

Mentoring Newly Appointed Head Teachers In Slovenia Experiences From The Field

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Assisting and supporting newly appointed head teachers is an encouraging attitude for them in school leadership. For this reason, mentors as advisers and counselors, have an important role in head teacher's professional development process. In this study, problems that are encountered by newly appointed head teachers are being discussed. Also the importance of mentoring process for head teachers is being described with guidance of mentoring literature. Furthermore, Slovenian model of mentoring for head teachers are being described with three related dimensions; mentees' relationship with mentors, organization and content of the mentorship programme, and benefits of the programme for mentees' future work. Consequently, effectiveness of the model that was developed for mentoring head teachers are being analyzed by head teacher's views about the programme. The findings show that, Slovene model has been welcomed by both mentors and newly appointed head teachers.

Keywords: *Mentoring, head teachers, effectiveness of mentoring*

Slovenya'da Yeni Atanan Okul Müdürleri İçin Mentorluk Modeli Alandan Deneyimler

Yeni atanan okul müdürlerine yardım ve destek sağlanması onların okul lideri olmalarında teşvik edici bir yaklaşımdır. Bu nedenle, bir danışman ve rehber olarak mentorlar yeni atanan okul müdürlerinin mesleki gelişim süreçlerinde önemli bir role sahiptir. Bu araştırmada yeni atanan okul müdürlerinin karşılaştıkları sorunlar tartışılarak, mentorlukla ilgili alanyazının ışığında okul müdürleri için mentorluğun önemi açıklanmıştır. Yeni atanan müdürler için Slovenya'da uygulanan mentorluk programı; mentor-yeni atanan müdür ilişkisi, programın organizasyonu ve içeriği ile programın yeni atanan müdürlere gelecekteki işlerinde onlara yararları boyutlarıyla ele incelenmiştir. Programın etkililiği yeni atanan müdürlerin görüşleri analiz edilerek değerlendirilmiştir. Bulgular, mentorluk programının hem mentorlar hem de yeni atanan müdürler tarafından olumlu bulunduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: *Mentorluk, okul müdürlüğü, mentorluğun etkililiği*

Slovenia got its independence in 1991 so it can be referred to as a relatively young country but also relatively small having only two million inhabitants. The population is served by 595 schools; of which 147 offer secondary (15 – 19 years) and 448 elementary (6 – 15 years) programs. In 1995 the National School for Leadership in Education (NSLE) was established to prepare serving and aspiring head teachers for leading their schools more effectively.

The core activity of NSLE is developing and delivering the program leading to “headship license”. The program is comparable to similar programs in European countries (Erčulj et al., 2007). The program for the Headship Licence consists of 6 compulsory modules:

Introductory module (learning styles, team building, professional development);

- Schools as organisations and leadership;
- Human resource management;
- Learning-centred leadership (head teacher as a pedagogical leader);
- Planning and evaluation;
- Legislation.

The program is implemented residentially in small groups of 18 to 21 participants in 6 weeks (144 hours) during one or two years. Participants are obliged to participate actively during the course. After each module they must write a short assignment where they link theory and school-based practice.

Through a program developed and delivered by NSLE, a "headship licence" is one of the conditions the applicants must fulfil within one year after their appointment. Initially the program was a requirement for all head teachers who were in post. Over time the legislation changed and the licence became an entry requirement for the headship, three years ago it changed to the current practice. However, the number of aspiring head teachers has increased to approximately 90 per cent of the annual cohort. Most of those who complete the licence do not become head teachers for two or more years, and few of them have had any leadership responsibilities in their schools so far. It was apparent that some form of transition between the headship licence and the taking up of an administrative position was required. Beside this, new demands placed on head teachers make this role ever more complex. Caldwell, Calnin and Cahill (2003) point to ubiquity of

change, complexity of the role, level of remuneration, status of the profession and other factors that affect leadership roles in schools. Begley (2002), for example, claims that the work of educational leaders has become “less predictable, less structured, and more conflict-laden” (p. 49). So leadership cannot simply be learned during pre-service courses. Its contextual nature requires knowledge “to select the response for particular situation in that specific time and place” (Goddard, 2003, p. 14). An effective way to develop such knowledge is professional discussion with peers that gives opportunity for reflection and for constructing new effective responses.

It seems that mentoring has capacity to bridge the gap between initial training for aspiring head teachers and the contextual knowledge they need to respond to the complex nature of school leadership. Therefore in 2003 NSLE initiated a mentoring system for new head teachers.

In this article problems encountered by newly appointed head teachers will be discussed and potential of mentoring to respond to these problems will be presented. Further, Slovenian programme of mentoring will be explained together with some key findings from evaluation done among experienced and new head teachers referred to in this article as mentors and mentees. Finally, recommendations for an even more effective system of mentoring newly appointed head teachers will be given.

Problems Encountered by Newly Appointed Head Teachers

The literature points to very similar problems that new head teachers encounter when they enter their job. National College for School Leadership ([NCSL]2003a) provides a list of common problems among UK head teachers:

- feelings of professional isolation and loneliness;
- dealing with the legacy, practice and style of previous head teachers;
- dealing with multiple tasks, managing time and priorities;
- managing the school budget;
- dealing with (e.g. supporting, warning, dismissing) ineffective staff;
- implementing new government initiatives, notably new curricula or school improvement projects;
- problems with school buildings and site management.

Further, the same report indicates that primary schoolteachers encounter more problems with managing time and priorities, improving consultation and communication, getting staff to work as a team, implementing teacher appraisal and deciding whether or not to teach (NCSL, 2003a). The previous recent small-scale studies into the problems experienced by new heads in England also reported high level of stress and the need for a high level of technical, and especially financial, skills. However, the prime issue for these new head teachers was the need to come to terms with their new sense of isolation (Daresh & Male, 2000).

The International Beginning Principals Study investigated on the experiences of beginning head teachers during their first two years in post. In this study the most urgent problem revealed was the recruitment of teaching staff, followed by problems regarding buildings. Some head teachers also identified pressures from the central government related to legislation, new curricula and improvement projects (Male, 2001).

Dunning (2000) reports the findings of an extended study about the problems of new head teachers carried out in 1995 and 1996 in Wales. It seems that the problems do not differ very much to those in the previous studies referred to in this article. Head teachers in Wales were asked to categorise potential problems into internal, external and staff and staffing issues. Among internal problems the management of time was particularly problematic especially finding time for observing work in the classroom. They also pointed to school building and site management, and financial resourcing. Among external problems nearly two-thirds of respondents referred to issues arising from national policy, while staff-related problems were not featured in the heads 'top ten' problems.

In Scotland Draper and McMichael conducted two pieces of research about the problems of new head teachers. The findings from 2000 point to loneliness as the major issue. Some new heads felt overloaded with administrative matters, which they felt prevented them from taking educational activities such as monitoring classrooms. Some others were surprised by the rush of work and about the level of accountability (Draper & McMichael, 2000).

Finally, Anderson (1991) reporting about training, recruiting, selection and induction of head teachers in the United States brings about very similar problems encountered by »newly hired principals« (p. 50). The report points to isolation, time management, technical problems, such as completing reports, dealing with budgets, etc., socialisation to the school

system, and lack of feedback about how they perform. Many of newly appointed head teachers report that pre-service training never fully prepared them »for the realities of the principalship« (p. 59) and so most of their learning occurs on the job.

At the early stage of development of the mentoring programme in Slovenia (2005) we conducted a small scale research among 16 (10 female and 6 male) out of 32 newly appointed head teachers who participated in the programme *Mentoring newly appointed head teachers*.

Of the sixteen respondents, eleven were in their first year as head teachers and 5 in their second year. Only two had been in deputy head positions; the majority were promoted directly from roles as teachers or school counsellors, and had no prior managerial experience. Four of the respondents were head teachers of urban schools in two major cities but eleven were responsible for rural schools. Approximately one third ($n = 5$) of the respondents were responsible for schools that had kindergarten programs.

During the last meeting within the programme they were asked to fill in the questionnaire. We asked them several questions about challenges of early headship but also about their experiences with mentoring programme that will be described later in this article. At this point we would like to refer to answers related to challenges. Almost half of the respondents (7) point to legislation and further 4 to financial operation of schools as two most challenging areas. Answers ranked 4, and 5 also refer to what Anderson (1991) denotes »technical problems«: labour relations and development of internal legal procedures. Rank 3 was given to lesson observations (3 respondents) – in Slovenia head teachers must observe teachers' lessons and even experienced ones would often find this part of their job very stressful. Individual answers refer to promotion of school, school climate, induction of new staff, changes, self-promotion, time management, improved quality, and conflict management. It can be concluded that new head teachers in Slovenia are more concerned with managerial aspects of their work and that they do not seem to feel isolated like most research in UK and USA indicate. This could be assigned either to »external pressure and demands« (Bolam, 2000) or to »increase of routinisation in the workplace« (Crow, 2002). On the other hand, sense of isolation may have been reduced by professional community of mentors and mentees that was created during the programme.

Head Teachers and Mentoring

Already from Homer's *Odyssey* onwards, the role of a mentor has been generally understood as »wise counsellor«, »guide« and »adviser« to younger or newer colleagues and thus »investing in their future effectiveness« (Smith, 1993). Crow and Mathews (1998) define mentors as »individuals with experience and influence who teach those with less experience« while Levinson et al. (1978) refer to mentors as »trusted guides who teach«. In the context of school leadership, mentors are »successful principals who are committed, willing and able to invest sufficient time and effort to develop the next generation of educational leaders« (Williams, Matthews and Baugh, 2004). Actually, mentors might assist and support newly appointed head teachers to cope with complexity of head teachers' job but also to avoid the »sink-or-swim« induction to the job as reported by Anderson (1991) and experienced in many countries so far (including Slovenia until recently).

However, several countries have realised that »learn-on-your-own« attitude increases head teachers' anxiety about fulfilling their responsibilities. Similarly, Louis (1990) points out that the first six to ten months in a new job is crucial period when new head teachers need a log of information and assistance and when they are most receptive to learning. Crow (2001), on the other hand, relates mentorship with professional and organisational socialisation. The need for head teacher mentoring has been recognised in several countries. According to Bush (2005) Singapore introduced mentoring for head teachers as an integral part of the training programme, it lasts for 8 weeks and is supported by facilitators. Mentees can practice a range of leadership skills negotiated with their mentors. A similar approach is taken in USA where mentoring is also a part of pre-service leadership development programme. It is mandated in 20 states with the aim »to prepare school leaders for the 'real world'« (Daresh, 1995). Anderson (1991) reports about different types of support for newly appointed head teachers, such as peer-assisted leadership and model of principal induction consisting of large-group component, small-group component and mentoring component. While the large group component was designed to focus on the concerns and issues related to the district, the small-group component serves as a vehicle for providing individual assistance with implementation of the personal growth plan. Furthermore, mentoring programme is designed to pair 'veteran' head teachers with beginners.

Kirkham (1993) claims for the need for mentoring for beginning head teachers in UK in order »to reach maximum possible effectiveness in the minimum possible time and simultaneously reduce the anxiety that comes from isolation of the post« Bush (2005), on the other hand, refers to that mentoring became a significant part of headship development in 1991. It is considered more »as a substitute for training rather than forming part of it« (Bush, 2005). NCSL that provides the programme points to various benefits for first-time head teachers as well as for schools. It offers several opportunities for head teachers' personal and professional development, such as: developing strengths and addressing weaknesses in personal, interpersonal and professional skills, developing confidence to take up the head teacher role, developing strategic thinking skills related to the new role, coping with and overcoming feelings of professional isolation and loneliness, and others.

Research referred to in the Full report on mentoring and coaching for new leaders by NCSL (2003b) suggests that most mentoring of new head teachers is carried out by more experienced heads who assist new heads to solve their own problems, act as catalysts of sounding board, provide linkage to people and resources and where opportunities for discussing various topics related to school management are provided. During the process of mentoring new head teachers may thus become more confident, they can improve personal skills and technical expertise, they have the opportunity to reflect on their new role, and their feeling of isolation is reduced.

We can conclude that mentoring has been recognised as significant step in head teachers' professional development in providing »a secure environment where [first-time head teachers] can explore ideas for maintenance and change with people who understand the role« (Kirkham, 1993). The new head teachers, given the opportunity of regular meetings with a mentor can also build the capacity to engage in critical reflection which is perceived vital to their professional growth (Coleman, 1996; Gunter, 2001; Harris, 2003).

Slovene Model

The Slovene model of mentoring for head teachers was developed on the basis of theoretical sources about mentoring, foreign experiences (Goddard, 1998) and A Needs Assessment Survey conducted among 42 newly appointed head teachers before the programme was developed. Two themes emerged from their responses. First, there was the dissonance

between pedagogical leadership and administrative tasks. Second, there was a strongly expressed need for a formal mentoring process to support new heads. When describing their understandings of the knowledge and skills required by new head teachers, respondents talked broadly of the larger philosophical issues. They described, for example, the need for the school to play a central role in the community, and for the head to provide instructional leadership to his or her teachers. They emphasized skills such as communication, tolerance, and the possession of a broader pedagogical knowledge of learning processes. When discussing their personal and individual needs, however, they focused wholly on concrete matters of administration. For example, three respondents expressed a need to better understand how to develop the annual school plan. Others talked of the need for specific strategies to implement the reforms of the new educational legislation. The respondents were surprised to discover that their major challenges were not related to pedagogical leadership. Rather, they found themselves dealing with issues of day-to-day management and routine administrative tasks. The major concern was the need to become knowledgeable about legislation related to schools, in three areas. These were financial, human resource management, and school organization. Subsets of this theme included the motivation of staff, the delegation of responsibilities, and the development of an overarching understanding of the larger educational system. Although these matters had been covered in one of the modules of the headship licence program, respondents found it difficult to transfer this knowledge into the practical arena. Mentoring then seemed to be an appropriate programme to fill these gaps.

We work with groups of 8 mentors and 8 mentees. The number of groups depends on the number of newly appointed head teachers. They are invited by the Ministry and NSLE. So far the programme has not been compulsory but it is intended to be as such. Mentors are selected among experienced head teachers on the basis of advertisement and according to our professional experiences with head teachers supposing that a mentor should be “door opener, information giver, supporter” (Mullen & Lick, 1999) and that he/she can “offer a new and whole way of seeking things” (ibid.). The model consists of three interrelated parts:

- 1 meeting for mentors
- 5 meetings/workshops for mentors and mentees
- face-to-face meetings between mentors and mentees.

Each group has its co-ordinator (from NSLE) who is responsible for organising in running meetings/workshops, for following the dynamics in

face-to-face meetings as well as in the whole programme, and for evaluation of the programme.

The initial meeting for mentors is aimed to discuss the issue of mentoring focused on the “building blocks of effective relationships” (Ensher & Murphy, 2005, p. 196) between mentors and mentees, to present evaluations by mentors and mentees from previous years and to present the programme.

Meetings/workshops for mentors and mentees present the main part of the programme. They cover the following themes:

- Introductory meeting – getting to know each other, features of mentoring, presentation of the programme, expectations and experiences
- Legislation
- Planning
- Leading staff
- Managing teacher performance

These themes are covered by experts in the above-mentioned areas. During each meeting/workshop there is time for reflection on face-to-face meetings that occur according to an agreement between mentor and mentee, and some time for planning the next face-to-face meeting.

The programme lasts one year; it is carefully evaluated and amended according to evaluation results and to professional knowledge that is being constantly developed by new literature and experiences in the programme.

Effectiveness of the Programme

In the last section of this article some results from a small scale research (see previous chapter) related to the programme of mentoring will be presented. Beside questions about challenges of their new workplace, the newly appointed head teachers (mentees) were asked to evaluate relationships with mentors, organisation and contents of the programme, and benefits of the programme for their future work.

Relationships with Mentors

We found relationships between mentees and mentors key component because the personal dimension of mentoring, i.e. relationships and trust among mentors and metees have been identified as key to successful

mentoring (Johnson & Ridley, 2004; Young et al. 2004; Ensher & Murphy, 2005) Relationships with mentors are implied in Questions 2, 3, and 6 – 10. Mentees report that they consulted mentors about challenges they identified in Q1 almost always (94 %). They also explained why they consulted mentors. 4 answers referred to mentors' experiences, further 3 to changes in legislation and another 3 to support they needed due to their insecurity. There were more individual answers that could be clustered into "receiving quick-fix solutions" and "moral support". In fact this might be related to findings from Ensher and Murphy's (2005) findings on how mentees benefit from their mentoring relationships. They point to career support, personal/emotional support and role modelling.

Almost all mentees (15) find mentors' advice and suggestions useful because they have already been tested in practice (5 answers), they are based on experiences (5 answers), information was precise and quick (3 answers) and because "a mentor can see your work from a distance" (2 answers). Only 1 respondent think that guidance and suggestions cannot be transferred to her school so she finds them less useful.

Questions 6 – 10 refer directly to relationships and communication.

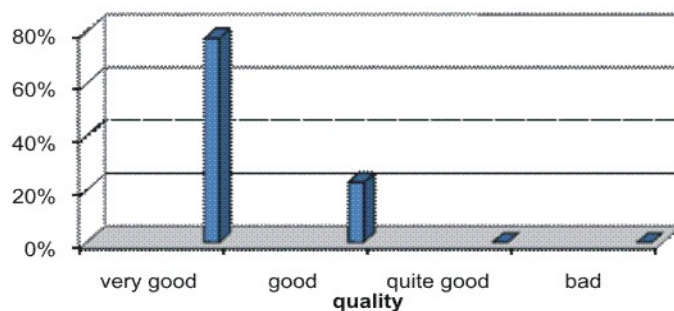


Figure 1. Relationships with Mentor

As it can be seen from the table in most cases (13) relationships are viewed as very good and in remaining 3 cases as good. No mentee report about bad or even not about quite good relationships. Communication is also viewed as effective, it occurred mostly personally (face-to-face) once a month. It is considered as optimal; it was initiated either by both or more by mentees than by mentors. The following tables illustrate these data:

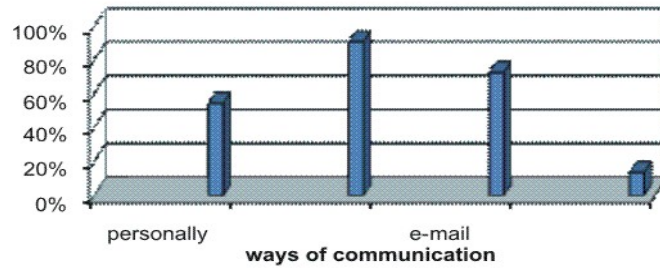


Figure 2. Ways of Communication with Mentors

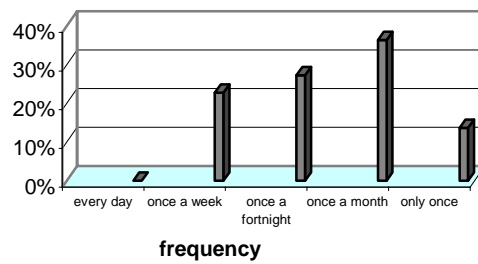


Figure 3. Frequency of Communication with Mentors

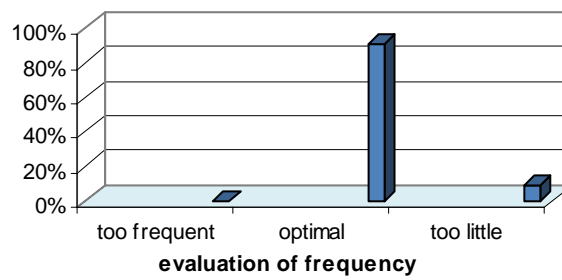


Figure 4. Evaluation of Frequency of Communication

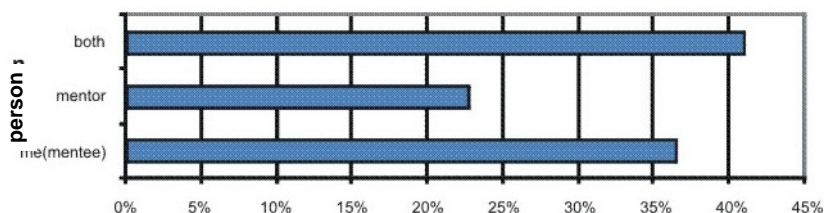


Figure 5. Initiation of Communication

Organisation and Contents of the Programme

Questions 13 and 15-17 refer to this category. The contents of the programme are seen as entirely applicable or applicable. Only 2 answers can be found in »partly applicable«. In the table below the number of respondents selecting the given answer are indicated.

TABLE 1
Evaluation of the Contents of the Programme

<i>Contents</i>	<i>Entirely applicable</i>	<i>Applicable</i>	<i>Partly applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>
Introductory meeting	13	3	-	-
Legislation	15	1		-
Planning	14	1	1	-
Leading staff	15	1	-	-
Managing teacher performance	14	1	1	-

From this table it can be seen that the programme based on need analysis and professional judgement from NCSLE and external expert have been well selected.

Frequency of common meetings/workshops is also seen as optimal (15 answers) as well as their length where all respondents selected »optimal length«. Their positive comments referred to »excellent use of time«, »good blend of theory, practice and discussions«, »good experiences to have workshops in mentor's or mentee's school«, »no changes from the initial

plan«. Mentees' suggestions in terms of further programme have been divided into those that refer to contents and answers that referred to organisation. Most answers refer to very specific contents that may be seen as current issues in educational system, such as strategic plan, financial plan, payment system, etc. It is however significant that several answers refer to social dimension of organised meetings. They suggest »some time for less formal discussion«, »social events«, »two day meetings to have time to socialise«. In terms of developers of the programme this will be taken into account as we believe that »professional development must occur within the context of socialisation between peers« (Little, 2005, p. 87).

Benefits of the Programme for Mentees' Future Work

Since the programme is seen as relevant by mentees we could conclude that it can serve its purpose. In order to get more direct views of benefits of the programme we asked Question 14: How has your participation in the programme helped you in your work? 8 (50 %) respondents say »a lot« and further 8 (50 %) »quite a lot«. The answers about what specifically will help them in the future are listed according to their frequency:

- solving concrete problems (12 answers)
- sharing opinion and experiences (10 answers)
- quality of lectures/workshops (7 answers)
- shared work – community of mentors and mentees (6 answers)
- raising self-confidence (»realising that I am on the right way«) (4 answers)
- socialisation with other head teachers (3 answers)
- linking theory and practice (1 answer)
- realising that others have similar problems (1 answer)

If we compare the list with benefits referred to by Ensher and Murphy (2005) we can conclude that most of Slovene mentees benefit at the level of personal/emotional support, followed by role model and less in terms of career support. This might be related on the one hand to position of head teacher in Slovene system where job mobility, pay raises and promotion opportunities are defined at the state level. On the other hand, the focus on personal/emotional support may point to isolation that obviously is the issue although it was not explicitly stated among problems encountered by newly appointed head teachers.

However, the list of benefits for new heads stated in the report developed by the National College for School Leadership UK is more closely related to the emotional side of mentoring. The list includes issues such as reduced feelings of isolation, reduced stress, increased confidence and self-confidence, opportunity to reflect on the new role etc. Only 3 issues (from among 10) refer more to »technical« than »emotional« growth. Very similar points can be found in Crow's (2003) six major benefits to mentees, i.e.: exposure to new ideas and creativity; visibility with key personnel; protection from damaging situations; opportunities for challenging and risk-taking activities; increased confidence and competence, and improved reflection. So we can say that issues mentees perceive as benefits are more of emotional nature than pure technical expert support and therefore relationships between mentees and mentors and mentors' personal features play a much greater role than their administrative competences.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As the role of school leaders has become extremely complex and performance demands have increased tremendously mentoring programme for newly appointed head teachers seemed to be a necessary step on head teachers' professional development path. New head teachers encounter many problems that they could not realise during their teaching career (Koren, 2006) and it is difficult to cope with them alone. One of the most important issues for them in building relationships (Allen, 2004) where mentoring can contribute to a large extent.

Slovene case indicates that mentoring has been welcomed by both mentors and mentees and that they evaluate the programme as well as the idea of mentoring very positively. But we should not "rest on our laurels". In terms of further development of mentoring newly appointed head teachers the following issues should be taken into account.

Mentors should be selected very sensitively. Although our research indicates almost ideal relationships between mentors and mentees it should be considered that the first cohort of mentors was appointed mostly upon NSLE staff's positive professional experiences with these head teachers. The emotional benefits prevail in mentees' evaluations to such an extent that the personal role of mentors should be carefully evaluated. Our suggestion here is that mentors' role should be addressed from different points of view. While the evaluation pointed to in the previous section focuses mainly on the professional role with the view to support this aspect

of mentoring, we should consider evaluation of the personal role to be equally important and stressed. Data collected should provide a basis for selection of head teachers – mentors. However, the problem of selection procedure still remains open and all those engaged in this process should be aware that it will remain highly sensitive in spite of evidence from actual participants in the very concrete context. But at least it could have a firmer ground than personal professional experiences between head teachers and NSLE.

A coherent program for mentors should be developed. The first cohort of head teachers – mentors entered the process of mentoring newly appointed colleagues after a longer meeting where mentors' role and some possible flaws, such as dependency, were discussed. Mentees' opinions indicate that mentors performed their role very well especially in terms of personal and emotional support and experiences they could learn from. On the other hand, mentors in their answers (which have not been presented in this article) reveal a certain degree of distress and even stump how to give specific answers without being too directive or how to support mentees in complex situations. On the other hand, the group of mentors will be extended in order to give more head teachers this professional opportunity but also to avoid elitism of the program. The mentor's role is something they have not experienced or been trained for so it should not be expected that everyone would perform it "from the scratch". This argues well for mentors as "the more layers of support, the more likely mentoring will succeed" (Caro-Bruce & McCready, 1995, p. 163). The program for mentors should thus reflect the balance between personal, relational and professional role of a mentor.

Need analysis and thorough evaluation should be carried out every year and the program itself should be regularly revised. As it is widely acknowledged, evaluation plays the crucial role not only in assessing effectiveness of certain strategies but also in opening new views on certain issues and informing changes (MacBeath & McGlynn, 2005). And these aspects of evaluation should be considered in redesigning the existing program because positive experiences with the cohort under study should not impede further development. On the other hand, changes in Slovene educational system have been introduced very frequently so the program must reflect current situation. Beside this, new trends in theory and research about school leadership should be considered in regular revision of the program.

Last but not least, there is a significant missing point in this article. Theory and experiences indicate that mentoring must be reciprocal

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(Goddard, 1998; Allen, 2004; Ensher & Murphy 2005; Bizjak, 2006). According to Slovene experiences, evaluations indicate that mentors have also perceived the model as a significant opportunity for their professional development, for and insight into current practice, increased reflectiveness and improved self-esteem. There is already a range of evidence available to relate mentorship to mentors' professional development. But the question about the influence of the program on mentors' leadership practice in their own schools remains unanswered and opens the scope for further research.

Özet

Slovenya 1991 yılında bağımsızlığını ilan eden, nispeten küçük ve genç nüfusa sahip bir ülkedir. 448 tanesi ilköğretim okulu, 147 tanesi orta dereceli okul olmak üzere toplam 595 eğitim kurumu, yaklaşık iki milyon nüfusa sahip olan Slovenya'ya eğitim hizmeti sunmaktadırlar. 1995 yılında okul müdürlerini, okullarını daha etkili yönetebilmeye teşvik ederek onların yetiştirilmelerini amaçlayan Ulusal Eğitim Liderliği Okulu (NSLE) kurulmuştur. Okul müdürlerinin yerine getirmeleri gereken koşullardan birisi, Ulusal Eğitim Liderliği Okulu tarafından geliştirilen ve yürütülen bir programla “Okul Yöneticiliği Lisansı” nı, atanmalarını takip eden bir yıl içerisinde tamamlamalarıdır. Başlangıçta görev yapan tüm okul müdürleri için bir tamamlanması zorunluluk olan program, üç yıl önce ilgili mevzuatın değişmesi ve mevcut deneyimler ekseninde okul yöneticiliğine giriş için bir zorunluluk haline gelmiştir. Okul müdürlüğüne atanmak isteyenlerin sayısı gittikçe artmaktadır. Ancak, okul yöneticiliği lisansını tamamlayanlar iki ya da daha fazla süredir okul müdürlüğüne atanmamaktadırlar ve okul müdürlerinin çok azı okullarında yönetsel sorumluluğa sahiptir. Bu sebeple okul yöneticiliği lisansı ile, okulda yöneticilik konumunu üstlenmek arasında bir bağlantı kurulmasına gereksinim vardır. Bunun yanında okul müdürlerinden beklentilerin artması, okul müdürlüğü rolünü daha karmaşık hale getirmiştir.

Liderlik, hizmet öncesi eğitim sürecinde alınan derslerle öğrenilebilecek kadar basit bir olgu değildir. Bu bağlamda liderlik doğası gereği, belirli bir zaman, yer ve durumda uygun tepkilerin verilmesini gerektirmektedir. Eğitim alanındaki bilgi birikiminin geliştirilmesinin en etkin yollarından birisi, yeni fikirlerin yapılandırılmasına ve etkili tepkilerin oluşturulmasına olanak tanıyan öğretmenler arası tartışma gruplarının oluşturulmasıdır. Bu sebeple, danışmanlık, okul müdürlüğüne atanmak isteyenlerin hizmet öncesi eğitimleriyle, eğitim liderliğinin kendi karmaşık yapısında okul müdürlerinin sahip olmaları gereken bilgi birikimine sahip olma düzeyi arasındaki boşluğu kapatacak bir köprü görevi üstlenmektedir.

Yeni Atanan Okul Müdürlerinin Karşılaştığı Sorunlar

Okul müdürlerinin görevlerine yeni başladıklarında karşılaştıkları sorunlarla ilgili alan yazın incelendiğinde, ortak noktalara değinildiği görülmektedir. Ulusal Eğitim Liderliği Okulu İngiltere'deki okul müdürlerinin karşılaştıkları sorunları şu başlıklarda belirtmiştir:

- Mesleki anlamda izolasyon ve yalnızlık duygusu

- Kendilerinden önceki okul müdürlerinin stilleri ve uygulamalarıyla ilgili önyargılar
- Zaman yönetimi ve önceliklerin belirlenmesi
- Okul bütçesinin yönetimi
- Etkin çalışmayan eğitim işgörenleriyle ilgili önyargılar
- Yeni eğitim programları ya da okul geliştirme projeleri gibi yeni politikaların gerçekleştirilmesi
- Okul binalarının ve inşaat alanlarının yönetimiyle ilgili sorunlar

Ayrıca Ulusal Eğitim Liderliği Okulu'nun hazırlamış olduğu rapora göre, ilköğretim kurumlarında görev yapan öğretmenler önceliklerin belirlenmesi ve zaman yönetimi, iletişim ve danışmanlık sürecinin iyileştirilmesi, eğitim işgörenlerini bir takım olarak işe yönlendirme, öğretmenlerin değerlendirilmesinin iyileştirilmesi gibi konularda problemler yaşamaktadırlar.

Slovenya'da Yeni Atanan Okul Müdürleri İçin Danışmanlık Modeli

Yeni atanan okul müdürleri için Slovenya'da geliştirilen danışmanlık modeli; danışmanlıkla ilgili temel teorik kaynaklara, danışmanlıkla ilgili diğer ülkelerde yapılan çalışmalara ve program geliştirilmeden önce göreve yeni başlamış 42 tane okul müdürüne uygulanan "gereksinim değerlendirme anketi"nin bulgularına dayanılarak yapılandırılmıştır. Model geliştirilmeden önce uygulanan anket sonucunda okul müdürlerinin görüşlerine göre iki temel boyut ortaya çıkmıştır. Birincisi yönetim görevleriyle, pedagojik liderlik arasındaki uyumsuzluk, diğeri de göreve yeni başlayan okul müdürlerinin desteklenmesi için formal boyutta danışmanlık sürecine olan gereksinimdir. Modelin oluşturulması sürecinde 8 Danışman ve 8 danışan grubuyla çalışılmıştır. Danışanlar bakanlık ve Ulusal Eğitim Liderliği Okulu tarafından davet edilmişlerdir. Danışmanlar ise deneyimli okul müdürleri arasından seçilmiştir. Danışmanlık modeli birbiriyle ilişkili üç temel bölümden oluşmaktadır:

- Danışmanlar için bir görüşme
- Danışmanlar ve danışanlar için beş görüşme ve seminer
- Danışmanlar ve danışanlar için yüzyüze görüşmeler

Danışmanlar ve danışanlar için düzenlenen görüşmeler ve seminerler, oluşturulacak olan program modelinin temel bölümlerini yansıtmaktadır: Bu bölümler;

- Başlangıç görüşmesi- danışanların ve danışmanların birbirlerini tanınması, danışmanlığın özellikleri, programın tanıtılması, beklentiler ve deneyimler
- Yasal mevzuat
- Planlama
- Eğitim işgörenlerinin yönlendirilmesi
- Öğretmen performansının değerlendirilmesinden oluşmaktadır.

Geliştirilecek olan danışmanlık modelinin etkililiğini belirleyen en temel boyutlardan birisi danışmanlarla danışanlar arasındaki ilişkililerdir. Karşılıklı güvene dayalı bir danışman danışan ilişkisi, danışmanlık sürecinin başarıya ulaşmasında hayati bir rol oynamaktadır. Geliştirilecek olan danışmanlık modeli, okul müdürleri tarafından kendileri için yararlı ve onların gelecekteki mesleki gelişimleri için destekleyici olduğu sürece amacına hizmet edebilecektir.

Eğitim liderlerinin rollerinin her geçen gün hızlı değişim süreci karşısında karmaşık hale gelmesi, okulların ve eğitim liderlerinin performans beklentilerine cevap verecek danışmanlık programlarının önemini arttırmıştır. Yeni atanan okul müdürleri çok fazla sorunla karşı karşıya gelebilmekte ve bu sorunları tek başına çözmekte başarısız olabilmektedirler. Bu bağlamda özellikle mesleğe yeni başlamış olan okul müdürleri için mesleki gelişim sürecinde danışmanlık hayati bir önem taşımaktadır. Slovenya’da yeni atanan okul müdürleri için oluşturulan danışmanlık sürecinde, özellikle danışmanlığın hem danışanlar hem de danışmanlar tarafından oldukça benimsendiğini ortaya koymuştur. Danışmanlık süreciyle ilgili gerek teorik boyut gerekse uygulama sonuçları göstermektedir ki, danışmanlık sürecinin başarılı olabilmesi için iletişim süreci karşılıklı saygıya dayalı olarak gerçekleştirilmelidir. Tartışma süreci için daha fazla zaman ayrılması ve danışmanlık sürecinin sosyal boyutuna daha fazla önem verilmesi, modelin geliştirilmeye açık olan yönleri olarak belirtilmiştir.

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Alındığı tarih/Received: 08.03.2007

Düzeltilme/Revision: 10.11.2007

Kabul/Approved: 10.11.2007

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Appendix
Questionnaire for mentees

EVALUATION SHEET FOR HEAD TEACHER - MENTEES

Dear head teachers,

In 2004/05 we continue the mentorship program for newly appointed head teachers. We are interested in your experiences, opinions and suggestions about your work during the current year, about your relationships with mentors and about organization of the program. So we would kindly ask you to answer the questions below.

1. What have been the greatest challenges for you during the current year?
2. Have you discussed these challenges with your mentor? Yes No
If YES, please, explain?
If NO, please, explain?
3. If you discussed the challenges with your mentor, have you found his/her advice helpful? Yes No
If YES, please, explain?
If NO, please, explain?
4. What aspect of your work has changed significantly during the current year? Please, explain.
5. What will you change in the future? Please, explain.
6. Relationships with your mentor have been:
Very good Good Not really good Poor
7. What has been the most common way of communication with your mentor?
Face-to-face Telephone E-mail Other _____
8. How frequently have you communicated with your mentor?
Daily Once a week Once in two weeks Once a month Once in a while
9. The frequency of communication has been:
Too often Just right Too rarely

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10. Who has initiated communication? Myself The mentor

11. Mentor's which features have you especially appreciated?

12 What else do you find important?

- That the mentor's school is close to the mentee's one.
- That the mentor's school is similar in size.
- That the mentor's school is situated in similar area (i.e. rural, urban ...)
- That the mentor and the mentee are of similar age
- That the mentor and the mentee are of the same sex
- Other _____

13 How applicable have been the contents of one-day courses?

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Entirely applicable</i>	<i>Applicable</i>	<i>Partly applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>
Introductory day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The structure of the Ministry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conflict management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing teacher performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership and staff motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. How helpful is mentoring for you a newly appointed head teacher?

- Very helpful Rather helpful Not really helpful Not at all helpful
Please, explain.

15. Evaluate the frequency of one-day courses (meetings) organised by NSLE

- Too many Just about right Too few
Please, explain..

16. Evaluate the organisation of one-day courses (meetings) organised by NSLE

- Too long Just about right Too short
Please, explain..

16. Please, give suggestions for further development of the program according to your experiences with headship and our program:

Contents:

Organisation:

Thank you for your answers!