assure them of confidentiality especially, as the interviews were to be tape recorded.

An interesting development, which reinforces the seeming unproblematic nature of gaining the consent of participants of this study, was that after selecting the sample that met the criteria, the mentors who did not meet the criteria were not pleased that they could not be part of the research. Some confronted me to find out whether their exclusion meant that they were not good mentors. Others wanted to find out whether I chose only my favourites. I had to explain to them, in detail, the criteria for the selection and the rationale for the criteria before they accepted to be excluded. This allayed the concerns of those I did not select. What it goes to show is the general willingness to participate in the study which may be due to the cooperative institutional relationship that the programme had built with the school.

The significant message here seems to be an indication of the somehow unproblematic nature of getting the consent of people to take part in a research project in some contexts. This seems to contrast sharply with other jurisdictions where getting consent can be a very protracted process of negotiation and bureaucratic form filling. Although, there was a high degree of interest, ethical principles with respect to the research was applied very rigorously, particularly in seeking both verbal and written consent, and anonymising all the respondents so their identity could not be traced.

The process of data collection

This started from September 2007 as part of the normal visits and observations. The interviews, however, started from February 2008 when it was believed that relationships had been negotiated and normalised. The data collection ended formally at the end of June 2008.

Interview procedures

I developed an interview protocol based on the research questions (Dunne, Pryor and Yates, 2005) and some issues from the literature review (See Appendix 8 for interview guide). The interview protocol or guide was prepared to ensure that basically the same information was obtained from each participant. Also, interview guides ensure good use of limited interview time; they make interviewing more systematic and comprehensive; and they help to keep interactions focused.

Before embarking on in-depth interviews, a pilot interview was held with a male mentor and a female mentee. The aim was to refresh my interview skills and also fine-tune the interview questions. It was also to help me determine how long each interview would take. For example, after the pilot I had to change the first question which asked, 'Share a little about yourself' to 'How would you describe yourself?' because they had a problem answering it as they appeared not to be familiar with that expression. Again, I realised the interview took too long; almost 2 hours. So, I deleted questions that seemed to elicit similar responses as others.

As Yin (2003) has indicated, qualitative interviews, normally, take place privately, in naturalistic settings comfortable to the interviewee. So, I ensured that the physical context was conducive to effective interviews. The interviews were, therefore, conducted under shade trees where the teachers normally sit to relax, and socialise when they have breaks. I audio taped all the interviews and later transcribed verbatim although Lincoln and Guba (1985: 241) argue that the tape recorder can be intrusive and there is the possibility of technical failure. However, people are used to recording, and do not find it intrusive because of the use of the mobile phone in recording varied events, including speech. For example, the mentees are required to have either a video or audio recording of one of their

teaching sessions for reflective practice. So, it was not an intimidating experience. Again, from experience, recording interviews has the advantage of capturing data more accurately and hurriedly than writing notes. It also made it easier for me to focus on the interview. Moreover, it ensured that whatever was said could be preserved for analysis. In the course of the interviews I took notes to indicate areas for further probing. To forestall any technical hitches, I had a spare audio recorder handy. Each first main interview lasted about an hour.

I interviewed each mentoring dyad the same day but at different times. It is worth mentioning that some of the participants had to be interviewed twice or thrice for them to clarify some statements that they made or seek further information on new issues introduced by them in their answers to the questions. There was an instance a mentee said the mentor was not a friend although their relationship was cordial. It was during the initial reading of the data that I realised I should have asked for further information about this, and had to go back to her. In the course of the interviews, I looked out for pauses, body language, facial expressions, and other indicators that pointed to sarcasm, cynicism, emotions, and other nuances. These were recorded in my reflective journal for interpretation later. This is what Glaser & Strauss (1967) and Strauss & Corbin (1990:42) refer to as "theoretical sensitivity" of the researcher. It refers to the researcher's awareness of the subtleties of meaning of data.

Observation

In order to gain a deeper impression about the mentoring relationship, I developed an observation guide to capture the interactions (Appendix 9); verbal and non-verbal between mentors and mentees in the research setting although Dunne, Yates, & Pryor (2005: 68) argue that it is reductive and exclusionary. It helped focus the observation, while at the same time I made room for flexibility in its use depending on the circumstances. My interest in the observation was on the content of the activities as well as the pattern of the relationships. The observations lasted from 30 minutes to one hour for each pair. I attended four of each pairs' classroom teaching, pre-observation and post-observation conferences for live observations of interactions. I observed, for example, teaching strategies employed, the mentoring

strategies used by the mentor to support mentee professional learning, and the rapport and trust that had been established.

I noted my observations and thoughts in the process in my reflective journal. Where I needed clarifications, I followed the observations with interviews. At a pre-observation conference, for instance, a mentor asked the mentee whether she had written her lesson notes. I found this odd because according to the programme he was expected to mark the notes before the meeting. It turned out that it was not the mentor who marked the notes but another mentor. I combined the observations with interviews where necessary to clarify issues during the analysis and interpretation of the data.

3.5 The process of data management and analysis

Qualitative research, as is normally the case, produces a huge amount of data characterised by what might be termed ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 2000) to convey the richness and depth of evidence. Analysing such data required thorough and comprehensive techniques to reveal the themes and understandings inherent in the data. Data analysis was ongoing; occurring both during data collection and after all the data had been gathered (Neumann: 2004). It consisted of transcribing, reading, re-reading, analysing and synthesising information to generate patterns and themes (Gay & Airasian, 2000). Three types of data were generated and analysed: (a) communicative data made up of interview data (b) observational data derived from field notes in my reflective journal (c) documentary data from mentors’ supervisory notes.

Transcribing data

Since the process of data analysis started concurrently with data collection, I was able to get participants to repeat some of the things they said that were not audible on the tapes. This made the transcription easier to handle. I listened carefully to each interview and typed verbatim the statements made. To be double sure that I had captured the statements correctly, I listened to the tapes again and compared with the transcription. I then asked a colleague to cross check again for

the accuracy of the transcription text. Portions that I missed were then captured. For verifiability, I asked a colleague who is not associated with the internship programme to send the transcribed data back to the mentors and mentees for them to check whether the verbatim transcripts captured accurately what they said and offer them the opportunity to clarify or refine what had been attributed to them. I used a neutral person to allow them to fully reflect on the text and react to it without any inhibition and effect any changes, if any. All the attributions were accepted by the mentors and mentees. This is what (Stake, 2000) and Brown & Rodgers, 2003) refer to as member checking.

Data reading, synthesis and analysis

Satisfied that I had captured the interview data accurately, I proceeded to critically read the statements made by the participants during the interview, the field notes in my reflective journal, which noted verbal and non-verbal nuances of the interactions, and the mentors' written comments. I read and re-read the data to identify the processes in the data and marked out with markers (highlighters) significant statements that bordered on any aspect of the relationship to identify substantive codes such as 'cordiality', 'caring', 'sister', 'father', and 'learning'. As I said earlier, I took each pair as a single case and studied their transcripts. Each pair had a unique story of two individuals in a relationship. I later compared codes across the cases to identify common codes that may form cross case themes. In the process of reading and synthesizing statements and written notes, I identified the following themes under which I organised the analysis in chapters 4 and 5.

1. Mentor-mentee profile
2. Perception of mentoring and mentoring roles
3. How the relationships were developed, established and sustained
4. The general health of the relationships in relation to professional learning
5. Mentoring processes or strategies
6. Professional learning and identity formation

In the analysis, direct quotes from the mentors and mentees have been presented as stories to support these findings and allow the mentors' and mentees' voices to be heard.

Within and cross case analysis

I divided the data analysis into two parts: a case study of each of the four pairs of participants was constructed, and then a cross-case analysis was carried out (Patton, 1990). In the single case, I treated each pair as a comprehensive case in itself. Their perceptions of the relationship were put together, analysed and compared within the pair. A cross case analysis was then done ‘to see [themes] occurring across many cases to develop more sophisticated descriptions’ (Miles & Huberman, 1994:172). These formed the basis for conclusions, suggestions and recommendations to be made in chapter 6.

3.6 Credibility and Trustworthiness of the Data

Arguably, traditional concepts of reliability and validity which are critical in surveys and experiments do not normally apply to case study research (Basse, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Validity in research ensures that a study is measuring what it seeks to measure. Reliability, on the other hand, ensures that the research methodology could be replicated and that it is consistent throughout the study (Merriam, 1998). A case study, as it were, is a case that is chosen because it is of interest to the researcher and readers. It is not chosen because it is a typical example that can be generalised to a large population. Lincoln and Guba (2000) introduced the concept of “trustworthiness”, instead, to measure a case study’s truth. Trustworthiness indicates whether the conclusions drawn from the study are an accurate representation of the study. Merriam (1998) identified a number of criteria for ensuring the credibility and trustworthiness of naturalistic research data. These are prolonged observation at the research site, triangulation, peer review, and member checks. These criteria, which are very similar to those identified by Guba and Lincoln (2000), were used as follows.

Prolonged observation at the research site

As indicated earlier, I spent approximately nine months on and off at the research site. This prolonged engagement enabled me to gather data over a period of time (Merriam, 1998) and also enabled me to learn about the context of the research

site, as well as build trust with the participants; mentors and mentees (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Triangulation

Grundy (1995:21) explains triangulation as when ‘evidence about the same event is gathered from different data sources. Merriam (1998) advocated multiple sources of data, as well as multiple methods of data collection. Creswell (2003) stated that multiple sources of data give opportunities to verify the data from one source to another. In other words, it allows cross checking of the data to ensure internal validity.

Accordingly, in this study, I collected data from the multiple sources of interviews, observations, document reviews and my reflective journal. For example, data gathered from the observation of teaching activities, mentor-mentee conferences, and out of classroom activities were used to either confirm or refute statements made by the participants. As I indicated earlier, my observation of a pre-observation conference, confirmed a mentee’s assertion that the mentor could not have time to assist her with the writing of her lesson notes.

Peer review and member checks

As I mentioned when processing the data, the transcribed texts were given to a colleague to check them against the recorded versions for accuracy. His input was substantial as he detected that I missed certain portions of the tape. I attributed this to the rewinding and unwinding of the tape. The transcribed texts were also given to the mentors and mentees by a colleague to read and confirm that it reflected exactly the statements they made. Again, I met the mentor and mentee after each observation to discuss my findings. This helped to clarify the findings and to validate my interpretation of the observation data.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity demands that researchers ‘explore the ways in which [their] involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs such research’ (Nightingale & Cromby, 1999:228). Willig (2001) identifies personal and

epistemological reflexivity as influencing research. To her, researchers must reflect on how their own beliefs, values and experiences, among others, impacted on the research or how the research has changed their previously held assumptions.

In my position as the Director of the mentoring programme, I was an insider and had my own expectations of the relationship as outlined in the handbook for mentors and mentees, and as taught them during training sessions. All the same, I had to approach the study with an open mind; without any preconceived perceptions or expectations. The interview guides and the observation guide really helped me to focus on the substantive issues I was investigating. I embarked on it as an exploration to find what was there, and not what should be there. I must confess, however, that it was not easy to push aside my expectations and the realities of the study. There is no easy way out of this dilemma. I only had to acknowledge the problem and be reflexive throughout the study. Self-awareness and constantly reflecting on the research process vis-a-vis one's role seem to reduce the insider bias.

There is the common assumption in interpretive inquiry that any interpretive account will be coloured by the researcher's perspective (Neuman, 2004). In qualitative research, the researcher normally becomes an integral part of the research process. I recognised my position as the Head of the Centre that manages the mentoring programme of the University. My close relationship with the participants was likely to make them inclined towards a greater level of what Bernard (2000) terms as 'deference' or 'acquiescence' effect, whereby they will tell me what they think I wanted to hear just to please me. This may not affect the study largely because of the many data sources. Apart from the many data sources, most of the participants are familiar with the research culture since as indicated earlier most of the mentors are related to lecturers who conduct similar studies. As such they cooperate very well, knowing how crucial it is for a lecturer's academic and professional advancement.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS FROM

THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

A mentor helps you
to perceive your own weaknesses
and confront them with courage.
The bond between mentor and protégé
enables us to stay true to our chosen path
until the very end.
(Daisaku Ikeda: Buddhist Leader & Writer)

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present case by case findings from interrogation of the data on mentor-mentee experiences. Chapter 5 presents a cross-case analysis of the findings that compares and contrasts themes and sub-themes from the individual cases before relating these to the key theoretical understandings of mentoring teachers from the literature and the specific implications for the UEW mentoring programme.

I studied five cases of mentoring relationships and the experiences that ensued from them, using interviews, observations of mentor-mentee interactions in the classroom and during pre- and post observation conferences, as well as examination of documents on intern teaching evaluation and comments forms, pre- and post-observation guides, as well as reflective log forms (Appendix 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5) to understand the nature of mentoring relationships among student teachers of UEW and their mentors. As noted in chapter 1, UEW's mentoring scheme is based on a 'Cooperative-Reflective model of a school-based teacher professional development. The model is a hybrid one that fuses the existing models of *collaborative relationships*, *reflective teaching*, and *cooperative learning*.

The study investigated the mentors' and mentees' perceptions of mentoring and mentoring roles, the strategies used to negotiate professional learning in the

relationship, the perceived professional expertise gained and how these were perceived to have influenced the professional identity of both mentor and mentee. Broadly, the analysis depicts two mentoring relationship types; one I describe as the traditional mentoring relationship where the mentor is older and more experienced than the mentee, secondly, the ‘non-traditional’, an inverse of the first type, where the mentor is younger and less experienced than the mentee. Both presented deep insights into how the mentoring relationship is constructed, enacted and how the relationships enabled or constrained opportunities for mutual professional learning. The names of all participants have been changed to protect their identity and uphold the ethical principles agreed with participants at the outset of the research.

4.2 Mentoring in the ‘traditional mode’

4.2.1 Frank and Hannah: “Misplaced mentoring roles and unmet expectations”

Mentor-Mentee profile

Frank is a 59-year old male teacher, married with six children with 40 years’ teaching experience, holds a Master of Education (M.Ed) degree in Music and has been mentoring for five years. He is the head teacher of the school Hannah is attached to for internship, an active member of a local church and social club. Hannah, on the other hand, aged 30years is a female student teacher pursuing a B.Ed degree in Basic Education and prior to that had been teaching for 9 years. The fact that Hanna’s mentor, Frank is an older male has implications for how the mentoring relationship was developed, as is later revealed. Besides, Frank’s position as headteacher as well as his social commitments impacted on his availability and level of engagement with Hannah. It is also striking that Hannah comes into the mentoring relationship already with considerable classroom experience, so strictly speaking, cannot be labelled a novice teacher.

This profile of a mentee with relatively extensive classroom experience supposed to learn from an older colleague would be quite typical of many of the UEW student teachers on internship in schools.

4.2.1.1 Perception of mentoring and mentoring roles

According to Guyton (1989) and McGee et al. (2001), mentors and mentees who identify and understand their own and other's roles are more able to support the development and growth of the professional relationship during the practicum. As noted in Chapter 1, during UEW's mentor training sessions the concept of mentoring, the roles expected of mentors and the need for the relationship to be established on collegial terms to achieve the programme goals are emphasised. Knowledge of these roles and what they mean to both mentor and mentee has implications for how the relationship evolves.

When Frank was asked to give his views about mentoring in teacher education, he re-echoed the notions espoused in the UEW model of mentoring. In his view, '*mentoring means trying to guide somebody who is **freshly** entering the profession*' and creating a supportive environment to nurture the mentee's professional learning and development (emphasis added). Frank's approach in handling Hannah, basically said he was dealing with a novice, as reflected in his conception of what mentoring is.

Close observation of his interaction with Hannah suggested that his notion of mentoring influenced the way in which he conducted the relationship; he rarely drew attention to whatever professional capital Hannah already possessed to engage in reflective dialogue in relation to her knowledge and understanding of practice. Clearly, Frank related to Hannah as a complete novice. When I asked later whether he was aware of Hannah's previous teaching experience, and whether that was relevant to what they discussed, he seemed to dismiss this as unimportant. He remarked: *Once a student, she needs to learn it all over again.* Clearly, Frank worked on the assumption that Hannah's professional background did not matter much. He seemed to work on the assumption that once Hannah was coming from a teacher training context, much of what she already possessed could be discarded. His position was one of an 'experienced' mentor inducting an 'inexperienced' learner into the teaching profession. According to Frank,

The mentor ought to integrate the mentee into the school system. You make bare to him/her those things they are supposed to do and do it under your observation, supervision and direction.

Not only does it highlight a gap in how the programme has been conceptualised and presented to those to do the mentoring, but it also contradicts the collaborative and collegial focus that the UEW mentoring relationship was supposed to foster. It appeared Frank's attitude and actions reflected the former notion, and that he did not particularly subscribe to the collaborative and collegial aspects of mentoring as revealed in this comment:

During our time, (his own teacher training) teaching practice was teaching practice. Student teachers feared their supervisors. They took whatever instructions they gave them. They knew they were still students and therefore learning how to teach. There was that respect for the supervisor's knowledge. This new thing won't make them learn (Field notes: Friday, 4th May 2008)

Frank seemed to be welded to a view of learning to teach which was transmissive, or could be described as the 'empty bucket' approach, hence his dismissive attitude with regards to Hanna's practical knowledge accumulated prior to her further training in teacher education. Hannah had nearly ten years of teaching experience, and therefore, it could be argued had some practical knowledge of teaching worth reflecting on in the mentoring relationship.

Surprisingly, her own view of mentoring appeared to discount whatever professional capital that she came into the relationship with. She suggested that she was looking completely up to the mentor for guidance, and never raised her own background experience in discussions about any new things she was learning in relationship to this. Her own understanding of who a mentor is confirmed this view as she explained:

A mentor is somebody who somebody looks up to. If somebody is my mentor, then the things that the person does to make teaching effective I also learn from the one. It means I look at the good qualities in him in a way that I should also be like.

This is a view of a mentor as a repository of professional knowledge and skills with the mentee there to imitate. When asked about her previous classroom experience and whether that was something worth reflecting on in relation to what she was learning, she quipped:

My mentor is very experienced, forty years' teaching experience. I don't think I know anything that he doesn't know.

Besides, it was evident that she viewed the professional position of her mentor and his age as two factors which determined her own position in the relationship. When asked about how she could develop a collaborative and collegial relationship with her mentor, this was what she had to say: *'How can I teach my headmaster and father how to teach? This will be difficult for me'.*

This comment also suggests a misconception of the idea of collegiality and collaboration, in the sense that she appears to suggest that this meant her possessing knowledge that the mentor did not have. Quite clearly, the vast experience and age difference between mentor and mentee as well as his status appeared restrictive to fostering a collaborative and collegial mentoring relationship. This understanding of mentoring shared by both Frank and Hannah was further evidenced in the way they conducted their relationship and made sense of the professional learning experience, as discussed next.

4.2.1.2 The development and establishment of the relationship

It transpired that Frank's school had always held orientations to officially welcome interns and take them through rules and regulations governing professional practice in the school. The orientation was also used to brief interns about personal and professional ethics that cover issues such as punctuality and regularity, discipline, dress code and channels of communication. I had the opportunity to attend the orientation. What was evident from the careful planning of this activity was that a lot of effort goes into making the mentees feel welcome and part of the school as these introductory comments from the headteacher revealed:

You need not consider yourselves strangers. You're part of us. Feel at home. Here, we work as members of a big family (Field notes: Monday, 10th September, 2007)

However, much of what was shared focused mainly on the opportunity for the mentees to learn new things and understand the professional culture. There was little reference to, or any suggestion to the effect that, here was an opportunity for them to also draw on whatever experiences they brought to enrich their learning and interaction with other teachers. The orientation focused a lot more on understanding rules and norms, and what the mentees were expected to learn from the school attachment and work with their mentors. Thus, the tone was set for a very formalised and ritualised process of learning that largely ignored or overshadowed what the mentees, many of them with some considerable classroom experience, could offer. Not much was also said about what they were bringing from their university teacher training experience and how that could also enrich teaching and learning in the school.

In effect, establishing a mentoring relationship seemed to be construed as unproblematic; one in which once the necessary familiarisations have been covered then it meant the relationship would run smoothly in one direction – from mentor to mentee and lead to desired learning outcomes. This idea is particularly evident in how Frank described his approach in establishing the professional relationship with Hannah:

When the mentees come, we orient them to the school. She had earlier entered into conversations with me so she did not entertain any fears and the two of us started working together.

It is also interesting the way in which Frank repeatedly used the word ‘fear’, suggesting that this was a condition that his mentees arrived with, and it was his responsibility to dampen or erode this attitude by ‘working together’. However, the idea of working together, for Frank, did not mean providing room for Hannah to reflect on her own experiences or engage in critical dialogue on problems of teaching and how they might be addressed. Hannah’s comments when asked how

the relationship was established basically reaffirmed Frank's position. It also revealed that her mentor had time issues when it came to mentoring her: *I did not feel comfortable in the school initially. My mentor was not regular at school. I was confused, but with time, I adjusted.* That adjustment meant she learnt to accommodate a rather sporadic professional relationship with Frank because of his frequent absence. Frank seemed to think that his leadership position in the relationship was what had assuaged Hanna's initial 'fears' and paved the way for a smooth working relationship. How then was the nature of the relationship?

4.2.1.3 Perceptions of relationship experience

When asked to describe the nature of their relationship, it was evident that Frank and Hannah viewed the relationship differently. Frank assumed that the seeming cordiality in the relationship meant that Hannah was comfortable and learning from him.

As he explained:

My relationship with my mentee is very cordial. We get on very well. The cordial relationship is helping the intern to learn better.

It appeared that Frank interpreted cordiality as the absence of friction in the relationship, and once no obvious tensions had emerged, the relationship was healthy. It seemed that the age difference and his position as the head of the school closed for Hannah any space to engage in critical dialogue about what she was learning and how that was shaping her understanding and practice of teaching. Frank, it would appear, failed to realise these as potential factors that could determine the nature of the relationship and how it affected Hannah. Hannah's comment highlights this issue quite well:

To me because my mentor is the head of school and far advanced in age than me, our relationship even though cordial is not friendly. I describe it as an official relationship. I see other teachers sharing jokes with him, but I cannot do it. I am not close to him. I consider him a father, so I have a limit to what I should have discussed with him as a mentor. If the age difference were to be say five years, I would not have had any problem with that.

The big age difference also appeared to have created a social and professional distance between them, and restricted forging the kind of ‘professional friendship’ that would have engendered collaboration and collegiality. When I suggested to her that the father figure was something that could rather make her feel comfortable in approaching Frank, her response confirmed the narrow way in which she had perceived the mentoring relationship: *We don’t meet often, so I’ve not got used to him. Also I cannot share my personal life with a man who is not my boyfriend or husband. If he were a woman and I trust her I can share.* Two issues seem to arise here; Frank’s lack of time for the relationship and the cross-gender pairing appeared to be reasons for the absence of ‘professional friendship’ which could engender the sharing of professional and personal experiences. But Frank appeared unaware of all these, as revealed in his statement:

The age difference has nothing to do with my relationship with [her]. Instead, she respects me equally as I do.

During their pre-observation and post-observation conferences I observed that Hannah appeared shy and timid as she always tried to avoid direct eye contact with Frank.

Hannah avoids eye contact with Frank. She looks intently into her lesson notebook. She nods in agreement to every suggestion. She appears shy (Field notes: Wednesday, 6th February, 2008).

Later, when I drew Frank’s attention to what I observed, he attributed it to Hannah’s regard for him as a father; *...my intern sees me as a father and is a bit reserved.* As to what he was doing to let her open up he said, *I am counselling her.* This means that the relationship was not as healthy as Frank described.

As Hannah hinted earlier, it emerged that Frank’s failure to recognise that she was not comfortable in the relationship was that he was too busy to make time for the relationship. Hannah explained:

He is a very busy person and did not have time for me. He instructed me to contact other mentors when I needed help. We did not meet to do any work together except those times he had to talk to me about my work. Even with my lesson note [sic], I at times send it to other mentors, especially Sister Maggie to vet and give me further coaching on lesson presentation. My mentor seems to

be very busy and can bump into my class anytime. Hence, I am always prepared fully.

The implication here is that Frank appeared to have shirked his mentoring responsibilities. Again, it seems he could not create any meaningful professional learning opportunities for Hannah. As his profile shows, Frank was involved in church and social club activities. During my stay in the school, I noted that on quite a number of occasions he came to inform me that he was going out of the school to attend to pressing issues in town, and that other mentors were on hand to assist: *The Bishop has sent for me. The class teacher will take care of Hannah* (Field notes: Tuesday, 18th March, 2008). Unfortunately for Hannah, however, the teacher in whose class she was practice teaching was not a trained mentor.

Apart from his busy nature, it appeared, Frank was somehow unenthused about the collaborative and mutual learning focus of the relationship. Since he was retiring from active service the following year, it appeared he did not find the relationship mutually beneficial because when his attention was drawn to the fact that his frequent absences might not enable him to benefit from the experience, he remarked *...it's those who have more years to do who need this kind of experience*. This seems to call to question the rationale or criteria for selecting mentors and matching mentors and mentees.

How then did Frank and Hannah negotiate professional learning, given the nature of the relationship as described above? What pedagogic principles underlie the learning relationship? What is the process of mentor-mentee learning? What learning opportunities did Frank offer Hannah?

4.2.1.4 Mentoring strategies

From the interview and observation data, three factors appeared to have influenced the strategies adopted to negotiate professional learning in this relationship. These were Frank's lack of time for the relationship; second, the fact that as a 'detached' head teacher he did not have a class of his own and third, his failure to consider Hannah's teaching experience as a resource. These seemed to

have influenced the adoption of didactic strategies such as telling, and directing instead of collaborative and critical reflective activities such as team planning, team teaching and critical reflection on teaching which could have resulted in the co-construction of professional knowledge and skills.

Although he explained that:

Apart from vetting her lesson notebook, and holding conferences with her, she comes to me for explanations concerning some topics,

the reality, as Hannah revealed earlier, was that the lesson notes were even sometimes vetted by other mentors, *Even with my lesson note [sic], I at times send it to other mentors, especially Sister Maggie to vet and give me further coaching on lesson presentation.* Thus, the lesson notes which should have formed the basis for pre-observation professional dialogue were not marked by Frank. As a result, the dialogic nature which their pre-observation conferences were expected to assume and which could have elicited reflective responses from Hannah was absent. He states: *I hope your notes have been vetted. Follow the suggestions given* (Field notes: Friday, 29th February 2008.) As he explained during the interview:

When I tell her something she immediately would not give any answer about that, but will go and ponder over it and later come to discuss it with me.

This means Hannah engaged in critical reflection not with Frank as an interactive exchange during the conference sessions but alone after the conference. I observed during pre- and post-observation conferences that Frank dominated the sessions without giving Hannah a chance to share her ideas because he did not use the required forms (Appendix 1, 2 & 5) to engage Hannah in critical reflection and self-evaluation with the reason that, *the use of the forms makes the sessions too long* (Field notes: Tuesday, 12th February 2008.). This further suggested his lack of time for the relationship. So, the collaborative and collegial focus appeared compromised for this kind of master-apprentice relationship. Frank did not have a class of his own so there was no modelling of teaching for Hannah to observe; neither was there

any collaborative teaching for them to actively engage with and reflect on teaching.

An examination of three of Hannah's teaching evaluation forms (Appendix 3) revealed that the least grade she had was 'B', indicating that she was a competent teacher.

Interestingly, on one of the evaluation comments forms (Appendix 4) Frank had written:

You have the potential to become a good and responsible teacher. Work hard to improve your classroom management skills.

This implied that Hannah needed some guidance in classroom management. However, she could not experience ongoing support from Frank.

In one lesson, Hannah took the pupils out to collect different types of leaves. During the post-observation discussions, Frank remarked, *You could have collected the leaves in advance and brought them to the class for the lesson instead of taking the children out* (Field notes: Tuesday, 8th May 2008.) I expected the mentee to explain her choice of that strategy, but she accepted the mentor's suggestion. Later when I asked why she did not give any reason for involving the children in collecting the leaves, she remarked, *'He's my mentor. I have to listen to him. The final decision rests with him. If that is what he wants I have to do it. In the end he is going to determine my grade.*

Hannah's comments evoke a picture of a master-servant relationship. There appeared to be a lack of genuine communication between her and Frank. Again, Frank's role as an assessor appears to have limited the extent to which Hannah could have engaged Frank in critical and genuine arguments on substantive issues. Apparently, it was to gain rewards by pleasing the mentor. So, what did this relationship offer the mentor and mentee?

4.2.1.5 Professional learning

When asked how the relationship offered opportunities for professional learning, Hannah sounded somewhat ironical.

Hannah:

This affected the learning in a positive way, because I was in the school to do my work well and I do not believe in going to his office to discuss any other things that will not go to improve the quality of learning.

In a follow up question to clarify what she meant by her statement above, it came out that Frank's absence enabled her to try out most of the TESSA teaching strategies with her class teacher and other teachers as her comments suggest:

Because he didn't have time for me, I asked my class teacher to observe my new strategies and comment on them. Auntie Maggie also gave me a lot of feedback. I enjoyed working with them. I learnt from their comments. For instance, I improved on how I prepared children for the drama pieces.

I observed three of Hannah's lessons and noticed that she always prepared adequately and had a lot of patience with the slow learners. She mostly used active learning strategies such as group work, discussions, drama and questioning. I noted an improvement in how she organised a second drama piece.

Children are more organised and seem to know exactly when to say what. This is not like the first one where most of the children appeared not to know whose turn it was to speak and what exactly to say (Field notes: Wednesday, 19th March 2008, 11.30 a.m.).

The class teacher commented, *I've learnt a lot from Hannah's teaching strategies*; a comment I found very assuring as the programme is meant to offer professional learning opportunities for student teachers and practicing teachers as well. When I mentioned the class teacher's comment to Frank, he remarked, *that is why I said those who have more years in the service are those who will benefit from the programme*, reiterating his earlier comment that because he had just a year to retire, he did not need any more professional learning.

4.2.1.6 Conclusion

As indicated in the literature review, the mentoring relationship is characterised by mutuality, interdependence, empathy and empowerment (Ragins, 2000). These create personal growth, development and enrichment for mentors and mentees. Ragins & Verbos (2007:92) also regard the relationship as a developmental one that involves mutual growth, learning, and development in personal, and professional domains. In other words, it is a partnership of mutual benefits,

collegiality and reciprocity. As a partnership, it requires the commitment of both mentor and mentee to be functional.

However, in the relationship between Frank and Hannah, these ‘ingredients’ that supposedly determine the quality of the professional relationship, and which also greatly influence the quality of teaching practice experiences and professional learning, appeared deficient. For example, the professional experience of the mentee seemed not to have been considered as the basis upon which to build a supportive relationship and further professional learning. The mentee also seemed not to have regarded herself as a teacher with some teaching background which should serve as a resource for further learning and refinement. These, together with the mentor’s age, and status seemed to have given the relationship a hierarchical master-apprentice nature and the didactic strategies that were used instead of collaborative strategies and a collegial and reciprocal focus.

The mentor’s lack of time, because of his position as the head of the school and other social commitments, also led to the near abandonment or neglect of the mentee. Frank’s utterances also suggest someone who is at the stage of his career where there is little motivation to mentor others and pursue further professional learning. As a result, team planning, team teaching, modelling, and real conversation as a form of critical reflection on teaching and opportunities to provide student teachers access to mentors’ contextualised professional knowledge in a non-threatening situational context (Edwards & Collison, 1996) were virtually absent.

Two main issues arise in this relationship with respect to the design and content of the mentoring programme of UEW. First, it appears the criteria for determining who becomes a mentor is problematic. There is, for instance, the need to consider the age, status and other obligations of mentors before assigning them to mentees as the mentoring relationship needs time and commitment to develop. As Finkelstein, Allen & Rhoton (2003) argue, in mentorship with greater age diversity, less psychosocial mentoring (friendship, counselling, role modelling) may

be provided than in those with less age diversity. Of course, I have argued that age and status barriers can be overcome by a determined mentoring dyad with clear goals for the relationship, but the challenge still is there.

Second, it appears mentor-mentee matching is also critical to the mentoring relationship (Feiman-Nemser, 1996). The current practice where mentees are sent to the schools to be assigned to mentors by the heads of the schools without any criteria, apart from sameness of specialised subject area, results in instances of mismatch in terms of age, gender and personal chemistry. For example, gender was an issue in this relationship. As Kram (1985) noted, mentors and mentees in cross gender relationships may try to avoid the appearance of intimacy by restricting social roles and may revert to parental roles of father-daughter as played out in this relationship.

It can be argued that the relationship between Frank and Hannah was one of unmet expectations for Hannah; considering her perception of the mentor as a role model to learn from. This could be described as a procedural relationship with very little reflective engagement with professional learning.

4.2.2 Elvis and Edna: “A relationship of hope but little enlightenment”

Mentor-Mentee profile

Elvis is a 42-year-old male teacher, pursuing an M. Ed degree in Physical Education (P.E.) by Sandwich (during vacation periods), but still teaches in his old school. He has 15 years’ teaching experience and has been mentoring for 4 years. He is Edna’s former teacher. Edna is a 33-year old female student teacher, with 5 years’ experience as a Zonal Physical Education (P.E.) Organiser. She is now pursuing a B.Ed. degree programme in Physical Education. Their profile suggests a relationship that promises to offer professional learning insights for both as they share organisational and classroom skills. Edna has been in charge of organising sports events in a zone comprising 15 schools. This has offered her the opportunity of visiting each of these schools to supervise how pupils are prepared

for sports events and also conducting in-service training for P.E. teachers. This is the experience she brings to the relationship.

4.2.2.1 Perception of mentoring and mentoring roles

Elvis's conception of mentoring appeared to be one that is based on an understanding of the mentor offering professional guidance. This resonates with an important aspect of UEW's model of mentoring which emphasises the mentoring relationship as professional guidance.

According to Elvis:

Mentoring is the process of helping or guiding a colleague teacher who is a novice or anybody who is inexperienced to achieve the objectives, he/she wants to attain in that profession.

This view assumes a relationship that sees one teacher as an expert who guides one who lacks experience to develop their professional knowledge and practice. However, it is an understanding which is likely to undervalue Edna's own experience. As Edna revealed in her profile, she has been interacting with P.E. teachers and updating their skills as well as overseeing the organisation of sports events for at least five years. She is, therefore, not a novice teacher.

Surprisingly, Edna's own perception of mentoring and the role of the mentor did not touch on what experience she, as a mentee, brings to the engagement. So, for her,

Mentoring ...requires that one gets an experienced person to help monitor, guide and direct you on how to go about teaching.

What this seems to suggest is that mentoring is a supportive and guiding relationship in which the mentor serves as a guide for the mentee's professional learning. This made me probe further her role in the relationship. What appeared missing from her perception of mentoring and the roles expected of both mentor and mentee was the collaborative, collegial and mutual learning focus of the relationship as she said:

The mentee is to study the mentor and learn from him/her. I have some experience but he has more experience than I have. So I'm going to learn from him

It appeared it is the traditional conception of mentoring that is still held by the mentee. This understanding appeared to have influenced their practice of mentoring as the section that follows reveals:

4.2.2.2 The development and establishment of the relationship

Interestingly, in the establishment of the relationship, Elvis appeared to be conscious of the collaborative and collegial focus of the relationship and set off to establish one with Edna; as these comments indicate:

Elvis:

I told her we were going to work together, and the fact that I taught her does not mean I am going to be a master and her a servant. As usual she wanted to call me "Sir", but I told her no. She can call me [by my first name].

Edna confirmed being a former student of Elvis:

He was somebody who taught me some skills in Physical Education at the university so he was not a stranger to me.

Despite the fact that Elvis and Edna were familiar with each other and Elvis assured Edna of collaboration and insisted that they should even be on first name terms as an indication of collegiality, I observed that Edna could not relate to Elvis as an 'equal' or colleague. She continued to refer to Elvis as 'Sir'; acknowledging him as a former tutor. Elvis gave up insisting on it with this explanation ...*it appears because I am her former tutor, she finds it difficult to relate to me as her colleague*. When I reminded Edna that she had been asked not to refer to Elvis as 'Sir', she also remarked, *Sir, but I can't call him by his name. He's older than me and he's my mentor. I have to give him that respect.*

It appears the culture of respect for age and authority is a challenge to collegial relations between mentor and mentee. While the programme envisages such a relationship in order to offer professional learning opportunities for both mentor and mentee, the Ghanaian cultural context, as explained in the introduction,

appears to pose some challenges for such a relationship. Because Ghanaian society is hierarchical and people are respected because of their age, experience, wealth and/or position, the elderly are deemed to be very wise and cannot be challenged by anyone except someone of the same age group or even older (Quainoo, 2000). This is based on the notion that, with age come experience and wisdom. In many Western societies, however, there is this ‘call me by my first name’ culture where even children call adults directly by their first names, just as they would call their friends. As such, the line between adult and peer appears blurred (to the child). In Ghana, this would not be acceptable. For instance, as said earlier in the introduction, the creation of the institution of the Council of State in Ghana and the criteria for its membership (loosely based on age and accomplishments) is meant to reflect the ideals of this ‘Elder Respect’ system (Geest, 2002).

4.2.2.3 Perception of the relationship experience

Judging by the interview statements, it could be argued that Elvis created a supportive relationship for professional learning, and typifies what one might expect for a productive mentoring relationship. Elvis described his relationship with Edna as follows:

The relationship between my intern and me is very pleasant. I am very open and my intern comes to me whenever she is in need of anything. I am always in the classroom or on the field with her anytime she is teaching. I am always there to give her support and directions when needed.

I observed from the field that there was a cordial and lively relationship with Elvis shadowing Edna on a number of occasions as she went about her responsibilities. For example, in one instance Elvis accompanied Edna and shared in the responsibility of managing a basketball group work (Field notes 18th February & 24th March 2008). What I noticed was that Elvis’s openness, level of commitment, time availability and support appeared to create a trusting environment in which Edna could engage in discussions on a number of professional issues.

Strangely, however, I observed that despite the cordiality in the relationship, Edna and Elvis could not connect at the personal level. In the UEW mentoring programme, it is envisaged that a relationship characterised by cordiality and openness may engender collegiality and facilitate professional as well as personal learning for both mentor and mentee. It appeared, however, that cordiality did not necessarily lead to collegiality. As said earlier, respect for authority appears to limit the extent to which mentoring relationships can be collegial and exhibit professional friendship as Edna explained:

We are free anywhere we meet, even though I can say my mentor is not my friend. Due to the respect I accord him, I do not share my social problems with him, yet we are very free with each other.

When pressed to explain what she meant by her mentor not being her friend, it emerged that Edna had a different understanding of ‘friendship’ in mentoring relationships as she explained, *if my mentor were a female, I could discuss personal issues with her*. I explored this issue further with Elvis, who also explained:

This is a professional relationship and women will not share their personal life with male mentors. That will be going too far. We discuss only professional issues.

From these statements, it appears there is the need for a clear distinction between social friendship and professional friendship in mentoring relationships. Mentoring relationships are supposed to foster professional friendships to enable the participants to benefit from collaboration and mutual learning. But from the two views, it appeared Edna and Elvis had slightly different understandings about expectations from the mentoring relationship. The views above also raise an issue about cross-sex mentoring relationships and the level to which mentor and mentee can relate personally and share personal experiences.

How the mentoring dyad perceives mentoring and mentoring roles and the type of relationship they establish, arguably, determine the type of strategies they adopt in the professional learning process. This is what the next section discusses.

4.2.2.4 Mentoring strategies

Elvis used his practice as a context or resource for professional learning. He opened up his teaching to Edna as he indicated:

I taught lessons for her to observe me for a month and drew her attention to some technical skills in those lessons.

It was instructive that Elvis drew Edna's attention to what to observe. This made the observation more focussed. However, during the de-briefing session, it emerged that the strategies were not new to Edna. For example, I observed two of these model lessons. In one, Elvis asked Edna to observe how he introduced and ended P.E. lessons using the rhythms of popular music as captivating warm up and closure activities. During the post-observation analysis Edna remarked, *I use this method a lot with the zonal teams. They enjoy it so much.* When asked whether she learnt any new thing since the strategy was already familiar to her, Edna revealed that a realisation and confirmation that one had been using the right teaching strategies was enough learning as well as motivation as her reply indicated, *'I was excited at it. It confirmed that the strategy I've been using is effective. I became convinced that I've been using the right teaching approaches'.*

Though professional advice is one of the means of sharing professional experience, because Elvis considered Edna as a novice, most of the things he talked about to Edna were already known to her. For example, Elvis advised Edna on the lack of equipment and how she should be innovative, resourceful and creative.

We do not have the equipment to work with so I made her aware of how to be innovative, resourceful and try hard to improvise for some of the materials to use in her lessons.

As a zonal P. E. Coordinator for 5 years, this was one of her major assignments; to ensure that P.E. teachers used available local materials to teach their lessons. It was, therefore, not surprising that Edna replied, *I have been insisting on this in any school I visit, and make sure they improvise.*

The observation data also seemed to indicate that the pre- and post-observation conferences could also not provide the needed forum to engage in some amount of mutual reflection. The reflective forms (Appendix 1, 2, & 5) were scarcely used with the explanation that Edna did not have any problems with the teaching episodes. I noticed that the sessions almost always ended with pedagogical prescriptions for Edna such as *Next time, let groups of students do different activities and let them change over*. Edna revealed to me later in a private discussion: *Most of his prescriptions are well known to me and I was reluctant to question some of his prescriptions because he has the final say in my grading*. This, again, seemed to go counter to the collaborative and collegial focus of the programme. The concern here is the conflict between assessing and mutual assistance and learning. It seems to suggest that assessment may hinder the development of the collegial mentor-mentee relationship which is essential for professional growth.

Another observation I made, which seemed to confirm the somewhat superficial nature of the professional learning in the relationship was in connection with the marks awarded on the intern teaching evaluation form (Appendix 3). They seemed not to suggest that Edna initially had problems with teaching which had to be addressed through the relationship for improvement.

For example, she scored 80% for her first supervised teaching. This put her in the 'A' grade (Excellent). The rest ranged between 85% and 90%. So what was there to learn again? For an explanation Elvis remarked, *in fact, she is a good teacher. Her being a P.E. organiser has given her rich experience. So, she doesn't need too much assistance*.

The questions that arise are: Do student teachers with considerable teaching experience derive any benefit from being in mentoring relationships? How do the design and content of UEWs mentoring programme meet the professional needs of student teachers with considerable teaching experience?

4.2.2.5 Professional and personal learning

In the UEW mentoring model, as indicated earlier, the professional relationship between the mentor and the mentee is expected to result in professional and personal learning for both parties through a two-way transfer of experience and perspective. That is, both of them must learn, grow and develop through the relationship, motivating and stimulating each other.

What Elvis and Edna reported as professional and personal learning, however, appeared somewhat superficial. For instance, Edna reported learning strategies and methods of teaching, how to improvise teaching and learning materials, how to manage children's behaviour and learning, how to behave professionally and also received pieces of advice about life in general. When pressed to mention specific approaches and specific TLMs that were new to her, she could not. She admitted, *they were strategies I knew already and have been using with teachers in my zone when training pupils for sporting events. I have met more deviant pupils than I found in this school and was able to handle them. But I appreciate his desire to help.*

What Edna's statements seem to suggest is that cultural and personal sensitivities made her pretend that she was benefiting from the relationship. She was unwilling to confront Elvis with the realities. This raises questions about UEW's mentoring model for learning to teach through collaboration and reflection. From this, it can be argued that professional learning seemed repetitive, unchallenging and unreflective. Although Elvis opened up his practice to Edna to observe, she could not ask any questions about what she observed. It appeared she felt inhibited about asking questions.

The mentor training and the practice of mentoring, however, seemed to have benefited Elvis professionally and personally as the following statements indicate:

I did the traditional research and I have learnt a lot from her with her Action Research project. The mentorship programme has equipped me with much knowledge in mentoring. I have improved so much on my teaching strategies and interpersonal relationships.

How to conduct and supervise an action research project forms part of the training offered mentors to enable them assist mentees conduct action research as part of the requirements of the internship. From a comment he passed about Edna's project he seemed to have gained some insights into the issue the mentee investigated; a case study of the motor skills development of a certain primary school child. He remarked,

We didn't get this opportunity to do real research like this. We only copied people's old projects. This study is revealing. You get to understand issues better.

4.2.2.6 Identity formation and transformation

Edna's comments about the importance and impact of the mentoring programme seem quite significant. The comments appear to be an observation about the appropriateness of the UEW mentoring model for shaping the identity of novice teachers and not a model for teacher trainees who are upgrading as can be inferred from the following:

I see the internship to be good, because after going through the university and coming straight to the classroom to teach cannot be the best of practices. You go through the internship experience to acquire the needed skills before you can be on your own as a teacher. By that, one becomes bold to face the realities in the profession.

About 65% of the teacher trainees in UEW are those who have taught for at least three years after initial teacher training as indicated in the introduction to the thesis. As a result, they are already familiar with the challenges of the Ghanaian classrooms. They are teachers who have gained enough confidence in teaching although they might not be using appropriate teaching strategies. For such teacher trainees, the UEW mentoring model presents some challenges. For example, the teaching experiences they encounter at the internship sites must be novel enough to add to their repertoire of teaching strategies. Otherwise, the experience becomes repetitive, unchallenging and boring. It can be challenging and refreshing if the critical engagement in reflection component is seriously addressed.

4.2.2.7 Conclusion

This was a relationship that from their profiles was to offer exciting opportunities for mutual professional learning through collaboration. However, the concept of mentoring and mentoring roles appeared problematic. It mirrored the old conception of master-novice relationship, instead of the modern concept of collaboration, collegiality and reciprocity (Barrett, 2000). It evokes paternalistic, protectionist and dependency tendencies. This concept, as revealed earlier, contradicts UEWs notion of mentoring. Their conception of mentoring and mentoring roles appeared to have influenced their practice of mentoring where the mentor assumed the role of an expert proposing ‘innovative’ instructional approaches to the mentee. This seemed not to have allowed them to share the rich experiences of each other, resulting in the adoption of mentoring strategies that could not promote real collaboration, collegiality, critical reflection and mutual learning.

This situation reflects the concept of teaching practice inherent in the traditional approach to teacher preparation alluded to in the introduction to this research. The challenge, here, may be attributed to either inadequate preparation of both mentor and mentee for their roles or they are finding it difficult to discard old notions and old habits.

Apart from this, a greater challenge to the collaborative and cooperative learning model adopted by UEW is the socio-cultural context in which the model is being implemented. That is, the culture of respect for age and authority restricts the extent to which collegial mentoring relationships can evolve.

Another substantive issue of this relationship is that of gender. Again, this appeared to have restricted the psychosocial functions of mentoring; that is friendship, counselling and role modelling (Kram, 1988; Pawson, 2004). As pointed out in the literature review, cross-gender mentoring dominates in the UEW programme. This, therefore, poses a great challenge to the model.

As far as teacher identity formation or transformation is concerned, it appears the UEW model is appropriate for novice teachers and not for teacher trainees with teaching experience who are upgrading.

4.2.3 Kingsley and Hanson: “A relationship of reversed roles”

Mentor-Mentee profile

Kingsley is a 51-year old male teacher with 26 years’ and 2years’ teaching and mentoring experience respectively. He is now pursuing a Diploma programme in Basic Education by distance. Hanson, on the other hand, is a 43-year-old male student teacher, with 20 years’ teaching experience, pursuing a B.Ed degree in Basic Education. From their profile, although the mentor is older and relatively more experienced than the mentee, the mentee is pursuing a higher degree than the mentor is. The Diploma certificate is higher than the initial Teachers’ Certificate ‘A’, but lower than a Bachelor’s degree. This appears to be a relationship that could offer a lot of insights into how to negotiate professional and personal learning in mentoring relationships in which the mentee is pursuing a higher academic qualification than the mentor is pursuing. This pairing, again, brings to the fore the problematic nature of mentor selection and mentor-mentee pairing of the UEW mentoring programme.

4.2.3.1 Perception of mentoring and mentoring roles

The conceptions of mentoring and mentoring roles held by Kingsley and Hanson seemed to suggest that each mentoring relationship would be different due to the needs of the mentoring dyad, their personal interests, and the unique nature of the mentoring relationship that would develop.

The academic experience dynamics of Kingsley and Hanson appeared to have informed Kingsley’s view of mentoring as a guiding relationship with ‘undergraduate students’, instead of the traditional relationship between a more experienced mentor and a less experienced mentee. Considering their academic background difference, this focus on the academic status instead of the

professional experience of the mentee seemed to suggest that Kingsley felt a potential challenge that this could pose to him as he remarked:

Mentoring means guiding undergraduate students to acquire the needed methods and skills in teaching needed to help the mentee perform better in the teaching profession. The mentor is a counsellor, a guide, and a supervisor. ... to be able to mentor somebody whose academic level is higher than you, you need to read more to broaden your horizon in order to help the intern.

This seemingly open admission of academic inadequacy by Kingsley seems to, again, question the criteria used for mentor selection and mentor-mentee matching. Kingsley's statements above reveal a seeming inherent discomfort and 'fear' or lack of confidence to mentor Hanson.

Hanson, on the other hand, seemed to hold a diagnostic or therapeutic conception of the relationship as helping him to be aware of his deficiencies in professional knowledge and skills for remediation as revealed in this interview statement:

Hanson:

Mentoring is the role on us as interns to get us occupied by the mentor in terms of practical teaching, to identify our weaknesses. A mentor should guide and direct, supervise and offer suggestions and go by the laid down rules assigned to him/her as a mentor.

Thus, mentoring affords the mentee the opportunity to try knowledge and skills acquired in the real world and real time of the school to see their relevance, appropriateness and efficacy. Ironically, Kingsley who Hanson was looking up to as a mirror to identify his strengths and areas that needed improvement appeared unsure of his own professional competence. The peculiar nature of their background characteristics appeared to have given this relationship its perceptions which evoke a somewhat non-dependency type where neither the mentor nor mentee would seem to dominate.

4.2.3.2 The development and establishment of the relationship

From the interview and observation data the orientation programme seemed to have afforded the partners the opportunity to familiarise with each other.

Kingsley: *When the mentees report at first, we organise an orientation for them. They then become familiar with the staff, students and the school environment.*

Through the orientation, we study each other and determine how to relate with them (interview).

Kingsley and Hanson shake hands. Kingsley pats Hanson on the shoulders. They exchange smiles. They walk abreast to the classroom chatting enthusiastically all the way (Field notes: Monday, 10th September 2007).

But as said elsewhere, the orientation's objective of integrating the mentees into the school's life and culture and facilitating their transition from students to interns seemed to have disregarded their individual teaching backgrounds and regarded them as novices. This could not give the mentees the opportunity, for instance, to share their experiences with the pupils and staff of their new school and what they had brought with them to share with the school as the programme envisages.

4.2.3.3 Perceptions of mentoring relationship experience

Interview and observation data, again, indicated that there was a cordial relationship between Kingsley and Hanson. Mutual respect appeared to have been a key factor for the healthy relationship. As a result, age difference was not a barrier to forging a closer relationship. Mentor and mentee, therefore, exhibited some amount of collegiality.

Kingsley: *My relationship with my mentee is cordial. I relate to him as my sibling. I am older than my mentee, but the age difference does not play any important role in our relationship. The friendly relationship enables us to learn from each other. My intern is very cooperative, disciplined and respectful.*

This healthy relationship was corroborated by Hanson:

My relationship with my mentor is very cordial. My mentor is quite older than me; however, that age difference does not have anything to do with our relationship. He respects me and I respect him.

I, however, observed that this seeming collegiality was driven by a kind of 'inferiority' complex on the part of Kingsley. In one of their interactions, Kingsley remarked,

You see, you're an undergraduate student and, therefore, more knowledgeable and competent than I am. So I'm going to learn from you.

Hanson: *We're going to learn from each other. When it comes to teaching, you're more experienced than I am* (Field notes: Wednesday, 20th February 2008).

The signal seemed clear; the academic background difference could make learning in this relationship a one-way affair. All the same, the cordiality and seeming collegiality in this relationship provided a non-threatening context in which they developed a collaborative professional relationship.

4.2.3.4 Mentoring strategies

From what I observed, Hanson worked as an autonomous teacher. He seemed to have controlled the pre-observation and post-observation sessions as he was most of the time explaining how certain strategies worked. Kingsley appeared to have very little to contribute as he felt Hanson was already an excellent teacher. For example, at the initiative of Hanson, they did team teaching, with Hanson giving Kingsley insights into how TESSA methodologies work as the following indicates:

Hanson:

I want us to use dramatisation to team teach the Social Studies topic 'Family Rules about Behaviour'. This is one of the teaching strategies I learnt from the TESSA methodologies (Field notes: 11th March 2008).

Critical reflection after the lesson was absent as Kingsley could not co-engage Hanson in reflection, which is supposed to support the practice of reflective practice. I also observed that the teaching evaluation form (Appendix 3) had only very favourable comments such as, *Very good introduction, Excellent class control, Good class participation, A very successful lesson*. It appeared Kingsley felt uncomfortable critically assessing Hanson's teaching. For example, in one of the lessons Hanson taught, he did not engage the children in any critical thinking. He only 'lectured' without asking questions or finding out whether they had understood the lesson. Kingsley could not draw Hanson's attention to this. When I drew his attention to it during the post-observation conference, Kingsley's remark was, *In fact, the lesson was interesting so there was no need for questions or exercise to test understanding* (Field notes: Thursday, 17th April 2008). So, although the nature of the relationship allowed Hanson to try out a number of the TESSA

innovative and participatory methodologies, critical appraisal of and reflection on teaching seemed weak.

4.2.3.5 Professional and personal learning

During one co-planning session for a Reading lesson, entitled ‘Good and Bad Temper’, Hanson suggested, they used dramatisation. After the lesson Kingsley asked, *where did you get this idea from? It worked very well. Even the slow readers could take part. I’ve learnt so much from the approach you used to teach reading* (Field notes: Tuesday, 6th May 2008). In another lesson, instead of using the traditional textbook to teach reading, Hanson used grocery packages such as empty boxes of ‘Omo’ washing powder, and empty milk tins to teach primary 3 pupils (8 year olds) how to read. The children were excited to see these familiar items in the classroom. The desire and interest to read what was written on these items was unusual. This was a strategy the mentee picked from the TESSA modules. During the post-observation conference Kingsley remarked, *I told you, you graduates are very good and innovative teachers* (Field notes: Tuesday 29th April 2008). So, as I indicated earlier, it appeared this was a relationship that benefited Kingsley more than Hanson.

Kingsley’s concluding interview comments seemed to sum up the professional and personal benefits he derived from the relationship. Apart from enriching his teaching strategies, the practice of mentoring improved his professional attitude and ethics as revealed in the following statements:

Kingsley:

As a mentor I see the mentoring to be very good, because it has prepared me adequately to have much more insight into teaching. The act of mentoring has made me aware of some other teaching methodologies to use with children, time management and self-discipline. I am punctual at school, prepare my lesson notes on time and teach with TLMs. My interpersonal relationship has also improved.

He continued to recount how his identity as a teacher had changed:

In addition, it has helped me with how to cooperate with interns and other members of staff, how to handle pupils and how knowledgeable a mentor should

be. Being a mentor has actually changed my philosophy about being a teacher because hitherto I was behaving like an ordinary teacher, but now I have to acquire more experiences to enable the intern learn from me... Mentoring helps the individual mentor upgrade himself.

These comments imply that Kingsley had the opportunity to make up for his own inadequacies. This probably accounted for his eagerness to learn from Hanson. Thus, it can be argued that the relationship challenged him to be a lifelong learner.

4.2.3.6 Conclusion

The peculiar profile characteristics of Kingsley and Hanson appeared to have reversed the traditional mentoring roles with the mentee assuming the mentor role. Because of academic background differences it seemed the mentor found the relationship a bit of a challenge. All the same, the profile characteristics enabled them to establish a cordial and a kind of collegial relationship which should have offered more professional learning opportunities to mentor and mentee. However, these background differences seemed to have offered learning opportunities to only the mentor. The issue of mentor selection and mentor-mentee pairing can be said to be responsible for this situation. Pairing of mentees with mentors seems to be done without any critical considerations. Invariably, as found in the previous two cases, professional learning in the relationship is limited. In UEWs programme, the school-based mentors are selected by the head teachers/headmasters of the partnership schools. It is in view of problems such as these that Feiman-Nemser (1996) questioned whether mentees must choose their mentors or mentors must be chosen for mentees by third parties.

Healy & Welchert (1990) argue that the interaction between mentor and mentee is aimed at passing on the professional legacy of the mentor to the mentee, and that reciprocity between mentor and mentee gives rise to an identity transformation by each. This is true because from my professional experience, mentors' pedagogical suggestions are important sources for mentees' learning. In this relationship, the mentor rather seems to be amazed at the professional competence of the mentee. Without any co-engagement in critical reflection, the mentee could not look more

critically at his own teaching to evaluate the effectiveness of the innovative teaching approaches he tried with the pupils.

4.3 Non-traditional relationships

4.3.1 Olivia and Naomi: “A relationship of convenience”

Mentor-Mentee Profile

Olivia is a 30-year old female teacher with 10 years’ teaching experience. She holds a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree in Basic Education from UEW, and has been mentoring for 3 years. Olivia is one of the pioneer student teachers who went through the internship model at UEW. She was trained to mentor teacher trainees when she completed her B.Ed. programme. Naomi, however, is a 42-year old female student teacher in her final year of a B.Ed. degree in Basic Education. She has 27 years’ teaching experience.

This relationship is described as non-traditional since it does not mirror the older and more experienced mentor and the younger and less experienced mentee relationship. How this relationship is negotiated, developed and the professional activities that mentor and mentee will engage in could be insightful for teacher professional development in mentoring relationships.

4.3.1.1 Perceptions of mentoring and mentoring roles

It is interesting that in their perceptions of mentoring, Olivia and Naomi were silent about ‘experience’. It appeared they were conscious of their teaching experience dynamics. So, Olivia viewed mentoring as a helping, supportive and learning relationship, the purpose of which is to facilitate the realisation of the mentee’s dream of becoming a competent teacher through guidance, monitoring, counselling, and supervision. She explained:

Mentoring is the process of guiding another person... to achieve a specific purpose, ... to make the person the best of what he/she intends to be. The mentor is a role model, a guide, a facilitator, a clinical supervisor, a parent, a friend, and anything that will let the intern feel free to share ideas with him/her.

Naomi also viewed it as a supportive relationship in which the mentor plays guiding, supervision and counselling roles.

Mentoring is whereby you look up to somebody for strength, guidance, and direction in a particular thing that you are doing. ...A mentor's role is to guide, monitor, supervise and counsel the intern.

These perceptions seemed to suggest that the relationship might offer opportunities for collaboration where no one would dominate. It appeared to offer a supportive, encouraging and non-evaluative relationship. This, it seemed, would create an environment which is safe for learning and professional growth.

4.3.1.2 The development and establishment of the relationship

Despite the positive perceptions about mentoring and mentoring roles held by the dyad, the relationship appeared to have had some difficulties in its establishment. Personality traits were critical factors to the establishment of the relationship. The dynamics of age and experience seemed to have posed some threats to establishing a functional relationship as Olivia indicated:

Initially, there was that challenge of identifying how I was going to work with my intern. My intern is older and more experienced than I am. Earlier I saw signs that the age difference might disturb the mentoring relationship so I worked that out. A few times, she made remarks during interactions with her to indicate that some interns like her have had many years' teaching experience already and often referred to her rank in the Ghana Education Service. Initially, she was reluctant to make any enquiries about the internship from me.

Olivia continued:

With my knowledge of individual differences, when the interns arrive in the school, I quickly observe them to identify their personal characteristics and thus approach them first with welcome smiles; to say hello and to make the one feel at home with me and chat about things in general. I forgot about who I am and humbly approached her with respect. I passed favourable comments about her work and the least of things she might do in class. I respect the intern and she equally reciprocates.

This appeared to be a very challenging relationship for Olivia. It was evident from the interview and what I observed that it took the mentor's commitment, interpersonal skills, humility, respectfulness, flexibility and tactfulness to establish

the relationship. In fact, at a point and as I observed and she indicated in the interview, she humbled herself too much for Naomi; calling her ‘Mum’ (Field notes) any time she wanted to talk to her.

However, Naomi, in the interview indicated that there were no obstacles to the relationship.

I am older than my mentor is and we are all women, but the age difference has nothing to do with our relationship. I respect her and she does it to me [sic].

This prompted me to probe further since it went contrary to what Olivia said. In my subsequent interactions with her, she jokingly asked me:

‘But Sir, why do you want people like us to come for this internship? We’re already experienced. I’m not learning any new thing. It’s a waste of time.’(Field notes: Wednesday, 27th February 2008).

This sharply contradicted all that she said during the interview. It rather confirmed Olivia’s assertion that the personality characteristics of Naomi were potential factors that seemed to play against the relationship. It also seemed to indicate that Naomi was not too comfortable in a relationship in which she was more experienced than her mentor. This, again, raises questions about the criteria for selecting mentors and pairing mentors and mentees.

4.3.1.3 Perception of mentoring relationship experience

Cordiality in mentoring relationships as a crucial element to the achievement of mentoring goals, especially learning was emphasised by both mentor and mentee. For Olivia, it enabled her to perform her roles, and allowed Naomi to have the comfort to share ideas with her as she revealed in the following interview statements:

Olivia:

The relationship between my intern and me is very very good; cordial I should say. [It] helps me to do my work effectively as a mentor. It helps me in the various discussions we usually hold to talk about lesson planning and preparation, delivery and evaluation. [It] allows the intern to have a free mind to share with me any challenges she might be facing. I see her as a sister, a

colleague teacher working together towards a common goal. Honestly, the age difference is never a barrier to our mentoring relationship. Hardly can one determine who the intern is and who the mentor is when you meet us in the classroom doing co-teaching

This was corroborated by the mentee:

Naomi:

The relationship between my mentor and me is both official and cordial. An intern has to be in a good relationship with the mentor so that they can learn from each other.

What I observed was that after the initial difficulties, they were later seen to have been connected at the personal level. For example, they waited for each other to go for break together (Field notes: Monday, 3rd March 2008; Thursday, 10th April 2008; Wednesday, 23rd April 2008). Their discussions at pre-observation and post-observation conferences were also cordial and lively. This, however, did not engender real collegiality and reciprocity as they claimed. From Naomi's statements, she was obliged to take instructions from Olivia:

Even though she sometimes refers to me as a senior teacher, I take instructions from her as required of an intern so I do not have any problems with her. (Field notes: Wednesday, 27th February 2008).

This implies that it was a somewhat cosmetic relationship. She was behaving the way she did to satisfy programme requirements. It also appeared that Olivia's role as an assessor made Naomi submit to Olivia as in an initial visit to the school Naomi asked me, *Sir, is it true that the University considers the mentors' grades they give us as part of our final assessment?* (Field notes: Monday, 10th September 2007). She looked at me in disbelief when I confirmed it.

Another thing I observed and which she commented on in her interview statement was that the distance between the classroom of Olivia and hers, to some extent, influenced the mentoring relationship. *'Mentor and mentee don't share the same class'* (Field notes: Monday, 10th September 2007). It did not seem to have offered them enough opportunity to forge a real professional relationship as she revealed:

My mentor is not my class teacher so I am closer and friendly to my class teacher than to my mentor even though our relationship is cordial.

Thus, lack of proximity between mentor and mentee seemed to have constrained the relationship.

4.3.1.1.4 Mentoring strategies

The interview and observation data seemed to suggest that this mentoring dyad valued collaborative activities. These involved pre-observation conferences, observations of teaching, and post-observation conferences. They engaged in activities such as team planning, team teaching, discussions and reflecting together which enabled the relationship to assume a somewhat collegial professional relationship. Both mentor and mentee commented on some of these strategies during the interview as follows:

Olivia:

I directed her in the writing of her teaching philosophy, reflective practice, and lesson plan. We talked about the lesson plan and she readily adjusted to what I expected; especially to the aligning of major aspects of the lesson plan. ...Hardly can one determine who the intern is and who the mentor is when you meet us in the classroom doing co-teaching.

Naomi confirmed:

In our initial meetings, we talked about when my lesson notes should be ready and directed that as much as possible I should use teaching-learning materials in all lessons. Initially when she read my lesson notes, she directed me to write it in a particular form and I did as she required. We discussed how to prepare teaching portfolio and all other things about teaching and learning. I had the opportunity of observing her whiles teaching and it really inspired me the more.

From what I observed, however, Olivia seemed not to have taken Naomi's experience as a resource for learning. In fact, lesson notes preparation was not a problem for Naomi at all as I observed. In fact, in one of the pre-observation discussions, Naomi remarked, *'We've been doing all these. The only difference is that you have adopted this format which is new to me'*. (Field notes: Monday, 24th March 2008). This meant that it was only the format which was new to her and not the content. However, it appeared the holding of conferences was well intended and somehow effective; to promote co-construction of professional knowledge through

reflection It appeared to have provided opportunities for Naomi to reflect by providing answers to the reflective questions (Appendix 1, 2, 3, & 5). The sessions also afforded them the opportunity to exhibit the cordiality and near collegiality in the relationship as ‘...*the sessions were relaxed and lively. The answers provided were thoroughly discussed in a frank and non-threatening manner*’ (Field notes: Friday, 16th May 2008).

4.3.1.5 Professional and personal learning

From my observation, this relationship seemed not to have offered much professional and personal learning to the mentoring dyad despite what they said they learnt from the relationship. For example, according to Naomi:

I did [learn] and would like to talk about three things that I learnt. I had the opportunity of observing her whiles teaching and it really inspired me the more. Secondly, her interaction with the pupils when teaching; by taking her time to get to the less average ones to participate in her lessons. Thirdly and finally, her attitude and passion for her work and the desire of being ready whenever she is called for assignment outside the classroom even when it is an emergency duty without any prior notification.

Getting inspiration from the mentor’s disposition and attitude towards teaching, as well as her infectious enthusiasm for teaching, strictly speaking, may not be considered new professional learning as such; judged against what Olivia also said about Naomi’s teaching expertise:

Olivia:

My mentee handles lessons with deeper knowledge of subject matter, and communicates with enthusiasm and at the level of the children. In addition, she teaches with much enthusiasm, captures the attention of the learners and sustains their interest throughout lessons.

From these statements, the mentor too was amazed at the mentee’s teaching prowess. When I went through the intern teaching evaluation form (Appendix 3), the least score for the mentee was 80%; suggesting that she was a competent teacher. During one of the post-observation conferences Naomi remarked:

You see, when you teach for a long time you take certain things for granted like lesson notes and teaching learning materials. At times you even feel lazy to teach, and you ask the children to take their books and read privately while you do your own thing.(Field notes: Wednesday, 26th March 2008).

This buttresses the point that the mentee seemed not to have learnt any new skill from the relationship. At best, it could be described as a refreshing or renewal of experience.

Mentor training as a critical component of effective mentoring programmes seemed to have been attested to by Olivia. Apart from equipping her with the necessary mentoring skills, it appeared to have improved her professional practice too as her comments below suggest:

The mentorship training has guided me ... in my teaching and in my work as a mentor. I was equipped with knowledge and skills in action research writing, clinical supervision, reflective teaching, philosophy of teaching and others. I reflect on my lessons, which hitherto I was not doing, and that has helped me a lot to improve on my teaching skills.

Thus, she considered the mentor training and the process of mentoring as a form of continuous professional development.

Conclusion

This is a case of a relationship between a younger and less experienced mentor and an older and more experienced mentee. As Levinson et al (1978) argued, the relationship succeeded because of the awareness of vulnerabilities and a conscious effort by the mentor, using tact and diplomacy, to harmonise the relationship. Because of the greater age diversity, the relationship almost assumed that of a parent-child with the mentor calling the mentee ‘mum’ (Levinson et al, 1978). This resulted in a relationship in which the mentor appeared to be over submissive.

Another thing about this relationship was that the mentor seemed not to have capitalised on the mentee’s long years of service to engage in constant dialogue and critical reflection and analysis of teaching for new learning and improvement. This would have resulted in identity transformation for both mentor and mentee whereby they would have refined their own styles and philosophies of teaching (Wang & Odell, 2007).

In addition, because mentor and mentee did not share the same class, co-learning activities appeared to be limited. The mentor only went to the mentee's class when she needed to observe her lesson as was the situation during the old teaching practice. This arrangement goes contrary to the design and content of the UEW programme, which insists that mentor and mentee should share the same classroom since the distance between the classroom of the mentoring dyad largely determines the level and quality of collaboration and support provided (Tauer, 1996).

4.3.2 Lily and Eric: "A relationship of great diplomacy"

Mentor-Mentee profile

Lily is a 33-year old female teacher with 11 years' teaching experience. She holds a B.Ed. degree in Basic Education and has mentored for four years. Eric, on the other hand, is a 42-year old male teacher with 20 years' teaching experience pursuing a B.Ed degree in Basic Education. This is also a relationship that does not reflect the traditional mentor-mentee relationship. Apart from the experience difference, there is the issue of gender difference too. These two factors are likely to influence the development of the relationship and the learning that may take place.

4.3.2.1 Perception of mentoring and mentoring roles

When asked to give their perceptions of mentoring and mentoring roles, this mentoring dyad went beyond what mentoring is to indicate leadership and management qualities that effective mentors must possess. This awareness was critical to establishing and managing a functional and productive relationship. The mentor needs to provide leadership for the relationship and ensure its smooth development, maintenance and sustenance.

For example, Lily believes:

A mentor is a trusted advisor ... a person who has gone through an experience and is capable of guiding another person through a similar one. This person requires leadership qualities like patience, knowledge, humility, self-control, wisdom and selflessness to cope with the process. The person also needs management skills like good planning, organisation and communicative skills.

She thinks:

The role of a mentor is like parents who guide their children. Thus, a mentor guides the mentee and learns from the mentee. A good mentor is the one who has the time and patience to listen and understand the mentee and makes it easy for the mentee to approach him or her.

To Eric: *Mentoring is a service, guidance and assistance offered to someone who is undergoing training to help the person acquire or gain the professional competence within the period of training. The role of the mentor is to supervise, guide, facilitate and assess. The mentor should be competent, respectful, fair, firm, creative, sociable, cooperative, intelligent, caring, and encouraging.*

Like Olivia and Naomi, none of them mentioned age and length of experience of the participants in their perceptions. This seemed to be the situation in the two non-traditional mentoring relationships to deliberately leave them out as inapplicable.

4.3.2.2 The development and establishment of the relationship

Lily seemed to be aware that establishing a collegial relationship could enable them manage a functional mentoring relationship despite the age and experience differences as she remarked:

Lily:

When I get new mentees, I do all I can to befriend them, know more about their personal lives, and sometimes some of their problems that can impede the effectiveness of their internship.

Eric confirmed Lily's desire for a collegial relationship:

Eric: *After an orientation session, my mentor met me and assured me that we were going to work as colleagues.*

It appeared, however, that the dynamics of the personality characteristics of the mentor and mentee somehow impacted on the establishment of the relationship as can be inferred from the section that follows.

4.3.2.3 Perception of relationship experience

Although Lily wished to establish a collegial relationship with Eric as indicated above, the interplay of cross-gender relationship and power dynamics seemed to be obstacles as revealed in the following statement:

Lily: *Mentees of these days want to see the mentors as bosses over them, but I am trying to get them mix up with the rest of us by making them know that they should consider themselves as colleague teachers so that we can interact easily and confidently. The problem, however, is that, sometimes, the effort to make mentees feel at ease is taken differently by others on the staff. Some of these things hinder me from going all out in my interactions.*

Two issues are raised in the comments above. First, the situation where mentees see mentors as bosses that Lily complains about seems to be a carryover from the old teaching practice. If it persists, then it implies that the mode of the practicum has not changed to allow mentees to relate to mentors on fairly equal terms. Second, the cross-gender relationship and how it attracts gossip and conjectures is also raised.

When I enquired later from Eric why he considers Lily as his ‘boss’ despite the age and experience difference he attributed it to her assessor role and trying to avoid misrepresentation of his intentions. He remarked,

My relationship with my mentor is very cordial. Although I am older than she is, I respect her because she respects me too. The age and experience difference don’t matter. Once she is the one who will finally determine your grade, you have to give her that respect and distance. Also I can’t get too close because you know women, I don’t know what she might think and what others might take it for. I’m a responsible man. We are free. It’s OK.

In other words, the mentor’s role as an assessor constrains the relationship somehow. So, although there was a cordial relationship between them, I never saw them as closely together as Olivia and Naomi were.

4.3.2.4 Mentoring strategies

Lily and Eric employed team teaching, which involved team planning, analysis and reflection to allow each to learn by participation.

Lily:

Because he is right with me in my classroom, we do team teaching, I realise that he is not just after marks, but is ready to learn what a graduate teacher needs to know through reflection.

At one of their planning sessions Lily asked Eric to suggest an approach they should use to teach factors. Eric suggested the use of games and the two of them planned it, taught the lesson and reflected on it. Lily remarked during the post-lesson discussion, *This approach is really interesting. It made the whole lesson simple and easy to understand. This is mathematics made easy.* This seemed to indicate that Lily found the approach, which was an adaptation of a TESSA approach, insightful.

Self-evaluation and critical discussions were also seen as professional learning activities. As Lily indicated that despite the age and experience difference, Eric was willing and eager to learn in the relationship.

With his age and longer years of experience in teaching, he works with all his heart, applying every teaching standard he is prompted to do. Though this man is older than I am, he opens up during his teaching to be criticised and he evaluates his own performance objectively at the end of each supervision session.

What I observed was that at post-observation conferences, Lily often asked him to do a self-evaluation of lessons taught: *If you were to evaluate yourself, what would you say about the lesson?* This, he did without any inhibition. *I think the lesson went well. I was happy with everything.* In one of my informal conversations with him he disclosed, however, that the whole thing was becoming boring. When asked to explain, he said, *apart from the TESSA approaches I'm trying out there's nothing new.* When I suggested to him that he did not say this in the interview, as the following statement suggested:

Eric:

It is important to develop a relationship because that would enable us to discuss and share ideas. The relationship is helping me a lot. I am learning a lot.

he agreed and said, *'Sir, you see we have to say something'*. What he implied by this was that he told me what I wanted to hear. But the truth was that he was not learning anything new. Despite this, it appeared the opportunity to experiment as a way of professional learning was significant as Eric commented:

Even though I am a mentee and I am supposed to learn from her, she allows me freedom to explore.

4.3.2.5 Personal and professional learning

In this relationship, although both Lily and Eric reported of benefiting professionally, the critical engagement appeared compromised. It could be inferred from Lily's comments below that Eric was already a competent and confident teacher, as well as a resourceful one. As I indicated above, it was rather Lily who appeared to have gained more from the relationship as she was introduced to the TESSA website for active learning teaching strategies. In one of her comments on Eric's teaching she remarked:

Lily:

[The relationship] has exposed me to so many methods of teaching. Because he is right with me in my classroom, we do team teaching. I am learning many things from him too. The confidence with which he even handles the students sometimes we the old teachers don't do that. He has a way of handling even the stubborn boys so the next time I also adopted that attitude not necessarily sacking them but he calls them and talk to them and you realize he has control over them. Another thing I have learnt from him is that he is always telling me to go to the internet and research for information. So I have picked it.

What Eric claimed to have learnt seemed interesting as can be inferred from the following statements:

Eric:

My approach to teaching has changed. My perception about how things should be done in a school is also changing. Sometimes what we are taught in the university is not what you meet in the classroom. The classroom is different. There are no teaching materials. The relationship is helping me because she advises me on good practices that will enable me to cope with the teaching and learning process. My mentor is good. Some of the things that I have learnt from my mentor are punctuality to school, systematic delivery of lesson, and different ways of introducing a lesson.

After teaching for 20 years, it appeared amazing that it was during the internship that Eric had become aware of the realities of the Ghanaian classroom. Second, it was interesting to hear that he learnt the professional attitudes and qualities of punctuality and lesson delivery from the mentoring relationship. In fact, when I questioned him further about his claims, and what Lily said about his competence, he said, *'I thought it would not be fine to say I didn't learn anything'*. This clearly

pointed to a difficulty in ascertaining the efficacy of this mentoring relationship as a vehicle for reciprocal professional learning for upgrading student teachers.

Conclusion

In this relationship, both mentor and mentee behaved in accordance with the demands of the mentoring programme. However, the major goal of mutual professional learning seemed to have been achieved one-sided with the mentor rather gaining more than the mentee. This, again, brings to the fore the issue of mentor-mentee matching as commented on in the other relationships. It appears mentees expect their mentors to be relatively more experienced than them. This may explain the lukewarm attitude and pretence mentees in such relationships show towards their mentors.

The analyses of the five cases of mentoring relationships have provided insights into the uniqueness of each case and how each contributed to teacher professional learning. In the next chapter I discuss the findings across the five cases for conclusions to be drawn and recommendations made about the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF ISSUES ARISING ACROSS CASES

We are born in relationship
We learn to be in relationship
And we live the whole of our lives in relationship
Until the point of death
Jacques Delors (1996)

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss data analysed across all of the cases in order to compare and contrast themes and sub-themes that emerged from them in relation to the research questions and how consistent the findings are with existing literature on teacher professional learning in mentoring relationships. By identifying similarities and differences, I seek to provide further insights into and understanding of issues concerning the intricacies of the mentor-mentee relationships and how they impact on teacher professional learning in the Ghanaian context. It must be noted that the discussion of the findings is grounded within the context that the concept and practice of formal teacher mentoring is a novelty in Ghanaian teacher education.

5.2 Perceptions of mentoring and mentoring roles relative to UEWs model

Generally, two problematic conceptions of mentoring relationships emerged from the analysis, the first being the conception of mentoring as an apprenticeship learning relationship that occurs between an experienced teacher and a student teacher (Frank & Hannah). This relationship was based on the notion of a mentee as an ‘empty’ vessel to be filled by the mentor (Levinson, 1978; Zey, 1984; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Wang & Odell, 2007). The problem with this conception is that it ignores the fact that all the mentees in the cases came with some prior teaching experience. Instead, the relationship focused on transmission of expert knowledge from the mentor.

This is surprising given that the concept of mentoring as transmission is inconsistent with UEWs model which seeks to promote collaboration, collegiality and reciprocal learning between mentor and mentee, and where the mentee also plays an active part in the construction of professional knowledge and the acquisition of teaching skills (Barrett, 2000; SIH, 2009).

From my professional practice, as the Director of this programme, three reasons may account for this situation. First, the old conception of professional learning during teaching practice has somehow developed into stabilised conditions of practice and norms in some of the mentors, especially the old ones. Despite the training given to mentors to change their perspective and understanding of professional learning, some still hold on to conceptions and exhibit behaviours that clearly contradict the underlying collaborative, collegial and reciprocity philosophy of the UEW programme. It was clear from one of the cases (Frank and Hannah) that the age gap and the deeply held understandings of learning as transmission were factors that influenced mentor behaviour.

Second, there are no clearly spelt out criteria for mentor selection. Heads of partnership schools nominate teachers to be trained as mentors. Others volunteer to be mentors. Thus, the absence of selection criteria gives room for teachers who do not have the qualities of a mentor to come onto the programme. The third reason is that the programme does not have any built in formal evaluation of mentors by mentees at the end of the placement season. This could have given the University some information about which mentor to retain and who to dispense of their services. As Ostroff (1991) and Phillips (1991) comment, evaluation is the cornerstone for any programme improvement. These are serious gaps that the programme has to address.

Another relational conception that emerged from the case studies, which appeared cosmetic, was one characterised by some amount of collegiality, collaboration and mutual learning (Elvis & Edna; Kingsley & Hanson; Olivia & Naomi; Lily & Eric). However, as was played out in the relationship between Frank and Hannah,

although there were instances of cordiality and respect among mentors and mentees, collegiality in terms of sharing and tackling teaching challenges as co-learners rarely occurred as in the spirit of the UEW model. Although some mentees (Edna, Hanson, Naomi and Eric) described their relationship with their mentors as collaborative and collegial, there was evidence that in practice they kept a distance and held back from critical dialogue.

A major factor that may account for this situation is the lack of sensitivity to the professional and socio-cultural context in which the model is being implemented.

It appears UEW is applying mentoring conceptions that are too theoretically driven and alien to Ghanaian culture. In the Ghanaian teaching profession, for example, professional ethics, normally, include respect for rank and social distance. It is, therefore, impracticable for teachers of lower ranks to relate with those in the higher ranks as equals. The problem may also be interpreted within the general culture of Ghanaian society. The culture of respect for age and authority poses a great challenge to collegial mentoring relationships. Ghanaian society, as indicated earlier, is hierarchical. Age is equated with experience, respect, reverence and wisdom (Quainoo, 2000). Mentors and mentees may collaborate but may not operate as equals. Collegiality in Western societies, however, seems not problematic as children can call adults directly by their first names. This culture appears to blur the line between adults and peers. Students call their professors by their first names. This will be unacceptable in Ghanaian educational institutions.

Another setback to the collegiality concept which the programme seems not to have taken into account is the inherent power of mentors (Foucault, 1980; Townley, 1994). An in-depth examination of the power relations that exist between mentor and mentee within mentoring relationships is missing. For example, the mentor's role as an assessor appeared to have restricted opportunities for collegiality and reciprocity. In the UEW model the mentor is a summative assessor whose marks constitute 70% of the mentee's final assessment, while the remaining 30% is allocated by the University supervisor. This alone is enough to

put a lot of power in the hands of the mentor. Knowing this, the mentee would play the underdog to please the mentor in order to pass. Thus, the power dynamic through summative assessment by the mentor restricts the relationship and makes it assume a hierarchical nature with the mentor dominating activities in the relationship.

So, while, perceptibly, the relationship was that of equals, in reality it was a master and student relationship just like what existed between practising students and their supervisors in the old teaching practice where much of the emphasis was on, in some cases, one-shot supervision and the marks student teachers were awarded instead of ensuring that the student teacher was nurtured to grow professionally over the teaching practice period.

The mentor role perceptions in the five relationships did not reflect the actual roles performed by the mentors as the study shows. Although they appeared to be aware of the roles as spelt out in the guidelines for the programme, they practiced otherwise. This seems to contradict Guyton's (1989) and Mcgee's (2001) assertion that mentors and mentees who know and understand their own and each other's roles are more likely to support the growth of the professional relationship.

It appears there is a gap between mentor selection and mentor-mentee matching. The inappropriate mentor-mentee matching appears to have limited the roles they were supposed to play. As Feiman-Nemser (1996) argues, mentor-mentee matching is critical to mentoring relationships. For instance, how can a young and a relatively inexperienced mentor be a role model who is supposed to provide professional and personal inspiration, admiration and motivation (Little, 1992; Carruthers, 1993; Furlong & Maynard, 1993), for an old and experienced mentee; or a counsellor in times of uncertainties (Anderson & Shannon, 1993). Again, how can a mentor whose academic qualification is below that of the mentee be a facilitator who enhances the professional learning efforts of the mentee (Brookfield, 1986)?

It is reasonable to assume that mentees would prefer mentors who are able to provide them with the needed assistance at the proper time. Their academic, professional and personal needs could be served best by having a mentor who is qualified, experienced and who remains within close proximity. In my view, the current practice where mentees are randomly matched with mentors without any considerations of age, gender, professional experience, status, academic standing and personal chemistry, is flawed. This gap may affect how mentees and mentors interact and negotiate their relationships and may also affect learning within mentoring relationships.

5.3 Relationship types

Apart from the problems associated with the perceptions of mentoring and the roles of the mentor and mentee, the types of relationships established also presented problems. Three relationship types emerged from the study. As stated earlier, one was the traditional relationship between an older and more experienced mentor and a younger less experienced mentee (Levinson, 1978; Zey, 1984) as was found in the relationship between Frank and Hannah, Elvis and Edna and Kingsley and Hanson. The second was what I call the emerging (non-traditional) relationship between a younger and less experienced mentor and an older more experienced mentee (Levinson, 1978) found in the relationship between Olivia and Naomi and Lily and Eric, while the third was the relationship between Kingsley and Hanson where Hanson, the mentee was pursuing a higher academic and professional degree than the mentor was. This I describe as an anomalous relationship. Each of these three relationship types presented unique challenges to the mentoring dyad.

With the first type, as discussed earlier, the vast age difference (29 years) between Frank and Hannah seemed to have created a psychological distance between mentor and mentee. The nature of the relationship between Frank and Hannah confirms Levinson's (1978) claim that if a mentor is much older than the mentee, the relationship may become that of a parent and child relationship as played out in their father-daughter relationship. Levinson et al (1978) suggest that for an

effective and successful mentoring relationship the mentor must normally be older by between 8-15 years. Mendleson et al (1989) also cite Kram's and Burke's studies that suggest average age difference to be 16-18 years. It appears the lesser the age diversity the closer they could relate; as played out in the relationships of Elvis and Edna, as well as Kingsley and Hanson.

As pointed out elsewhere, in Ghanaian culture, great emphasis is placed on authority structures, including even authority based on age among siblings within the family. This is extended to other older people in the society. Thus, mentees who have parent-child relationships are bound by the norms of the general culture to respect and not question the authority of the mentor. Thus, great emphasis is placed on obedience and submission. There can be mutual respect and cordiality in such relationships but there will be some distance characterised by humility and obedience (Quainoo, 2000). This is what Geest (2002) refers to as the 'Elder Respect' system. Again, although the authority structure was still there in the relationships between Elvis and Edna, and Kingsley and Hanson, these relationships were slightly freer than the parent and child apparently because of the relatively close age differences.

In the emerging relationships, the evidence suggested that the mentors had initial difficulties negotiating the relationships such as Olivia indicated. In these relationships extra caution, diplomacy and tact was needed in handling the mentees. Mentees in these relationships were also not comfortable in them. It was evident that the ego and self-esteem of such mentees were at play. Naomi, for instance, questioned why they should be humiliated by matching them with younger and less experienced mentees. It is considered a reversal of Ghanaian traditional social roles where a more experienced person 'mentors' the youth. Kanan's & Baker's (2002) argument that a mentee's acceptance of a mentor equal or junior in age carries the implicit acknowledgement of one's inferior competence is worth noting.

Here, again, is yet more evidence pointing to the UEW mentoring programme's lack of cultural sensitivity and clear guidelines in terms of mentor- mentee matching. As pointed out, this has the potential to affect the kind of professional learning that will take place in the relationship.

This questions the rationale for UEW to partner more experienced mentees with less experienced mentors for professional learning. This is not to say that once one has many years' teaching experience, then the one is automatically a competent teacher. The argument here rather is that there appears to be some psychological and social disincentives for experienced mentees to be mentored by less experienced mentors. Again, less experienced mentors also find it more challenging to partner more experienced mentees as Levinson et al (1978), Kram (1983) and Clutterback & Lane (2005) noted.

I refer to the third relationship (Kingsley's & Hanson's) as 'anomalous' in that academically the mentee seems to be more knowledgeable than the mentor. The evidence suggested that this knowledge gap between mentor and mentee presented relationship dynamics such as anxiety, and a feeling of inadequacy. Furthermore, this type of relationship was missing from the mentoring literature. In fact, Berliner (2000) argues that good mentoring practices require that the mentor should be an expert with rich content, practical and pedagogical knowledge. Mentors are, therefore, regarded as sources of knowledge for the mentee (Roberts, 2000). Apart from the lack of social sensitivity, it appears the UEW programme lacks a well-research based knowledge to inform the practice of mentoring. What this type of relationship seems to point out is that apart from professional experience, the social and academic standing of mentors and mentees may have to be considered when matching mentors and mentees to ensure maximum learning for each.

What these three relationship types seem to suggest is that the concept of collegiality and reciprocal learning in mentoring relations as envisaged in UEW's mentoring model and supported in the literature presents great challenges to the

mentoring dyad because of the peculiar social-cultural context in which the concept is being practiced. Establishing a professional relationship is considered a vital aspect of the internship experience and critical to the learning that occurs within it (Ferrier-Kerr, 2009). Because of this, any conceptual confusions or gaps in policy and practice may lead to the establishment of relationships that may not meet the goals of the mentoring programme.

5.4 Perception of mentoring relationship experiences relative to personal and professional learning

The reciprocal learning concept (Healy & Welchert, 1990; Barrett, 2000; Ralph, 2003) which underpins UEW's mentoring model that the relationship will offer opportunities for meaningful professional development for both mentees and mentor teachers (CETDAR, 2009) appears to have been theoretically well intended but practically problematic because of the types of relationships established. The model recognises both mentors and mentees as co-constructors of professional knowledge. The master-apprentice relationship such as that between Frank and Hannah considered the mentor as a repository of academic and professional expertise. The mentee is to study the mentor's teaching style and imitate it. This type of relationship serves to perpetuate existing teaching practices and norms which consist mainly of didactic strategies instead of transforming existing teaching culture and practice (Wang & Odell, 2007) to embrace participatory methods. It also contradicts Young et al (2004); & Barrett (2000) who define mentoring relationships as interdependent when both mentors and mentees support and learn from one another. It can be deduced that either the concept is not well understood, accepted or some of the mentees and mentors are just welded to their traditional notion of learning to teach as transmission.

Another factor that emerged from the study as militating against the reciprocal learning concept was the matching of mentees with mentors who are nearing retirement as was the case of Frank (59 years; close to retirement age 60). As the evidence showed, at this stage in ones career, one appears not to be interested in

any further professional learning. It appears not much attention was given to issues of mentor selection and matching.

As far as mentor-mentee professional learning is concerned, there is a gap between theory and practice. As argued earlier, the quality of learning depends on the type of relationship that is developed. The import of the relationship is to afford mentors and mentees opportunities for learning (Ragins, 2000). But the professional learning situation as described in the study, calls to question whether mentoring programmes should be developed from models derived from theoretical positions alone. It can be argued from this study that theoretical positions alone cannot provide sufficient basis for the development of mentoring programmes. It must be based on the socio-cultural factors within the context of implementation as it is the interaction between particular mentors and particular mentees that determine the type of relationship to be established and the type of professional learning that will result. Because the designers seem not to have taken the cultural context into consideration, the relationships that resulted could not provide opportunities for collaborative strategies and reflection which could have resulted in self-evaluation, renewal and identity transformation.

5.5 Mentor-mentee professional learning processes

From the evidence, the type of professional learning strategy used depended on the type of relationship established (Kerry & Mayes, 1995). What pedagogic principles underlie the learning relationships? Roberts (2000) posits that mentoring is a teaching and learning process, while Zachary (2002:28) sees learning as ‘the fundamental process, purpose, and product of mentoring’. I, therefore, discuss below the strategies that appeared to have been used in the relationships that were established vis-à-vis the development of effective practice through collaboration, experimentation and reflection as envisaged in the UEW programme.

Transmission

The hierarchical father-daughter relationship seriously compromised UEW’s model of encouraging collaborative learning strategies such as team planning,

team teaching and critical reflection for teacher professional learning and growth. The mentee passively listened to the mentor without much dialogue and hence played no role in negotiating and constructing professional knowledge and experience. Imitation of a mentor's style does not equip mentees with critical thinking capacities. UEW aims to train a new crop of teachers who are reflective practitioners; teachers who constantly reflect on their teaching and their children's learning. Therefore, the type of mentoring relationship in which mentors hand down professional prescriptions to mentees defeats the aim.

As supported by the literature, mentors have to facilitate learning in mentoring relationships by applying adult learning principles (Zachary, 2002; Knowles, 1980). The principles rely on cooperative and collaborative relationship. That is when mentor and mentee are in joint diagnosing, planning, implementation and evaluation of their own learning. As explained earlier on, it appears some mentors still hold on to the old notion of learning in the old teaching practice model. Regular mentor training, seminars, conferences, review workshops and yearly evaluations of mentors by mentees need to be part of the design of the UEW programme. This, I argue, is one of the gaps in the UEW model.

Collaborative teaching

In the other relationships, although both mentor and mentee conceived mentoring as a professional learning relationship between colleagues that is characterised by mutual assistance, guidance and help involving team planning, and team teaching (Knowles, 1980; Knowles et al, 1998) as a major breakaway from the traditional approach to teacher learning and development, they appeared superficial, mechanical and procedural. From the evidence both mentors and mentees considered them as fulfilling the requirements of the programme and not as strategies for real professional insights and learning.

In this study, again, it was evident that only novel teaching episodes presented learning situations. Since the mentees were not pre-service or novice teachers, the teaching episodes were not challenging enough. For relatively experienced

teachers, it would be helpful if it were a new teaching strategy that the mentor or mentee wanted to partner each other to learn how to use it. It can, therefore, be argued that it is novice teachers who may need this type of participatory teaching to gain some confidence before assuming a sole teaching role since Burn (1997), Roth & Tobin (2002), and Tomlinson (1995) have argued that collaborative teaching by teacher-mentors and their mentees, including shared planning and reflection, has great potential to facilitate the early professional learning of novice teachers.

Six years of coordinating this programme has informed me that upgrading student teachers do not find the programme challenging and fulfilling enough. The design and content suit pre-service or novice teachers best. I, therefore, suggest a review of the design and content to suit both pre-service and in-service/upgrading student teachers.

Observation of mentors' teaching

Modelling teaching for mentees to observe also presents methodological as well as personal problems for the mentoring dyad. This social learning (Bandura, 1977) or experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) strategy involves mentees observing the professional behaviours of their mentors, subjecting them to critical reflections and discussions and learning from them. It appears this practice of observing mentors teach and subjecting the experience to critical discussion or feedback is problematic from a socio-cultural perspective. In Ghanaian culture, it is not the norm for young ones to subject the actions of elders to scrutiny (Quainoo, 2000; Geest, 2002). This may be construed as undermining the authority of the elder. This learning approach in practicum is well intended but difficult in practice as a result of the power differentials inherent in the relationships.

Observation of mentees' teaching

The socio-cultural context of the programme militates against the new model of supervision which is intended to afford the mentees the opportunity to learn from their own teaching. Mentors are only to act as facilitators (Brookfield, 1986) by

creating a functional working relationship and utilising questioning to assist reflection and feedback to help the mentees in their self-directed learning. This is to be achieved through pre-observation and post-observation conferences using guides and forms provided (Appendix 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5). In the new model mentees are generators or constructors of professional knowledge and skills about their own teaching with the assistance of the mentor.

The association between the mentoring role of mentors and the summative evaluation (Appendix 3) appeared to work against the platform the conferences are supposed to offer for free, frank and critical discussion of issues arising out of the professional learning processes. This gives mentoring what I will call a ‘political’ dimension where power dynamics come into play. While Tang & Chow (2006) stress the importance of feedback after lesson observation to teacher professional learning during teaching practicum and Fairbanks et al (2000) argue that feedback affords mentees time to examine, reflect, alter and construct new knowledge, given the traditional link between supervision and the teaching practice grade to be assigned to the mentees, mentees have great difficulty in offering alternative strategies to the mentors’ suggestions. The grade is uppermost in mentees’ minds when they are receiving feedback from the mentors after lesson observation. This makes the conferences assume didactic dimensions. A way out of this situation may be the adoption of a distinction, pass, and fail approach instead of awarding marks. With this the mentor and the mentee will discuss the teaching episodes over a period and at the end of the placement period engage in a joint critical evaluation of the mentee’s progress where the mentee can have the opportunity to pass judgement on his or her performance.

5.6 Professional identity formation and transformation

Smargorinsky et al (2004); Everton & Smithey (2000); and Tang (2004) assert that the relationships and experiences that occur between mentor and mentee during student teaching internships influence the development of the professional identity of teachers. Based on this, the UEW model aims to provide quality academic and field-based training for mentees and meaningful professional development

experiences for mentors. It is through reciprocity that identity transformation for both mentor and mentee results (Healey & Welchert, 1990). In this study, the emphasis was on the relational perspective of the mentoring experience which involves mutuality, interdependence, and empowering processes that result in personal and professional growth, development, and enrichment for the mentoring dyad (Ragins, 2005). In other words, it is through reciprocity between mentor and mentee that identity transformation for both results.

However, the types of relationships that were developed among the mentoring dyads were not the types that could ensure identity transformation. Each of the mentoring dyad should be able to assert his/her voice. There should be critical dialogue or conversation about practice. This was what was missing in the relationships as a result of the absence of any clear guidance or criteria for mentor–mentee matching. Identity formation and transformation would have seen both mentor and mentee revising their previously held notions about teaching and learning in the light of the interactions that went on between them and changing their teaching practices accordingly.

Conclusion

From the cross case analyses and discussions, it appears although the involvement of the classroom teacher in the professional training of student teachers is a novelty in teacher education in Ghana, and a great departure from the old teaching practice, the old conception of the relationship between student teachers and supervisors has not changed much. The old apprenticeship relationship between a student teacher and a master teacher still persists. Even where the relationship is conceived as a collegial one, in practice, it was superficial.

One of the major factors militating against the setting up of more open and collegial professional relationships in which professional learning activities include genuine discussions, collaborative planning, teaching and critical reflection on teaching is the cultural milieu in which this professional learning model is being implemented. Mentees see mentors as wielding power over them, and so must be

respected and obeyed. In the relationships mentees are supposed to offer alternatives to mentors' pedagogical suggestions as a way of sharing experience. However, this cultural demand seems to make it difficult for mentees to engage in critical and frank discussion of teaching approaches. It would take some amount of training, awareness creation and a change of aspects of the design, structure, and content of the programme to ensure real collaboration resulting in reciprocal learning for mentor and mentee.

The other factor is the summative assessment role of the mentor. This role seems to give a different perspective to the traditional roles of the mentor which included the offering of guidance, advice and support. The formal assessment being undertaken by mentors to determine the mentees' grades, to some extent, has overshadowed these traditional roles meant to result in a paradigm shift from the old model of teaching practice. Bleach (2001) argues that the power of assessment could result in mentors making mentees become mirror images of themselves in an apprenticeship model of training teachers. This could lead to the perpetuation of existing beliefs, standards, and practices whether they are relevant to the times or not.

It also emerged from the study that the professional or career background of the student teachers was a factor in how the relationships developed and worked. These were not pre-service teachers who were now going out to learn how to teach. Most of them had served for a while. For such students, the collaborative and collegial relationship is what they need. But again, the cultural contexts, the nature of mentor-mentee matching and the peculiar personal characteristics of the mentoring dyad are constraints.

With these insights from the cases, in the next chapter I make recommendations for theory, generally, and policy and practice of mentoring in teacher education in Ghana.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This study investigated UEW's teacher mentoring programme with a view to examining how the mentoring dyad perceive the whole concept of mentoring and mentoring roles in the context of professional learning, contextual factors that influence how the relationship evolves, and develops and how these influence the professional learning process. It also explored how mentors and mentees value and negotiate the professional learning that is supposed to result from the mentoring relationship. Specifically, it addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the mentor-mentee conceptions about mentoring and their respective roles in the mentoring relationship?
2. How do mentors and mentees develop, establish and sustain their mentoring relationships?
3. How do mentors and mentees negotiate professional learning in mentoring relationships?
4. To what extent does the relationship between mentors and mentees shape their professional identity and practice?
5. What are the implications of the findings for re-conceptualising and re-structuring the UEW mentoring programme?

The literature review examined the concept of mentoring, mentoring roles and processes, as well as mentoring functions. The claim that mentoring is a relationship was explored and the dynamics that underpin it were examined. The mentoring relationship normally culminates in learning. So, how the mentoring dyad learns in mentoring relationships and what they learn were also investigated. Insights gained from the literature review helped the conduct of the study, which used interviews, observations and document review to understand the mentoring

phenomenon from the perspectives of the mentors and mentees in the Ghanaian context.

The findings of the study have been discussed in chapter five. In this chapter, I summarise the main themes of the relationships of the five cases discussed and present recommendations for theory, policy and practice in implementing pre-service and in-service upgrading teacher mentoring programmes in Ghanaian contexts. I conclude this chapter with recommendations for future research and my reflections on the conduct of this study.

6.2 Summary of findings

Two critical themes emerged from the findings; that is, the idiosyncratic nature of the mentor-mentee relationships and the significant influence of the context (socio-cultural and the design and content of the mentor programme) in shaping the relationships. In respect of how mentors and mentees perceived of mentoring and mentoring roles, the study revealed that the old conception of a hierarchical relationship between an older, more experienced person guiding a younger, and inexperienced mentee (Daloz, 1999), still persists contrary to the collegial, collaborative and reciprocity conceptions that underpin the UEW programme. This conception raises a question about the viability of the programme to foster mentoring relationships that are based on collegiality and cooperation. Again, it poses a serious challenge to the programme's aim of ensuring professional learning for both mentor and mentee through collaborative and reflective activities.

Related to the problem of conception, is the revelation of a seeming insensitivity of the UEW programme to the socio-cultural context of Ghana. For example, the programme's conception of the mentoring relationship as lateral (Barrett, 2000; Eby, 1997) is at variance with the culture of Ghanaians. In a hierarchical society such as Ghana, where age is equated with experience, respect, authority and reverence, fostering lateral or collegial relationships among mentors and mentees of varying personal characteristics becomes problematic. The conception, it can be argued, is theoretically driven; which in itself is not a bad thing. However, the

research-based model should have been adapted to suit Ghanaian contexts. Wholesale adoption of ideas or models, the study has revealed, has challenges. Again, the apparent dearth of direction and guidance from the programme on how to select and match mentors and mentees resulted in the idiosyncratic and superficial nature of the relationships. The consequence of this was seen in the dyad going through the mechanics of the relationships without there being any real substance to their interactions. The professional learning that was supposed to result from their interactions was superficial.

It can, therefore, be argued that a mentoring programme cannot be developed from models derived solely from theoretical conceptions alone; it must take into account the socio-cultural context, as well. In other words, it must be re-contextualised and re-conceptualised if it is to deliver on what it promises. In re-contextualising mentoring, the emphasis should be placed on the impact that the cultural and professional contexts are likely to have on practice, especially its potential to corrupt the intended goal of mentoring as means of learning to teach. A re-conceptualising of mentoring is necessary in contexts where traditional and transmission models of learning to teach have taken root in the profession. Here, mentoring should, perhaps, be conceptualised as problem-solving based on a critical evaluation of traditional roles, where the mentor and mentee are guided to reflect and critique the experience of learning to teach.

This will mean initially providing structured guidelines on issues for reflection where both mentor and mentee collaborate to produce critical insights into learning recorded in a format for discussion between the two. For example, for the mentoring relationship to lead to reciprocal learning, the Pre-Observation Conference Guide (Appendix 1), the Post-Observation Conference Guide (Appendix 2) and the Reflection Log Form (Appendix 5) could be re-designed so that the mentor will also respond to the questionnaire anytime a mentee observed the mentor's teaching. This is supposed to engender genuine professional dialogue between the dyad and break the distance that may exist between mentor and mentee as a result of age, experience or gender. This, to me, is how the

Cooperative-Reflective Model must be conceived. The UEW model assumed that once a ‘good’ model of mentoring has been adopted, based on sound theoretical conceptions, then this could be grafted into the Ghanaian context unproblematically. What this thesis has demonstrated is that unless there is careful reconstruction of mentoring to dislodge common assumptions about learning to teach, mentoring will remain superficial, and not produce deep learning of teaching constructed by both mentor and mentee.

The study, again, revealed that the superficial nature of the professional learning may be attributable to the target student teachers. As indicated in the introduction to this study, they are teachers who have taught for at least three years after their initial teacher training qualification. Since they are not novice teachers, the current programme design that appears to be more suitable for novice teachers must be redesigned to make it more challenging for them, while at the same time making provision for the professional needs of novice teachers. For example, the new design could challenge the “experienced” student teachers to reflect on what they are learning in their up-grading programme in terms of practice, and engage mentors in exploring this learning vis-à-vis their previous professional preparation.

Another significant gap is that the programme does not envisage the potential for the mentor-mentee relationship to result in multiple transformations. For example, the professional learning in the mentor-mentee relationship which is supposed to be driven by collaboration and participatory methods should have an impact in the classroom where teaching and learning can make a great shift from the teacher-centred to learner centred to include participatory methods for children to take an active part in the teaching/learning process; which can be described as co-constructing knowledge with the teacher. This is the pedagogy that mentees bring with them that mentors are supposed to share. The promotion of such a teaching-learning culture may have the potential to neutralise the hierarchical socio-cultural context which appears to have been extended to the classroom and lecture halls where children/students are just passive listeners.

From the foregoing, I make the following recommendations.

6.3 Recommendation for theory

Theoretically, following the discussion of issues arising across cases and the summary findings, this study has revealed that conceptions and practice of mentoring may differ according to the socio-cultural and professional contexts in which it is conceived and practised. Again, the rationale and benefits envisaged in the conceptual underpinnings of the mentoring relationship such as collaboration, reciprocity, and collegiality have to reflect in the teaching practices of the mentor and mentee through the adoption of participatory teaching methods. I propose the diagram below (Fig. 6.1) as the conceptual framework for mentoring which takes into account the socio-cultural context as well as the parallels between the strategies for professional learning in mentoring relationships and strategies for teaching and learning in classroom contexts.

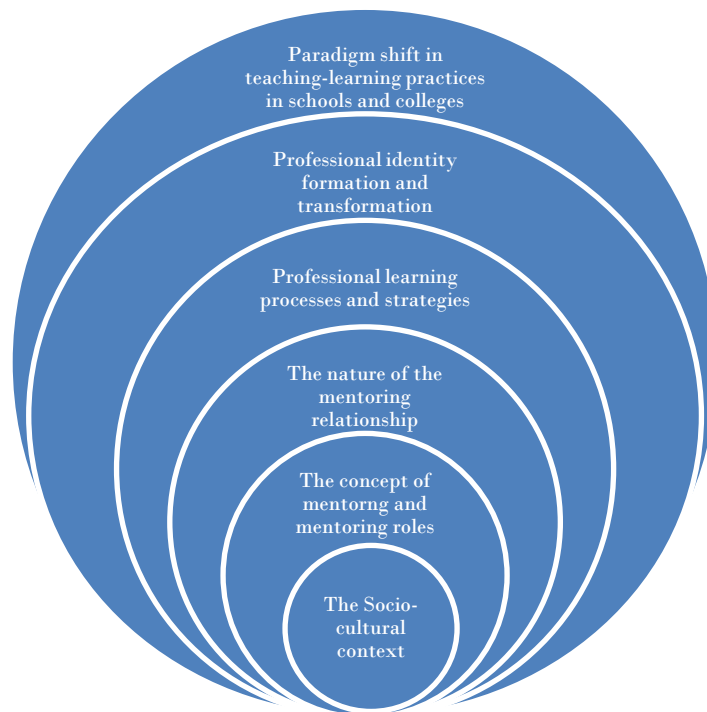


Fig. 6.1 A context-driven mentoring relationship model

As shown in the figure above, the socio-cultural context should be the starting point in considering the design of programmes and ultimately determine the mentoring concept and roles. This, invariably, will shape the nature of the

mentoring relationships that would evolve and develop. The type of relationship developed would then be influenced by the type of learning strategies that would be adopted in the relationship. The learning strategies adopted and the learning that occurs are supposed to result in identity formation or transformation of both mentor and mentee in the direction of improved classroom practice for both. The identity formation and transformation are supposed to be the revision and refinement of previously held notions about, for instance, self, teaching and student learning by both mentor and mentee. This new learning emerging from the professional interaction, then, should reflect in the teaching practices of both mentor and mentee in their teaching contexts since mentoring is supposed to help make the mentoring dyad more effective in the classroom to improve children's learning. This is quite a radical approach to mentor-mentee relationships, but necessary if teacher education is to be a change agent at the classroom level, and to be of benefit to pupil learning and achievement.

Mentoring programme designers must, therefore, take into account issues from actual mentoring contexts and understandings from a number of theoretical propositions in order to design and adopt an integrated theoretical construct for mentoring programmes that are specific to specific contexts.

This conceptualisation is an extension of the conception of mentoring that emphasises the contextual dimension as indicated in the literature (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). The contextual dimension mentioned, however, focuses only on the consideration of the importance of power influence of the school culture on teacher learning and not the power of the socio-cultural and professional culture. Again, although Foucault (1980) and Townley (1994) consider culture, ethnicity, and socio-economic status of the parties involved in the mentoring relationship as crucial in their conceptualisation of mentoring, they considered these from the perspective of Western societies with minority groups where these considerations were likely to impact on the mentoring relationships. It was not in reference to the socio-cultural context of ethnic groups such as Akans, Gas, or Ewes of Ghana.

None of these groups are regarded as ‘minority’ groups in Ghana. This is where the study makes its contribution to the mentoring literature.

6.4 Recommendations for policy

In the design of any teacher mentoring programme, critical consideration must be given to the professional culture as well as the general culture of the people by policy makers; models of mentoring should not be derived from theoretical conceptions in the literature alone. There should be greater consultation and dialogue among stakeholders for a consensus on the model that can accommodate the dynamics of the social and professional milieus.

6.5 Recommendations for practice

- i. For mentoring to be an effective approach for teacher professional development for both teacher mentors and student teachers, specific guidelines must be provided for the selection and matching of mentors and mentees. For example, all trained and prospective mentors as well as prospective mentees must be made to provide some information about their professional standing and personal data using a questionnaire. The information will constitute a data base that can inform the selection and matching of mentors with mentees by UEW and not the heads of schools/colleges. The heads may nominate but the selection must be done by the University, using the data they have. This will help close the age and professional experience gap between the dyad to enable them develop near collegial relationships.
- ii. Regular mentor training, seminars and conferences which expose mentors to the dynamics of and processes of mentoring relationships and mentoring outcomes, and offer opportunities for review activities should be an on-going component of the teacher mentoring programme.
- iii. Again, since it is clear from the study that some mentors do not use the knowledge and skills they acquire at training workshops to help mentees have rewarding mentoring experiences, implementers of mentoring programmes must build evaluation systems into the

programmes. This will serve to ensure quality experiences for the mentees.

- iv. Pre-internship orientation programmes for student teachers have to be integrated into mentoring programmes to prepare student teachers to be mentored. Student teachers need to be clear about their roles and how to negotiate the relationship and learning in the relationship before embarking on the internship. For example, they should be exposed to questioning, listening and observation skills as these are critical learning strategies in authentic contexts. High quality questions have the potential of helping them get the insights they want from their mentors.
- v. The reflective practice format that currently engages only the mentee must be redesigned to involve both the mentor and the mentee. Thus the mentor and mentee will be guided to reflect and critique the experience of professional learning. This can ensure collaboration and help achieve identity formation or transformation for both.

6.6 Further research

Glesne (1999: 199) argues that true research does not end. Instead, it points the way for yet another search. This is largely true because this study was not a comprehensive and exhaustive one. There is significant scope for follow-up research on many of the questions I raised in the introduction to this study to provide further insights into other dimensions of teacher mentoring.

This study explored mentoring relationships from the perspectives of in-service upgrading mentors and their mentees. The perspectives of pre-service student teachers could not be explored because at the time of conducting the study mainly in-service teachers were admitted by the University. Currently, the University has restructured its programmes and is admitting 70% pre-service student teachers and 30% in-service teachers. The perspectives of these pre-service student teachers need to be explored. Insights gained from their perspectives may help

deepen the understanding of the dynamics of mentoring relationships in the Ghanaian context for policy and practice.

6.7 My reflections on the research process

This study has been a real learning experience for me. First, it gave me the opportunity to put the research knowledge, skills and experience I gained from the course work assignments into practice. The critiquing of researched articles/reports, the conduct of a small scale evaluation in professional contexts (phase 1), the use of the interview as a data collection instrument and the critical analytical study (phase 2) equipped me with the tools that I used to carry out this study. Integrating the knowledge, skills and experience gained in these phases to carry out a full research was exciting. At the start of the programme I knew I was going to research my professional contexts; mentoring in teacher education. I, therefore, carried out all the course work assignments around the mentoring phenomenon. This enabled me to choose my research topic/area easily.

Having worked with mentors, mentees and heads of schools for five years as the Director of UEW's student internship programme, I had easy access to the research site and the research participants. Since school visits was part of my regular schedule, and many of the mentors were familiar with our role my presence at the research site was normal and could not have influenced the way the participants behaved in any great measure. Nevertheless, I was also aware that my professional standing and how it was viewed was important – their relationship to me could also be influenced by the same socio-cultural pressures in Ghanaian society. Aware of this, I was very sensitive to how I positioned myself during interactions and ensured that I was as informal in my interactions as I could possibly be.

A very humbling experience for me, however, was the revelation that mentors' and mentees' responses to questionnaires that sometimes were given to them to evaluate the programme were not genuine. During my personal and close interaction with them, I was confronted with the stark reality of the situation on

the ground. What I have learned from this is that when it comes to research that borders on people's experience of a phenomenon, it is always better to interact with them in their contexts and hear their voices.

Another lesson that is very significant in this study is that practitioner researchers who research their professional practice need a great sense of professionalism, courage and honesty to be able to critique their own practice and point out the flaws. I had to remind myself constantly that the essence of practitioner research is to improve practice.

This study has given me new insights into how to design and implement a teacher mentoring programme in a developing country such as Ghana. The new perspectives will be shared with UEW for the re-conceptualisation and re-design of the mentoring programme.

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APPENDIX 1

PRE-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE GUIDE

To be filled by the mentee

I plan to visit your class on/...../.....at.....am/pm

Instructions:

1. Please review and complete the questions for “Planning for Student Learning”. They are provided as a guide for the pre-observation conference and will serve as an agenda.
2. Return the Pre-Observation Conference Guide along with your lesson notebook to me a day before my observation.

Planning for Student Learning Questions**A. Students background:**

1. How do you become familiar with what your students already know (skills, cultural resources?)
2. What are the prerequisite skills required to accomplish the objective?
3. What adaptations or accommodations will be made for students who have difficulty?
4. What provisions will you make for students who have already grasped the materials?

B. Class Setting

1. What is the physical setting of the class?
2. How will you group the students?
3. What concepts/skills have your previous 3-5 lessons involved?
4. How does the content of this lesson build on what students have already studied?
5. How does the content of this lesson relate to what the students will be learning in the future?
6. How have you addressed the needs (eg. gender, culture, language proficiency, skill level, etc) of this particular group of students?

Signature (intern):.....

Signature (mentor):.....

APPENDIX 2**PRE-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE GUIDE**

Intern:..... School:..... Class:

Subject:..... Date of Observation:.../.../...Obs. No.(Circle)123456789 10

Topic:.....

Instructions:

Column A is to be completed by the student teacher for independent reflection

Column B is to be completed collaboratively between the student teacher and the observer.

POST-OBSERVATION REFLECTION**A. Planning for Student Learning**

1. Student Background

What accommodations/adaptations were most successful?

2. What could you have done differently?

3. Lesson Goal and Objective(s)

a. Was the goal of the lesson communicated to students?

b. Did students learn what you intended?

c. List strengths/weaknesses of the lesson?

4. Methods and activities

a. Were the grouping arrangements effective? Explain

b. Were teaching strategies/methods effective? Why?

c. Were activities varied and effective? Why?

5. Assessment

a. Did the assessment technique measure intended Student learning?

b. Any possible alternative assessment in the future?

c. Are there students who need intervention?
If so, how will you implement the intervention?

B General Reflection

1. Were students engaged and/or involved in learning? Yes or No; If no, why?

2. Was the “stimulus variation” successful? (Movement, pacing, wait-time, shifting
Sensory channels & interaction styles)?

3. Were questioning techniques effective? (Fluency, probing, higher order, divergent-
open ended)

4. Was progress assessed and rewarded/reinforcement?(Verbal or non-verbal cues)

5. Was use of time efficient? (Start class on time, smooth transition, eliminated wait time,
controlled interruptions)

6. Was “Closure” effective? (Connection with past/present/future; student demonstrate achievement)
7. Was enough time allocated for practice?
8. Did you have to adjust or change anything you planned for this lesson? If yes, Why?
9. Identify an individual or group of students who.....
 - A. performed well. How do you account for the performance?
 - B. had difficulty with the lesson. How will you help the student(s)?
10. What would you do differently if you taught this lesson again?
11. Based on today’s lesson, what is your objective and what activities do you plan to do next for this class?

.....
Signature Intern

.....
Signature of Supervisor/Mentor

APPENDIX 3

INTERN TEACHING EVALUATION FORM

Name of Intern:..... Reg. No..... Dept..... Campus.....

School..... Town..... Town..... Region.....

Name of Mentor/Supervisor..... Subject.....

Topic.....

Date..... Time/Duration.....

		SCORES		
		0	1	2
PLANNING AND PREPARATION				
1.	Exhibits knowledge of subject matter			
2.	Objectives are clear, appropriate and related to content			
3.	Align instructional strategies with lesson objectives			
4.	Plans for differences in learners' needs and abilities			
5.	Plans clearly and sequentially for whole class, group and individual outcomes			
6.	Planning connects with, and challenges students' present knowledge, skills and values.			
7.	Uses a variety of instructional materials			
INSTRUCTIONAL SKILLS-PROCEDURAL				
1.	Starts class promptly with little confusion			
2.	States purpose, objectives and procedures for lesson			
3.	Maintains lesson pace			
4.	Gives procedural and instructional directions clearly			
5.	Adapts to student attention span			
INSTRUCTIONAL SKILLS-TEACHING STRATEGIES				
1.	Uses a range of strategies for whole class, small groups and individual teaching/learning			
2.	Focuses students attention by motivational techniques			
3.	Relates lesson to prior knowledge and life experiences			
4.	Presents lesson in an organised manner			
5.	Uses questioning strategies for higher level thinking			
6.	Engages students in discussions, critical thinking and problem-solving			
7.	Uses available technology and manipulative materials effectively			
8.	Uses techniques that modify and extend students' learning			
9.	Identifies and uses opportunities for incidental teaching			
10.	Engages students in lesson closure			
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT				
1.	Manages classroom routines effectively			
2.	Maximises student time on task			
3.	Respect diversity among students.			
4.	Maintains positive rapport with students			
5.	Seeks to know each student as an individual			
6.	Reinforces appropriate behaviour through encouragement			
7.	Exhibits a balance of fairness and firmness			
8.	Enforces rules consistently			
9.	Redirects inappropriate behaviour promptly			
10.	Shows disapproval of behaviour but acceptance of student			
11.	Remains calm in dealing with conflict and disagreement			
COMMUNICATION SKILLS				

1.	Communicates with confidence and enthusiasm			
2.	Demonstrates enthusiasm etc.			
3.	Communicates at students' level of understanding			
4.	Incorporates students' opinions and ideas			
5.	Uses effective verbal/non-verbal communication			
6.	Uses appropriate and accurate oral and written communication			
7.	Projects voice appropriately			
8.	Avoids overused phrases (ok, you know, and what have you etc.)			
EVALUATION				
1.	Monitors students' participation and progress			
2.	Provides immediate and constructive feedback			
3.	Bases evaluation on instructional goals/objectives			
4.	Use formal and informal assessment strategies to assess student learning before during and after instruction to enhance learning			
5.	Encourages student self-evaluation			
6.	Demonstrates fair assessment processes for all students			
7.	Uses reflective thinking to analyse instruction			
8.	Recognizes need for self-improvement			
9.	Responds constructively to recommendations for improvement			

Total Score.....

Grade.....

Signature.....

GRADING SYSTEM

80+	-	A
75 - 79	-	B+
70 - 74	-	B
65 - 69	-	C+
60 - 64	-	C
55 - 59	-	D+
50 - 54	-	D
45 - 49	-	E

SCORE VALUES**0 = Standard Not Met**

Performance does not address the indicator of the standard.

1 = Standard Partially Met

Performance partially addresses the indicator of the standard.

2 = Standard Met

Performance address the indicator of the standard.

N/A = Not applicable

N/O = Not observed

APPENDIX 4

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION
CENTRE FOR TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND ACTION RESEARCH**

**TEACHING EVALUATION
COMMENTS FORM**

► This form must be completed by the supervisor/mentor

Name of student		Student ID No.	
Department	School of practice	Town/Region	
Subject area of supervisor/mentor		Lesson/topic	

COMMENTS

►  STRENGTHS

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Name of supervisor/mentor	signature of supervisor/mentor	date
Signature of student	date	

APPENDIX 5

REFLECTION LOG FORM

Name of Intern:..... Course:..... Date:...../.../...

Name of Mentor:..... School:.....

Respond to the following “reflection analysis questions” in two to three sentences:

1.	What were essential strengths of the lesson?
2.	How did the way you taught the lesson match with your beliefs about teaching and learning?
3.	What would you change about the lesson?
4.	Do you think the lesson was successful and if so, why?
5.	Which conditions were important to the outcomes?
6.	What unanticipated learning outcomes resulted from the lesson?
7.	Can you think of another way you might have taught this lesson?
8.	Do you think the content covered was important to students and if so, why?
9.	What I learned from the lesson.

APPENDIX 6**MENTOR'S TERMLY EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE BURING INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE**

Name of Intern:..... Regd. No.....

School..... Town..... Dept.....Campus.....

Name of Mentor.....

Signature..... Date.....

We would appreciate your cooperation in rating our student in terms of their performance in their internship with your institution. Your responses will help in identifying areas requiring attention in the student's continuing professional development. Thank you for your cooperation.

Performance Area (check for each item)	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Attendance and punctuality during the term.					
Ability to develop an understanding of and abide by, policy and procedures.					
Development of effective working relationship with staff.					
Ability to accept supervision and constructive criticism.					
Meets responsibilities promptly.					
Ethical behaviour as expected of professionals.					
Motivation and initiative					
Competence (given the level of experience in the field).					
Attends seminars and school related meetings.					
Commitment to teaching.					
Maintains a sufficient level of energy.					
Is discreet with confidential information.					
Engages in self-evaluation/reflection as a basis for self-improvement.					

Based on your observations, the student's overall performance with your institution has been (circle one):

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

APPENDIX 7**HEAD OF INSTITUTION'S EVALUATION FORM**

1. Intern's general performance:

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2. Mentor's performance:

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3. Overall evaluation of the programme:

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4. Any other suggestions:

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APPENDIX 8a

MENTOR INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction

Purpose for the interview

Interview as a conversation about mentoring

Mentor Profile

I'd like to get to know you. Share a little about yourself:

How would you describe yourself?

Describe your teacher training

For how long have you been teaching?

What are your prior mentoring experiences?

What do you consider as your strengths? Needs?

Has being a mentor changed your life or your thinking about being a teacher?

I'm interested in hearing about your mentee:

What words describe your mentee?

What are his/her personal characteristics?

What are his/her strengths?

What does mentoring mean to you?

What do you think is the role of the mentor?

What would you like the role to be?

What would you say makes a good mentor?

How prepared do you feel?

How is working with your mentee different from working with other teachers?

How would you describe your relationship with your mentee? (Probe)

How important is it for you to establish a relationship with your mentee?

How do you establish a relationship with your mentee?

What factors have been significant in your relationship?

How do you know that you have established an effective relationship with your mentee?

How is the relationship helping you?

What are some of the things you learn from your mentee?

Do you have any relationship with your mentee beyond school?

Does the age/experience/sex difference between you and your mentee affect the relationship?

What other factors affect your relationship with your mentee?

School environment

Now think back to the beginning of the school year. Describe the first week with your mentee and some of the things you did together.

What happened at your initial meetings?

What types of assistance did you provide your mentee? How?

Mentor programme

As a mentor, what do you think student teachers need?

Could you tell me about a time when you helped your mentee.

How did you identify what he/she needed?

How did you decide what strategies to use in helping him/her?

Where do you get your ideas on how to be a mentor?

What things in the mentor programme are most significant in affecting your relationship with your mentee?

Conclusion

Consider all that you have shared with me. Which are the most important to you?

Is there anything else you want to add that we haven't talked about?

APPENDIX 8b

MENTEE INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction

Purpose for the interview

Interview as a conversation about mentoring

Mentor Profile

I'd like to get to know you. Share a little about yourself:

How would you describe yourself?

Describe your teacher training

For how long have you been teaching?

What do you consider as your strengths? Needs?

I'm interested in hearing about your mentor:

What words describe your mentor?

What are his/her personal characteristics?

What are his/her strengths?

What does mentoring mean to you?

What do you think is the role of the mentor?

What would you like the role to be?

What would you say are the qualities of a mentor?

What does your mentor do that helps you most?

How is working with your mentor different from working with other teachers?

How would you describe your relationship with your mentor? (Probe)

How important is it for you to establish a relationship with your mentor?

How do you establish a relationship with your mentor?

How do you know that you have established an effective relationship with your mentor?

How is the relationship helping you?

What are some of the things you learnt from your mentor?

Do you have any relationship with your mentor beyond school?

Does the age/experience/sex difference between you and your mentor affect the relationship?

School environment

Now think back to the beginning of the school year. Describe the first week with your mentor and some of the things you did together.

What happened at your initial meetings?

What types of assistance were provided to you? How?

Mentoring programme

As a mentee, what do you think student teachers need?

Could you tell me about a time when you helped your mentor.

How did you identify what he/she needed?

How did you decide what strategies to use in helping him/her?

Talk about preparation you have had for your role as a mentee

Conclusion

Consider all that you have shared with me. Which are the most important to you?

Is there anything else you want to add that we haven't talked about?

APPENDIX 9**OBSERVATION GUIDE****A. VARIABLES AND DESCRIPTIONS**

Variable 1: Participant profile
 Personality characteristic of mentor/mentee
 Needs of the mentee
 Perception of mentor/mentee roles
 Mentor supervision skills
 Benefits to mentor/mentee
 Conflict resolution skills

Variable 2: School environment
 School culture
 The school community – the people
 The physical entity of the school

Variable 3: Mentor programme
 Programme purpose and goals
 Mentor training
 Mentor guidelines

B. MENTOR-MENTEE CONFERENCE

Participants

Date

Location

Purpose of meeting

Content of meeting

Planning

Problem solving

Personal life

Classroom management

Pattern of relationship

Body language

Structure (informality vrs formality)

Talking – who?

Sharing – who?

Questioning – who asks, how answered?

Active listening skills

Respect for professionalism (mentee to mentor and mentor to mentee)

Collaboration

Resolving disagreements

