



e-ISSN 2564-7261

*Research in Educational Administration and Leadership* (REAL) is a peer-reviewed international journal published biannually in July and December.

Web: <http://dergipark.gov.tr/real>

Email for correspondence: [journalthereal@gmail.com](mailto:journalthereal@gmail.com)

Sponsored by EARDA (Turkish Educational Administration Research & Development Association)

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*Mentoring and Role Modelling Through the Perspective of Academic  
Intellectual Leadership: Voluntarily and Institutionally*

**Baris Uslu**

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**Editorial**

**Mentoring and Role Modelling in Educational  
Administration and Leadership:  
Neoliberal/globalisation, Cross-cultural and  
Transcultural Issues**

**Eugenie A. Samier**

*University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland*

Many, if not most, of my writing comes from experience, as it does for many scholars – either observing situations and events, being among those involved in these, and the many discussions with students and colleagues about the experiences they have gone through in many countries I have visited or worked in. This topic of mentoring and the related role of role modelling initially came to me shortly after doing my doctorate in a mentoring mode with Christopher Hodgkinson in Canada, and my ideas about this were reinforced when I was mentored in informal postdoctoral work with Wolfgang Mommsen in Germany in the 1990s. Since that time, I have mentored some of my doctoral students, particularly in the last few years working with several in the Arabian Gulf. It was time for me to revisit my research and understanding of this topic after going through several years of research trips, guest lecturing and collaborative projects in Western, Central and Eastern Europe, followed by several years in the Gulf learning about the embeddedness of such roles in



different societal arrangements and cultural norms (e.g., Cullingford, 2016).

The opportunity to return to the topic came recently when I attended a presentation on mentorship in universities, only to discover that they really didn't mean mentorship – but matching people with others in different fields, for mostly three to four hours of career advice sessions in a year. It struck me that what they outlined was typical of a neoliberal idea of supportive relationships that I encountered years ago in first working on mentorship in the 1990s – preplanned programmes that had little to do with actual mentorship and confusing it other supportive and learning roles of teaching, supervising, advising, coaching, role modelling (which does not require personal contact), et cetera (Samier, 2000). What I discovered at that time in researching the topic is that mentoring is a complex, long-term relationship that takes about two years to establish, forms through a synergy of personality and character, and requires working with someone in the same field who has acquired a level of mastery over a long period of time, and lasts for at least five years and often for decades. These qualities are required for the multidimensional mentoring relationship that includes not only an educational role, but also an emotional one for support and a political role in protecting the protégée from organisational politics (e.g., Herman & Mandell, 2004; Laverick, 2016). The necessity of working together for a long period of time creates the trust necessary to these pairs, and in cultivating not just decision-making and the acquisition of knowledge but exercising judgement and applying principles and values to complex work and situations. And, perhaps most importantly, the relationship is unique to the pairs working together – there is no rubric or predetermined list of activities and characteristics that apply to all mentoring relationships.

Many organisations, I found in the 1990s, had tried designing mentoring programmes but had few of the authentic criteria for it built in. Still, much of the literature on mentoring and the programmes designed do not take into account types of diversity, nor that

mentoring is an embedded construction in the society and culture in which it forms. In my time in the Gulf, I learned that formative relationships take on a very different character due to Arab cultures, expatriate origins, Islamic values, and the geopolitical conditions of these countries. There were a number of new questions that arose for me in my Gulf experience: Can an expatriate mentor or be a role model for a Gulf graduate student? Can cross-gender mentoring and role modelling be successful? Can they be done cross-religiously? Can they transcend cultural difference and social norms – is there a common humanistic set of values? Can one divest oneself of colonising qualities as a Westerner working in a Gulf context? A few of my doctoral students in the UAE had some data on these roles and short discussion subsections in their theses, so I was able to enter their conceptions to some extent.

So, I came away from that recent presentation very irritated. And then I did what I usually do in that state of mind and contacted a colleague. In this case, I (fortunately) wrote to Kadir Beycioglu, editor of this journal, about his running a special issue on mentorship and role modelling to address their underdevelopment in the educational administration and leadership literature, especially internationally. But, being shrewd and insightful, Kadir said it was a great idea, but what did I have in mind? Which of course meant writing a draft call for papers. Which I did quite quickly, needing to work off the frustration and irritation I was experiencing in a cathartic activity.

A couple of questions came to mind in designing the call for papers for this special issue, in addition to the issues discussed above. First, what has been the impact on educational relationships over the last 50 years of neoliberalism, globalisation and market models? What are mentorship and role modelling from social inclusion (e.g., Colley, 2003; Vidyasagar & Hatti, 2018) and ethno-cultural (e.g., Johannessen, 2016) perspectives? What are mentorship and role modelling from diversity and postcolonial perspectives, especially for minority and marginalised students (e.g., Grant & Simmons, 2008; Hinsdale, 2015)? Initially, I was thinking about the forms that take place in Islam, but a



special issue on this could be broadened to a number of other countries. I also discussed the idea with a former doctoral student and now co-editor and co-author, Eman ElKaleh in the UAE (some of the ideas in this introduction came out of these discussions). The purpose of this special issue then became providing an opportunity for others to explore how mentoring and role modelling are conceived, what values are involved, what forms they take and what challenges and barriers may exist.

What I found in the UAE, for example, especially among more devout Muslims is that role modelling is central to Islam and was a part of their everyday thinking - mostly focussed on the Prophet Muhammad, but also could include other well-known figures like Salah ad-Din, Harun al Rashid, King Hussein of Jordan, Khadija, the first wife of the Prophet, and his later wife Aisha. And the mentor factor in the Emirati doctoral students' theses demonstrated that for women Emiratis who were really excelling had a mentor with a relationship that went back many years. Sometimes it was someone in the family, like an auntie or uncle, or someone they had started their professional education with, with whom they kept up a long term relationship. And for the UAE, the founder of the country, Shaikh Zayed al Nahyan, is a strong role model for men and women.

While mentoring and role modelling are often referenced in educational, and mainstream administrative and leadership literature, there is relatively little literature on them in educational administration and leadership, particularly in international and cross-cultural contexts, although some literature is appearing as noted in references above. What effect has neoliberalism had on these roles, and what is the impact of globalisation? Have the incursions of business and market models affected mentorship and role modelling adversely, for example, by standardising, managing and regularising it, in other words, kitschified it by mounting designed programmes that allow little variation or depth, and may, in fact, correspond poorly to the full range of academic and scholarly responsibilities and activities?

What are the challenges for expatriates mentoring and role modelling when teaching abroad, or for faculty in teaching and supervision foreign students from countries with different religious, cultural and political systems? Is there a problem with using behavioural models in mentoring that has little content or expertise in it, or which may violate religious and cultural values and norms? Has globalisation using mentoring and promoting particular role models advanced colonisation? Can mentoring and role modelling provide a social justice aim like advancing social inclusion? Can it be used to overcome and suppress negative stereotyping? Are there security and other risks in using foreign mentoring and role modelling?

There are a number of issues related to the definitions of mentoring and role modelling. To what extent is it a close, collaborative professional relationship between an expert or very well established professional and a novice, as defined traditionally composed of professional teaching, guardian protective, and emotion support roles? Should mentoring be distinguishable from other supportive roles such as teaching, supervising, facilitating, guiding, advising, peer teaching, coaching, etc., in other words has it become broadened to such a degree that it loses its particular qualities? What range of activities and dimensions of relationship does it include? How do race, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity affect the relationship? What cross-cultural factors inhibit mentoring and role modelling? What effect does the culture, political system, economic conditions, and social practices have on role modelling and mentorship? Are there some cultures and religious groups for whom mentoring and/or role modelling are more important? Do they have distinctive phases, and over what period of time do they need to develop? Are there better ways to research these relationships, and does this necessarily involve using indigenous and culturally sensitive research methods recommended by authors like Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) in her *Decolonizing Methodologies*? Are indepth qualitative methods better, such as ethnography, hermeneutics and phenomenology, or auto ethnography?



The articles in this special issue examine a number of these conceptions and patterns of mentoring and role modelling. The majority of the papers are on school mentoring in a number of international contexts. Julia Mahfouz and Sonya Hayes explore the research results on studies conducted primarily in the US on school principal mentoring over the last decade in 'Principalship and Mentoring: A Review of Perspectives, Evidence, and Literature 1999 – 2019' aimed at how necessary it is to cultivate effective leadership. The emergent themes they found demonstrated that different conceptions and values are involved, and that successful mentoring was dependent upon two main factors: the pairing in the dyads, and the length of time they had to work as a pair as well as other factors that are being used in the relationship such as digital contact. One of the main conclusions of the study is that more research needs to be done in other international contexts. Henry Tran and Douglas Smith's 'The strategic support to thrive beyond survival model: An administrative support framework for improving student outcomes and addressing educator staffing in rural and urban high-needs schools' examines administrative and leadership mentoring in US schools located in environments that are diverse and have many social problems. They focus on the 'Thrive beyond Survival' model in which principals provide mentoring for teachers as part of administrative support, focussed primarily on employee needs to improve competences, self-efficacy, and increase teacher retention in cross-cultural contexts.

A number of papers examine non-Anglo context schools. Sotiria Michopoulou, Vasileios Stavropoulos and Efstathios Xafakos' 'Investigating the existence of mentoring support to school's new-entrant substitute teachers in the Greek educational context: the role of school leadership' was designed to determine if new school teachers were receiving informal mentoring in a system in which mentoring as a formal practice is only just being adopted and how this is related to the leadership style of principals. They found that novice teachers were receiving some mentoring from experienced colleagues, particularly on the history and culture of the school and having a more

positive emotional impact in their professional development, and some from principals with a more supportive leadership styles, helping them to integrate. Ferudun Sezgin, Emre Sönmez, & Mehtap Naillioğlu Kaymak's article, 'Mentoring-based learning culture at schools: Learning from school administrator mentoring,' is a phenomenological exploration of mentoring roles and behaviours of administrators in Turkey contributing to a learning culture, Their findings demonstrate that mentoring is necessary to developing professional competencies and values.

Two papers cover a broader contextual background focussed on cultural and other societal factors that vary. Benjamin Kutsyuruba, Lorraine Godden and Keith Walker examines the formal and informal mentoring strategies used with early career teachers in 'The effect of contextual factors on school leaders' involvement in early-career teacher mentoring: A review of the international research literature.' Their focus on contextual factors in a heuristic framework that influence these practices shows how culture, political system, social structure and practices, and organisational structures shape expectations, role construction and professional development, and provide insights into further development. Marjorie Ceballos' article, 'Mentoring, role modeling, and acculturation: Exploring international teacher narratives to inform supervisory practices,' focuses on the critical role of international, that is foreign, teachers acquiring adequate mentoring and role modelling and the cultural competence required to adequately serve their colleagues and students, and the knowledge and skills their mentors need to be effective. The article also focusses on how acculturation as a process is understood and practiced, reviewing literature on the topic through major databases over the last decade.

Two papers investigate higher education mentoring, focussing mostly on the development of academics and their careers. Takako Mino's 'Institutional mentorship in West Africa: Comparing government-regulated and university-led models' explores through case study analysis institutional mentoring programmes in higher



education in Ghana and Niger, focussing on varying styles and roles embedded in policy and leadership practices as they affect protégées' agency, development and aspirations. The results demonstrate that some programmes follow a coercive strategy that does not fulfil mentoring requirements, whereas leadership-based models focussed more on agency are effective. Baris Uslu examines the nature and role of academic intellectual leadership mentoring, comparing voluntary and institutionally designed programmes in 'Mentoring and role modelling through the perspective of academic intellectual leadership: Voluntarily and institutionally' using a systematic review. The findings demonstrate that many of the rationales for both are shared, and can enrich the productivity of both mentor and protégée, however, cultural and political factors have a strong influence positively and negatively.

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Cite as: Samier, E. A. (2020). Editorial: Mentoring and role modelling in educational administration and leadership: Neoliberal/globalisation, cross-cultural and transcultural issues. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 5(3), 630-638. DOI: 10.30828/real/2020.3.1

#### **About the author**

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## Mentoring, Role Modeling, and Acculturation: Exploring International Teacher Narratives to Inform Supervisory Practices

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Abstract	Article Info
<p><i>As teacher shortages continue in countries worldwide, international teachers may be recruited from other countries to help fill critical teacher vacancies, particularly in high-need subject areas such as mathematics and science. International teachers are a unique group who have specific needs, which could be addressed through school administrators' supervisory practices. To understand international teacher needs, a review of the literature from 2009 to 2019 was completed to examine the extent to which dimensions of mentoring, role modeling, and acculturation were represented in international teacher narratives in peer-reviewed journals. In the course of the review, a fourth dimension of principals and ITs was found in the literature and explored. Findings from the literature review pointed to four themes related to the three identified dimensions: (a) a need for induction, (b) role modeling as collegial support, (c) international teacher acculturation issues, and (d) principal perspectives of ITs. The international teacher themes discovered through this review of the literature may help to inform the supervisory practices of school administrators as they strive to ensure positive outcomes for international teachers.</i></p>	<p><b>Article History:</b> <i>Received</i> September 05, 2019</p> <p><i>Accepted</i> August 12, 2020</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>Acculturation, International teachers, Mentoring, Role modeling, Supervision</i></p>

**Cite as:**

Ceballos, M. (2020). Mentoring, role modeling, and acculturation: Exploring international teacher narratives to inform supervisory practices. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 5(3), 640-680. DOI: 10.30828/real/2020.3.2

**Introduction**

Teacher shortages in school districts across the United States have been an ongoing concern for educational leaders since the early 2000s (Malkus, Hoyer, & Sparks, 2015; National Association of Secondary School Principals, n.d.). In response to the teacher supply shortfalls, school districts hired foreign teachers (i.e., teachers hired from a foreign country to work in a host country) to fill teacher vacancies (Hutchison & Jazzar, 2007). Although the teacher shortage situation has improved since 1999 (Malkus et al., 2015), shortfalls persist within specific subject areas (e.g., mathematics, science, and special education) and school contexts that are “urban, rural, high-poverty, high-minority, and low-achieving” (Aragon, 2016, p. 5). In 2019, the U.S. Department of State (n.d.) issued 3,252 J-1 visas to foreign teachers. The J-1 classification visa is given to foreigners who are in an approved exchange program in the United States for the purposes of teaching or conducting research, among other objectives (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, n.d.). The majority of J-1 visas issued to foreign teachers were concentrated in North Carolina ( $n = 522$ ), South Carolina ( $n = 350$ ), New Mexico ( $n = 270$ ), Texas ( $n = 262$ ), California ( $n = 258$ ), and Florida ( $n = 211$ ).

The United States is not alone in this practice as other countries like Australia and the United Kingdom also have hired foreign teachers in response to critical shortages (Hutchison & Jazzar, 2007; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017; Miller, 2018). Foreign teachers are referred

to in a variety of ways in the host countries where they work, including overseas-trained teachers in United Kingdom (Department for Education, 2014), internationally-educated teachers in Canada (Province of Nova Scotia, n.d.), and international educators (Cultural Vistas, n.d.) or international teachers in the United States. In this paper, the term *international teacher* is used to refer to foreign teachers. International teachers (ITs) face unique challenges that are compounded by the requisite cultural adjustment to a different educational system with its own culture and practices (Cross, Hong, & Williams-Johnson, 2011; Dunn, 2011). Research on international teacher experiences underscored needs related to gaining an understanding of the K-12 culture in which they were immersed (e.g., student behavior, pedagogy, school structure), a need for orientation prior to arriving in the host country, and the need for positive peer interactions (Cross et al., 2011; Dunn, 2011; Miller, 2018; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017). School administrators went further, explaining the necessity for continued IT professional learning to address instructional and cultural needs (Dunn, 2011).

Challenges faced by ITs echo those of teachers working in international school settings. In international schools, however, the focus has been on reducing teacher turnover through comprehensive induction practices oriented to the international school's context to help teachers manage cultural adjustment (Hayden, 2006). Furthermore, in international school settings, principals who were perceived as supportive of teachers and willing to engage teachers in shared leadership contributed to reduced teacher turnover (Mancuso, Roberts, & White, 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009). Given the similarities between ITs and teachers in international schools, practices related to new teacher induction and effective teacher development present an avenue to bridge ITs' transition to a new



academic environment. Specifically, the practices of mentoring and role modeling, which have been linked to improved instructional practices and student achievement (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Krasnoff, 2014; New Teacher Center, 2015). Additionally, practices that support acculturation (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989; Berry 2005) may provide additional support for ITs. Principals and other school administrators play a critical role in IT development, since they create the conditions for effective teacher development, effective teacher collaboration, and quality induction and mentoring (New Teacher Center, 2015). However, school administrators must first gain an understanding of IT needs through the experiences of ITs found in the literature. Therefore, this review of the literature focused on one research question: To what extent does international teacher literature focused on IT narratives reflect mentoring, role modeling, and acculturation needs? To position this study within the literature, the conceptual framework includes a discussion on mentoring, role modeling, acculturation, cultural intelligence, and work outcomes drawing from research on of novice teacher induction, cross-cultural psychology, and management.

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **Mentoring for Teacher Effectiveness**

Mentoring is an essential ingredient in novice teachers' success in the classroom (Bullough, 2012; Capizzi, Wehby, & Sandmel, 2010; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Correa & Wagner, 2011; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Gordon & Lowrey, 2017; Kessels, 2010; Löffström & Eisenschmidt, 2009; Sun, 2012; Tillman, 2005). Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) and Gordon and

Lowrey (2017) proposed mentoring practices to ensure novice teachers' success and retention in schools. First, Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) provided guidelines for mentoring novice teachers which included: (a) assignment of a mentor, (b) frequent meetings with the assigned mentor, (c) a focus on classroom observation and feedback, (d) analyzing student data to identify areas for growth and areas of strengths, (e) discussion of instructional issues, and (f) working in concert to develop a professional growth plan (p. 34). Gordon and Lowrey (2017) went further, arguing that while formal mentoring was integral to the mentoring structure, mentoring should be viewed as a web. In the mentoring web, principals, mentors (both formal and informal), college and university faculty, school support staff, students, parents, and the induction program all contributed to novice teacher development (Gordon & Lowrey, 2017). Further, novice teachers should be encouraged to seek out informal mentors because of the additional contributions they provided outside of the traditional mentoring model (Gordon & Lowrey, 2017; Correa & Wagner, 2011).

Various studies analyzed the contributions of mentorship to effective teaching practices and professional growth (Capizzi, et al., 2010; Löfström & Eisenschmidt, 2009; Correa & Wagner, 2011). In a study involving pre-service teachers completed by Capizzi and colleagues (2010), researchers found that pre-service teachers' instructional effectiveness improved following feedback on a lesson that had been videotaped. The teacher candidates found that watching the lessons together with mentors was helpful in the instructional feedback process. In a mentoring survey of novice teachers in Estonia, researchers found that novice teachers received mentoring support, including personal and professional knowledge development, feedback, collegial support, mutuality within the



mentoring relationship, mentor access, and trust (Löfström & Eisenschmidt, 2009). However, respondents highlighted the need for mentors to facilitate rather than lead reflection, the need for mentor professional learning to facilitate the mentor-mentee process, and the need to infuse mentoring into the school culture. Lastly, Correa and Wagner (2011) found informal mentors were critical to mentoring, providing feedback on instruction which novice teachers found valuable.

***Mentor Preparation.*** Effective mentoring relies on a mentor's ability to engage in mentoring practices that contribute to mentee growth. Several researchers established the need for mentors to be prepared adequately prior to stepping into a mentorship role and to continue to receive professional learning throughout the mentoring process (Bullough, 2012; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Kessels, 2010; Sun, 2012). Because of the distinct knowledge and skills required of mentors, this development is essential to mentor-mentee outcomes. For example, when providing support to novice teachers, mentors experience dissonance because of the competing aims of providing collegial support to mentees, while also providing critical feedback to ensure improved student outcomes (Bullough, 2012). Furthermore, novice teachers have indicated that mentors must be trustworthy, supportive, and offer the mentee a "degree of challenge" to improve instructional practice (Kessels, 2010, p. 33). Additionally, mentors should provide knowledge about teaching and learning, provide formative assessment and feedback to mentees, and support mentees through new challenges and experiences (Sun, 2012). Moreover, because of the unique role mentors occupy, mentors are often viewed as vehicles for teacher retention and development, spearheading changes in school culture (Bullough, 2012). These demands underscore the need for specialized professional learning to become

effective mentors (Kessels, 2010) and improve student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009).

Specialized professional learning for mentors includes strengthening relationship-building capabilities, classroom observations, use of formative data to inform instruction, and collection and analysis of student evidence (e.g., work samples and other artifacts) based on educational standards (Sun, 2012). In addition to specialized professional learning, Sun (2012) asserted that mentor selection is a salient component of novice teacher induction programs and should be approached carefully. Being an effective teacher should not be the sole consideration when selecting mentors (Bullough, 2012). Mentors should meet certain criteria, including: (a) three or more years of effective instructional practice, (b) ability to reflect on his or her own teaching, (c) subject-area knowledge and content pedagogy, (d) demonstrated commitment to his or her own professional growth and that of mentees, and (e) ability to be empathetic and understanding of mentees' needs (Sun, 2012, p. 7).

### **Role Modeling**

Role modeling, like mentoring, is a pertinent component of new teacher induction programs. Social cognitive theory as proposed by Albert Bandura (Grusec, 1992) and components of psychosocial support (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004) both inform role modeling. As framed by social cognitive theory, peer observations are a form of role modeling in which a teacher observes a teaching event and, subsequently, adopts behaviors from the teaching event. Psychosocial support, on the other hand, includes role modeling as a way to build and deepen interpersonal relationships among the mentor, mentee, and other colleagues.



***Role modeling through peer observation.*** Social learning theory or social cognitive theory, as presented by Bandura, focused on how children's and adults' cognition of social experiences impact their behavior and development (Grusec, 1992, p. 781). As explained by Grusec (1992), Bandura argued that there were four distinct components to the modeling process in social cognitive theory. First, the observer pays attention to events produced or modeled behavior, followed by the retention of the observed event or modeled behavior either through imagery or verbal methods (Grusec, 1992). Then, the pictorial or verbal representation produced must be converted into proper actions, and the observer must connect some value to adopt the observed event as a model (Grusec, 1992). In some instances, individuals may observe role modeling directly, while in other instances, role modeling may be indirect. Several studies analyzed the effects of direct peer observation on improved outcomes for the observers (Hendry, Bell, & Thomson, 2014; Hunzicker et al., 2017). In a research study on direct peer observation of university faculty, researchers found that respondents who observed their peers teaching indicated that the peer observations either served to validate their own teaching practices or led them to learn new teaching practices (Hendry et al., 2014). Additionally, Hendry et al. (2014) found that respondents also reported other beneficial aspects of the peer observation, including observing student engagement in class and a reduced feeling of isolation as they collaborated with their colleagues after the peer observations.

Indirect role modeling is also a component of role modeling. Indirect role modeling occurs when individuals observe behaviors from peers, supervisors, and others within their work environment, often with individuals processing observed behaviors unconsciously (Cruess, Cruess, & Steinhart, 2008). Cruess and colleagues (2008)

posited that reflection is an integral component of actively examining actions and activities taken by role models as a component of learning from the indirect role modeling observed. To learn from observed actions, Cruess et al. (2008) offered a modeling process framework for application following the active observation of role models where mentees explore unconscious behaviors, making them conscious and reflecting on those behaviors to convert insights into principles and actions. Within the proposed model, mentees would actively explore “affect and values” of the observed behaviors and reach “generalisation and behaviour change” (Cruess et al., 2008, p. 719).

Warhurst (2011) further validated the notion that role modeling can be an unconscious process that does not become conscious until reflection takes place. Participants in this study on mid-level managers learned from senior-level managers in their work environment in an ad hoc manner rather than through a formalized relationship. Participants selected indirect role models as a result of participant perceptions of the observed individual’s competence as a manager (Warhurst, 2011). Moreover, role model selection was not constrained to one person. Participants selected multiple role models and chose behaviors from each to create a personalized composite role model. The composite role model represented a blend of culled behaviors viewed positively by the participants (Warhurst, 2011).

*Role modeling through psychosocial support.* Psychosocial support differs from direct and indirect modeling because of its focus on interpersonal relationships, where “role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship” (Allen et al., 2004, p. 128) are integral functions of mentoring and related to satisfaction with the mentor and, therefore, may be linked to mentor-mentee outcomes



(Weimer, 2019). Others have come to similar conclusions, finding that psychosocial support, or collegial relationships with mentors and others, was an essential component of novice teacher success (Le Cornu, 2013; Weimer, 2019; Yusko & Feiman-Nemser, 2008). Le Cornu (2013), for example, found that mentees who had positive relationships with colleagues at their schools had a “sense of belonging and social connectedness” (p. 4). Moreover, positive relationships allowed mentees to join networks of veteran teachers to share ideas, engendering positive outcomes for novice teachers. The positive relationships were mutual in that mentees adopted veteran teachers’ strategies, and veteran teachers adopted those of mentees, reaffirming novice teachers’ contributions to the school (Le Cornu, 2013). Support from novice peers also contributed to novice teacher success. Novice teachers reported receiving support from their novice peers, both professionally and personally, allowing them to discuss problems and find solutions (Le Cornu, 2013).

### **School Administrators, Mentoring, and Role Modeling**

Given the importance of mentoring and other induction practices to teacher development and retention, principals and other school administrators occupy a crucial space in the mentoring structure and process of a school as well as the role modeling that takes place. Principals and other school administrators are central to establishing a school culture of collaboration where mentoring, role modeling, and other forms of teacher collaboration flourish (Brücknerová & Novotný, 2019; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Correa & Wagner, 2011; Gordon & Lowrey, 2017; Haiyan, Walker, & Xiaowei, 2017; Ingersoll, 2012; Löfström & Eisenschmidt, 2009; Pogodzinski, 2015; Youngs, 2007). However, much like mentors, school administrators need professional learning

to create school settings where mentoring relationships lead to teacher growth and retention (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). In addition to professional learning, school administrators also should be active participants in the mentoring process of novice teachers (Gordon & Lowry, 2017; Youngs, 2007).

Correa and Wagner (2011), for example, found that school administrator involvement in the early stages of mentoring was integral to effective mentoring. Therefore, school administrators needed to be involved by attending mentee orientation and involving themselves in the pairing of mentors and mentees. Moreover, school administrator involvement proved beneficial beyond the early stages of mentoring. Tillman (2005) discovered that mentee competence grew when a mentor and the school administrator collaborated in the mentoring process with the mentee. Further, mentees found feedback born from collaboration between the mentor and the principal to be indispensable to their success (Correa & Wagner, 2011).

School administrator involvement with mentees has proven crucial globally as school administrators engage in overall school improvement efforts and in developing the school culture to support novice teachers. For example, in a study completed in Australia, Lynch, Smith, Provost, and Madden (2016) found that a collaborative learning model, when conducted in a distributive manner involving the principal, lead teachers, and mentees, led to improved student outcomes in achievement across various measures. In this model, lead teachers provided coaching, mentoring, and feedback to teacher teams, the principal provided the same support for teachers and the leadership team, and specific professional learning for teachers was selected based on teacher needs (Lynch et al., 2016). Furthermore,



school administrators are responsible for establishing the school culture and processes that buttress mentor-mentee relationships and overall novice teacher induction. Youngs (2007) found that principals who had successful teacher induction programs engaged in a distributive leadership model where they shared induction responsibilities with others at their school. Moreover, school administrators influenced the outcomes of induction programs by building a positive teacher learning culture for all by redesigning school structures to promote teacher learning, espousing learning as part of the profession, and developing a climate that encouraged trusting, collegial relationships (Haiyan et al., 2017). In school settings where mentees perceived a negative relationship between teachers and school administrators, novice teacher engagement with mentors decreased (Pogodzinski, 2015), possibly leading to diminished outcomes.

### **Acculturation**

Acculturation is discussed here to provide context for the cultural adjustment individuals experience when transitioning to a new cultural environment, which ITs experience when arriving in a different country to teach in a new academic setting. Acculturation is defined as two cultures coming into contact with one another over a protracted span of time (Berry et al., 1989). Berry (2005) described acculturation as “a process of cultural and psychological changes that involve various forms of mutual accommodation [between cultural groups], leading to longer-term psychological and sociocultural adaptations between groups” (p. 699). Acculturation is a psychological process, where individuals “hold attitudes” as to how they choose to engage and relate to others they encounter in the acculturation space (Berry et al., 1989, p. 186).

Attitudes held by individuals lead to distinct acculturation attitudes where individuals decide “whether or not one’s own cultural identity and customs are of value and should be retained” and to decide “whether positive relationships with the larger society are of value and should be sought” (Berry et al., 1989, p. 187). The acculturation attitudes adopted by individuals result in assimilation, integration, separation, or marginalization. Assimilation culminates in an individual turning away from his or her own culture and becoming part of the dominant culture, while integration allows the individual to retain his or her own culture and become part of the dominant culture (Berry et al., 1989). Separation and marginalization involve the individual living outside of the dominant culture by choice as is the case with separation, or because it is imposed on the individual by the dominant culture as is the case with marginalization (Berry et al., 1989). Each of these attitudes is accompanied by acculturative stress, which is a type of stress that arises from the process of acculturation (Sam, 2015). Individuals whose acculturation attitudes steered them toward integration experienced less acculturative stress and achieved improved outcomes, while those who gravitated toward marginalization experienced the most stress (Berry, 2005).

*Acculturation and work outcomes.* The field of expatriate management has focused on developing an understanding of the contexts and conditions that may allow for the successful acculturation of expatriates (i.e., individuals working in a foreign country) in foreign work environments. Acculturation research in this area focused on the “cultural nuances of moving overseas, adaptation, and subsequent job success” (Gonzalez-Loureiro, Kiessling, & Dabic, 2015, p. 248). Researchers found various conditions and contexts which contribute to successful acculturation



of expatriates. For instance, Farh, Bartol, Shapiro, and Shin (2010) proposed a process model to explain how expatriates could engage in networks to create supportive ties. Through these networks, expatriates could address their informational or social needs, furthering their adjustment in a foreign country (Farh et al., 2010). Within this model, expatriates connect with a person who possesses knowledge about the new environment and understands expatriate needs, leading to improved adjustment (Farh et al., 2010).

*Cultural intelligence.* Other researchers (Ang et al., 2007; Guðmundsdóttir, 2015; Ramalu, Rose, Uli, & Kumar, 2012; Sambasivan, Sadoughi, & Esmailzadeh, 2017) stressed the importance of cultural intelligence and its effects on expatriates' adjustment to and performance in foreign work environments. Ang et al. (2007) defined cultural intelligence "as an individual's capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings" (p. 337). Sambasivan et al. (2017) found that culturally intelligent individuals were able to focus more on adjusting to social and work-related integration because they were less anxious when placed in a different cultural context. Other researchers have suggested organizations develop expatriates' cultural intelligence prior to arriving in the foreign country (Guðmundsdóttir, 2015; Ramalu et al., 2012). Ramalu et al. (2012) recommended that cultural intelligence development could be continued through mentoring and coaching provided by local mentors and expatriate mentors, possibly leading to improved adaptation and performance in the new cultural context.

## Methods

To complete the literature review, I identified and examined peer-reviewed journal articles on international teacher experiences as

they related to the broad dimensions of (a) mentoring, (b) role modeling, and (c) acculturation. First, database searches were completed to identify peer-reviewed journal articles, including the following databases: ABI/Inform Collection, Academic Search Premier, ERIC, EBSCO Education Source, JSTOR Journals, Professional Development Collection Education, ProQuest, Springer Link, Taylor and Francis, Science Direct, and Web of Science. The following search terms were used first individually and then in combination (e.g., “international teachers” or “international teachers AND mentoring”): “international teachers,” “overseas trained teachers,” “foreign teachers,” “employment of foreign teachers,” “international teachers,” “teacher induction,” “culture shock,” “acculturation,” “mentoring,” and “role modeling.” Additionally, the references list of articles selected for inclusion were explored to locate additional articles. Through this method, a total of 20 articles were identified for possible inclusion.

To be included in this analysis, peer-reviewed journal articles had to be published between 2009 and 2019 and focus on the experiences of international teachers working predominantly in K-12 public schools in a foreign country. The time and public school delimitations were put in place to collect articles that represented contemporary IT experiences within public schools to maintain consistency among the articles examined. The inclusion criteria yielded a total of 10 articles for inclusion in this analysis. To complete the analysis, the constant comparative method was used to identify findings related to mentoring, role modeling, or acculturation (Glaser & Strauss, 2008) within the articles selected for inclusion. For example, in terms of the dimension of acculturation, if the researcher described a teacher’s experience in terms of “culture shock” (Cross et al., 2011, p. 505), it fell within the dimension of acculturation.



Following the initial review for each of the three dimensions, the representations for each dimension found in the articles were reviewed and compared across articles to integrate the findings. Then, resulting themes that arose from the comparison of incidences within each dimension were identified (Glaser & Strauss, 2008). The articles included in this review, IT countries or regions of origin, and dimensions identified and examined in each article are found in Table 1.

Table 1

*Peer-reviewed Articles on International Teacher Experiences (N = 10)*

Author(s) (Year)	International Teacher Setting	International Teacher Country or Region of Origin	IT Dimensions Identified and Examined
Bailey (2013)	United States	Jamaica	Acculturation
Cross, Young, and Williams-Johnson (2011)	United States	Jamaica	Acculturation Role Modeling
de Villiers and Weda (2018)	South Africa	Zimbabwe	Acculturation Mentoring Role Modeling
Dunn (2011)	United States	India	Acculturation Mentoring Role Modeling
Fee (2011)	United States	Central America, South America, and Spain	Acculturation Role Modeling
Miller (2009)	England	Caribbean and Guyana	Acculturation Mentoring
Miller (2018)	England	Jamaica	Acculturation Role Modeling

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Datta Roy & Lavery (2017)	Australia	Canada, Eritrea, India, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Japan, South Africa, Seychelles, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Zimbabwe	Acculturation Mentoring
Vandeyar, Vandeyar, & Elufisan (2014)	South Africa	Zimbabwe and Nigeria	Acculturation
Weda & de Villiers (2019)	South Africa	Zimbabwe	Acculturation

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### Study Results

The review of the articles and subsequent comparative analysis of the dimensions of mentoring, role modeling, acculturation, and principals and ITs yielded three IT themes across the articles: (a) a need for induction, (b) role modeling as collegial support, and (c) IT acculturation issues. In the course of the examination, a fourth dimension was added, principals and ITs, since it appeared in the literature reviewed. This fourth dimension yielded the theme of principal perceptions of ITs. Acculturation issues was the most comprehensive theme and, therefore, was divided into four sub-themes. IT dimensions examined, resulting themes and sub-themes, and the articles in which the themes appeared are found in Table 2.



Table 2.

*IT Dimensions Examined and Resulting Themes*

IT Dimensions Examined	Resulting Themes	Author(s) and Year
Mentoring	A Need for Induction	Dunn, 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Miller, 2009; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017
Role Modeling	Role Modeling as Collegial Support	Cross et al., 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Dunn, 2011; Fee, 2011; Miller, 2018
Acculturation	IT Acculturation Issues ( <i>sub-themes</i> )	
	<i>Behavioral and academic expectations of students</i>	Bailey, 2013; Cross et al., 2011; Dunn, 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Fee, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014; Weda & de Villiers, 2019
	<i>Shifts in pedagogical practices</i>	Cross et al., 2011; Dunn, 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Fee, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014
	<i>Understanding the host culture and the educational system</i>	Dunn, 2011; Fee, 2011; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017
	<i>Feelings of marginalization</i>	Cross et al., 2011; Dunn, 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Fee, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014
Principals and ITs	Principal Perspectives of ITs	Dunn, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014

### **A Need for IT Induction**

Induction as a need for ITs was found as a theme in the literature. In four of the articles reviewed, ITs did not participate in any type of induction either from the recruiting agency prior to arriving in the host country or once they arrived at the school sites (Dunn, 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Miller, 2009; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017). In one study, ITs did receive school district-level support and a mentor from the hiring agency; however, school district-level meetings were scheduled at times that conflicted with ITs' school schedule and visits from the hiring agency-appointed mentor were infrequent (Dunn, 2011). ITs may have benefitted from participating in an induction program. In three studies, ITs indicated that a comprehensive induction would have allowed them to receive professional learning as it related to the curricula, the educational system of the host country, and the culture of the school (de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Miller, 2009; Weda & de Villiers, 2019). Because they did not partake in an induction program, ITs perceived they were left to struggle. (Miller, 2009).

### **Role Modeling as Collegial Support**

Role modeling appeared in the literature in terms of psychosocial support rather than through direct peer observation. In five of the research studies reviewed, ITs discussed collegial relationships and the impact of those relationships in helping or hindering their transition to the new academic setting (Cross et al., 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Dunn, 2011; Fee, 2011; Miller, 2018). ITs who built positive collegial relationships with their local school colleagues received support in sharing and developing lessons, managing the classroom, and navigating the new culture (Cross et al., 2011; Dunn, 2011). Other ITs received support from peer ITs who



had arrived earlier and, therefore, received more guidance from veteran ITs (Fee, 2011).

Other ITs, however, cited that they experienced negative relationships with their local school colleagues. In the negative relationships developed, ITs felt they did not have their local school colleagues' professional respect (Fee, 2011; Miller, 2018). Professional respect was accorded to ITs through student performance, once ITs' students were enrolled in their local school colleagues' classes (Fee, 2011). Other ITs expressed that they felt disconnected from their local school colleagues and articulated a need to develop collegial relationships (de Villiers & Weda, 2018). ITs indicated that professional learning on how to build collegial relationships might have been helpful in building positive collegial relationships (de Villiers & Weda, 2018).

### **IT Acculturation Issues**

*Behavioral and academic expectations of students.* First, ITs experienced acculturative stress from a mismatch between their expectations regarding students' classroom and social behaviors as well as students' predispositions toward academics and the reality of student behaviors and academics (Bailey, 2013; Cross et al., 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Dunn, 2011; Fee, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014; Weda & de Villiers, 2019). For example, ITs expected students to be "obedient and disciplined" (Cross et al., 2011, p. 505) in ways similar to how students behaved in their home countries. Further, ITs were expected to moderate students' behavior rather than students moderating their own behavior. In one study, ITs expressed that parents expected them to teach their children how to behave (Fee, 2011). ITs also felt blamed for students' misbehavior (Bailey, 2013). Students' social behaviors also were a source of dissonance for ITs as

they witnessed their students exhibiting different social behaviors or situations from students in their home countries, such as dating, becoming pregnant, or engaging in drug use (Fee, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014). Finally, ITs expected to maintain a professional distance between themselves and the students. ITs did not expect for students to have an expectation of liking their teachers as part of the student-teacher relationship (Bailey 2013; de Villiers & Weda, 2018). Academically, students in the host nation were also different from the IT perspective. ITs perceived that students had a sense of entitlement and did not seem to value education as students did in their home countries (Bailey, 2013). Rather, students had to be persuaded as to the value of education (Bailey, 2013; Vandeyar et al., 2014). Moreover, ITs felt blamed for students' poor academic performance (Vandeyar et al., 2014).

*Shifts in pedagogical practices.* ITs also had to make pedagogical and instructional adjustments in the host country (Cross et al., 2011; Dunn, 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Fee, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014). ITs experienced a different pace of instruction, where instruction was expected to happen at a faster pace (Cross et al., 2011). Also, ITs had to adopt different approaches to instruction and abandon traditional pedagogical practices, such as lecturing, in favor of other pedagogical practices (Dunn, 2011; Fee, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014). Moreover, ITs engaged in more testing than they had in their home countries (Fee, 2011). In terms of student class grades, ITs in one study mentioned grading as an issue as they found grading to be more relaxed in the host country than it had been in their previous environment (Vandeyar et al., 2014). Lastly, ITs were not used to being given academic leeway to create lessons and adopt new pedagogical practices, another source of dissonance for ITs when they started teaching in the host country (Fee, 2011).



While ITs experienced dissonance as they adopted new pedagogical practices, ITs in two studies cited this as a positive experience (Miller, 2009; 2018). ITs in these studies indicated that being in a new environment allowed them to grow in their instructional practice. Specifically, ITs reported appreciating the continued professional learning made available to them in their schools (Miller, 2009). In addition to the professional learning offered, ITs specified that the frequent classroom observations and subsequent feedback helped them to grow in their pedagogical practice (Miller, 2009). Other ITs, however, did indicate frequent classroom observations as a source of stress. In one study, ITs stated that they were unaccustomed to not only the frequency of observations, but also to the number of people who observed them (Fee, 2011).

*Understanding the host culture and the educational system.* Throughout the studies, ITs experiences indicated a need to understand the host culture (Dunn, 2011; Fee, 2011; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017), and how to navigate the educational structure (Fee, 2011; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017). ITs had little to no knowledge of the culture of the host country prior to arriving (Dunn, 2011; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017). Some ITs resorted to online resources, such as Wikipedia and YouTube, to address the knowledge gap and learn about the host country's culture (Dunn, 2011). When navigating the educational system, ITs did not possess an understanding of the system, creating obstacles as they attempted apply for teacher licensure in the host country (Fee, 2011; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017). At the school level, ITs had to adjust to both political and cultural aspects of the schools, including understanding political factions among teachers (Fee, 2011).

*Feelings of marginalization.* ITs also experienced marginalization due to prejudice from local school colleagues, students, and sometimes the principals (Cross et al., 2011; Dunn, 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Fee, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014). Teachers cited their accents as a source of discrimination when they spoke the language of the host country (Cross et al., 2011; Dunn, 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Fee, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014). Furthermore, some ITs also indicated that their race was also a factor in the prejudice experienced (Cross et al., 2011). Other ITs stated that once they were identified as foreigners in the host country (for example, by last name), this also became a source of discrimination for them within the school (Vandeyar et al., 2014; Weda & de Villiers, 2019).

### **Principal Perspectives of ITs**

While the preponderance of the literature analyzed focused on IT narratives, principal perspectives on ITs also appeared. In two of the articles reviewed, the principal perspectives on ITs were addressed explicitly, representing both positive and negative outlooks from principals (Dunn, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014). Principals who held positive viewpoints on ITs identified ITs' strong work ethic and contributions made to raising the standards (Vandeyar et al., 2014). In this study, students also corroborated the perceptions of principals. Conversely, principals in the study completed by Dunn (2011) did not perceive benefits to having ITs in their schools. Specifically, principals believed that IT issues (e.g., pedagogical issues and classroom management issues, among others) outweighed the benefits of ameliorating teacher shortages and possibly gaining highly qualified teachers with content expertise, which the school district had used to advocate for IT recruitment



(Dunn, 2011). Principals indicated that ITs needed further support and suggested continued professional learning, starting before ITs arrived in the host country, once in the host country, and throughout the school year (Dunn, 2011). Additionally, school district support and support from the recruitment agency were also identified by principals as issues which had contributed to IT outcomes (Dunn, 2011).

## Discussion

### **A Need for an IT Induction Framework: Mentoring and Collegial Support**

Findings from the literature indicated that ITs received little to no induction prior to arriving in the host country or once in the host country (Dunn, 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Miller, 2009; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017). ITs indicated that the ability to participate in an induction program would have proven beneficial as they came to understand the host country's curricula, the educational system, and the school culture (de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Miller, 2009; Weda & de Villiers, 2019). Furthermore, ITs had mixed results in the ability to establish collegial relationships or psychosocial support, which either advanced or impeded their transitions within the new culture (Cross et al., 2011; de Villiers & Weda., 2018; Dunn, 2011; Fee, 2011). As the IT corps continues to grow, limited or partial induction practices (Miller, 2008) will need to give way to a comprehensive induction framework to ensure positive IT outcomes.

*ITs and mentoring.* To address IT induction needs, ITs need to participate in a comprehensive induction program in the same way as novice teachers with an emphasis on mentoring practices. Research on effective new teacher induction program practices identified

mentoring as a practice that contributed to novice teachers' classroom success (Bullough, 2012; Capizzi et al., 2010; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Correa & Wagner, 2011; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Gordon & Lowrey, 2017; Kessels, 2010; Löffström & Eisenschmidt, 2009; Sun, 2012; Tillman, 2005). Furthermore, research from the field of expatriate management also suggested that mentoring or coaching is an effective practice for improving work outcomes for individuals working in a foreign country (Ramalu et al., 2012; Pekerti, Vuong, & Napier, 2017). For mentoring to be effective in advancing IT outcomes in schools, ITs need both formal mentoring (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017) and informal mentoring (Gordon & Lowery, 2017; Correa & Wagner, 2011).

Formal mentoring needs to occur through assigned mentors who can support ITs' development through IT classroom observations and subsequent feedback to ITs, collaborative analysis of student data to identify student needs, discussing classroom issues, and working with ITs to determine IT professional learning needs (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Mentoring practices for ITs should be undergirded by the understanding that ITs are likely content experts who need to gain an understanding of the curriculum and the educational system of the host country. IT outcomes also may be furthered if ITs have access to informal mentors, such as other colleagues, school leaders, school support staff and parents (Gordon & Lowrey, 2017). Through informal mentoring relationships, ITs may be able to gain a deeper understanding of the curriculum, the educational system, and the school culture from various points of view.



Formal mentors are pivotal in helping to facilitate IT growth as they gain fluency with the curriculum, educational system, and school culture. Therefore, careful attention needs to be given to mentor selection and preparation to support ITs (Bullough, 2012; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Kessels, 2010; Sun, 2012). While being an effective teacher is an important consideration when selecting mentors, IT mentors need additional skills and knowledge to support ITs (Bullough, 2012). Once selected, IT mentors need to be prepared to mentor ITs prior to beginning the IT mentoring process and while the IT mentoring is in progress. Mentor preparation should include strategies for relationship-building, effective classroom instruction, use of formative data to guide instruction, and collecting and analyzing student evidence based on curriculum standards (Sun, 2012). Additionally, IT mentors need to see themselves in a facilitative role as they guide ITs' reflections, so that ITs can become self-sustaining in the classroom (Kessels, 2010). As a result, ITs may not feel that they are left alone to struggle in the classroom (Miller, 2009). Lastly, IT mentors would benefit from professional learning on acculturation and cultural intelligence. IT mentors need to gain an understanding of the acculturation issues faced by ITs as ITs tackle the acculturation issues of maintaining their own culture and coming into contact with people from other cultures within the school and outside the school (Berry et al., 1989). Further, a focus on helping develop ITs' cultural intelligence may prove beneficial in lessening acculturation stressors and lead to improvements in social and work-related adjustments (Sambasivan et al., 2017).

*ITs, collegial support, and role modeling.* ITs indicated that relationships with their colleagues either advanced or hindered their transitions to a new academic environment (Cross et al., 2011; de Villiers, 2018; Dunn, 2011; Fee, 2011; Miller, 2018). ITs who

established positive collegial relationships received support as it related to academics, student behavior, and understanding the new culture (Cross et al., 2011; Dunn, 2011). ITs who had negative collegial relationships experienced a lack of professional respect (Fee, 2011; Miller, 2018) or a sense of disconnection from their colleagues in their schools (de Villiers & Weda, 2018). Given the importance ITs ascribed to collegial relationships, it may be that these relationships served as indirect role modeling experiences for ITs (Warhurst, 2011).

Social cognitive theory as explained by Bandura (Grusec, 1992) is a lens to use in comprehending the manner in which collegial relationships served as indirect role modeling experiences for ITs. Within this experience, ITs were exposed to unconscious behaviors (Cruess et al., 2008; Warhurst, 2011) exhibited by local school colleagues related to lesson development, classroom management, and understanding the culture. Through various interactions with local school colleagues, it may be that ITs connected a value to the observed actions within the interaction, which then allowed ITs to form a model (Grusec, 1992). This model became a frame of reference to inform IT instructional practices.

In addition to the indirect modeling component, positive collegial relationships increased ITs' sense of connectedness and belonging, contributing to IT psychosocial support structures (Allen et al., 2004). Collegial relationships are a recognized component of novice teacher success (Le Cornu, 2013; Weimer, 2019; Yusko & Feiman-Nemser, 2008). The ability for ITs to be able to access local school colleague networks to adopt instructional strategies and share instructional strategies may add to ITs' sense of self-efficacy as they make contributions in their new environment (Le Cornu, 2013). ITs, therefore, need support to help them access local school colleague



networks to eliminate or lessen perceptions of professional disrespect or disconnection (Fee, 2011; Miller, 2018; de Villiers & Weda, 2018). By engaging in local school colleague networks, IT outcomes may be improved as ITs add local school colleagues to their support network (Farh et al., 2010). Finally, support from both veteran IT and other recently arrived IT peers may also prove to be beneficial, both personally and professionally, as they discuss problems and create solutions (Le Cornu, 2013). The support can be face-to-face (Fee, 2011) or could be accessed through online technologies, such as blogs, where ITs can access additional supportive structures (Nardon, Aten, & Gulanowski, 2015).

### **Assisting ITs in Navigating Acculturation Issues**

In the review of the literature, ITs identified various acculturation issues which were grouped into the themes of behavioral and academic expectations of students; shifts in pedagogical practices; understanding the host culture and the educational system; and feelings of marginalization (Bailey, 2013; Cross et al., 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Dunn, 2011; Fee, 2011; Miller, 2009, 2018; Datta Roy & Lavery, 2017; Vandeyar et al., 2014; Weda & de Villiers, 2019). An initial step in assisting ITs in navigating acculturation issues is to develop an understanding of the acculturation process and the issues inherent in the acculturation process. First, schools receiving ITs should possess an understanding of the acculturation attitudes of assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization (Berry et al., 1989). Moreover, an understanding that ITs are facing acculturation issues both personally and professionally should also be emphasized (Gonzalez-Loureiro et al., 2015) to contextualize the IT experience. Lastly, because ITs will gravitate toward an acculturation attitude or be forced into one, as is

the case with marginalization, receiving schools should understand that each of these attitudes is accompanied by acculturative stress (Berry, 2005; Sam, 2015). ITs who are able to adopt an integration acculturation attitude will experience less stress, while those who are marginalized will experience the most.

Research on cultural intelligence development may prove beneficial in helping ITs navigate acculturation issues. Cultivating cultural intelligence may allow ITs to operate and mediate effectively in culturally diverse schools (Ang et al., 2007). Cultural intelligence development should occur prior to ITs entering the host country and should be directly related to the culture of the host country (Guðmundsdóttir, 2015). For example, if an IT will be teaching in the United States, then he or she should be exposed to differences in student behavior, academic expectations, and the pedagogical practices of American schools prior to arriving and once in the United States. Developing ITs' cultural intelligence may reduce the acculturative stress ITs experience as they encounter differences in perceived student social and school behaviors, perceived student academic dispositions, and are asked to make shifts in pedagogical practices from those they experienced in their home countries.

Mentoring and role modeling are also components of developing ITs' cultural intelligence. Through mentoring structures, ITs can continue to develop cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adjustment, contributing to enhanced work outcomes (Ramalu et al., 2012). Mentors can also help ITs by adding them to their local school networks, enhancing ITs' sense of belonging to the group (Pekerti et al., 2017). Additionally, mentors can also model cognitive processes related to specific tasks, including "cultural knowledge and appropriate and inappropriate behaviors" within a school (Pekerti et



al., 2017, p. 244). Lastly, the cultural intelligence of school faculty, students, and staff may also need to be developed to advance IT outcomes and may aid in ITs' cross-cultural adjustment. Some ITs experiences indicated that once they were identified as foreigners due to their accents or last names this led to discriminatory behaviors (Cross et al., 2011; Dunn, 2011; de Villiers & Weda, 2018; Fee, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014). Developing teachers', students', and school leaders' cultural intelligence may help to reduce marginalization experienced by ITs.

### **School Administrators and ITs**

Principal perspectives found in the literature represented both negative and positive perceptions of having ITs in schools (Dunn, 2011; Vandeyar et al., 2014). Each perspective presented in the literature further delineates the need for mentoring, role modeling, and an acculturation orientation to be established by principals to support ITs. Ultimately, principals and other school administrators are responsible for creating collaborative school cultures where ITs and other teachers can grow in their instructional practice (Brücknerová & Novotný, 2019; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Correa & Wagner, 2011; Gordon & Lowrey, 2017; Haiyan, et al., 2017; Ingersoll, 2012; Löfström & Eisenschmidt, 2009; Pogodzinski, 2015; Youngs, 2007). Therefore, school administrators need to give careful consideration to ITs' holistic development within the context of the school environment and acculturation needs.

In the review of the literature, principals in one study indicated that the pedagogical and classroom behavioral issues negated the benefits of having ITs in their schools (Dunn, 2011). Principals acknowledged that pre-service and ongoing professional learning were options to help ITs be more effective. One principal went

further, stating that ITs should be treated in a similar manner to pre-service teachers completing an internship (Dunn, 2011). This particular principal perspective clearly elucidates the need for principals to involve themselves in the mentoring, role modeling, and acculturation of ITs, much in the same way as they should with novice teachers to ensure positive IT outcomes (Gordon & Lowery, 2017; Youngs, 2007). To be effective, however, principals and other school administrators also need professional learning on effective induction practices (i.e., mentoring and role modeling) and how to establish them within their schools for ITs and novice teachers alike (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). In addition to the focus on establishing effective induction practices, professional learning also could include instruction in acculturation (Berry et al., 1989; Berry, 2005) and cultural intelligence development (Pekerti et al., 2017; Ramalu et al., 2012). Professional learning in acculturation and cultural intelligence may help school administrators as they engage in the initial stages of induction practices by establishing and attending IT orientation, pairing ITs with mentors (Correa & Wagner, 2011; Pogodzinski, 2015), and throughout the mentoring process during the school year (Ingersoll, 2012; Tillman, 2005). Furthermore, by reducing the acculturation issues experienced by ITs through mentoring, role modeling, and other induction practices, school administrators could also further IT contributions their schools.

Additionally, principals expressed that ITs did make positive contributions to their schools due to a strong work ethic and by raising school standards (Vandeyar et al., 2014). School administrators, therefore, could enlist ITs and their mentors in school improvement efforts. Identifying IT content expertise and coupling it with coaching, mentoring, feedback, and professional learning could lead to enhanced student outcomes (Lynch et al., 2016). ITs valued



professional learning they were given, concluding that it helped them to grow in their instructional practice (Miller, 2009; 2018). IT mentors could be instrumental in this process as they work with school administrators to identify IT pedagogical needs, provide support in the development of pedagogy, and select local school colleagues who could role model the pedagogy directly through classroom observations (Hunzicker et al., 2017). Central to this effort is how school administrators share responsibilities for IT induction with mentors (Youngs, 2007) and build a positive teacher learning culture, where an open and supportive school climate is present and learning is considered an essential professional component of being a teacher (Haiyan et al., 2017).

### **Conclusion**

As the teacher shortages fluctuate in countries around the world, school systems may recruit ITs to help ameliorate teacher vacancies. Based on the review of the literature, ITs need comprehensive support in the form of mentoring and role modeling, which takes into account the unique acculturation needs of ITs to ensure their success. School administrators are positioned to provide such supports, if they attend to IT needs by creating logistical structures and a school culture of collaboration that supports all teachers, including ITs. The IT narratives contained within the literature provide a place for school administrators to begin to address IT needs. There is a need, however, for researchers to further study the specific actions taken and perceptions held by school administrators in relation ITs to further develop school administrators' IT supervisory capacity within an acculturation

orientation. The success of ITs is vital to schools that rely on them to contribute to positive student outcomes.

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**The Effect of Contextual Factors on School  
Leaders' Involvement in Early-Career Teacher  
Mentoring: A Review of the International Research**

**Literature**

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**Abstract**

*School administrators are expected to undertake a variety of roles and responsibilities with regard to facilitating the ongoing professional development of teachers in their schools. Administering formal or informal mentoring initiatives is a typical strategy employed for supporting early career teachers [ECTs] as they adjust to school culture, contexts, and individual responsibilities. Implementation of mentoring programs happens within a dynamic contextual landscape that both influences the development of educational and professional expectations for instruction and professional learning and shapes the school's culture. In this article, drawing on the international multi-factor systematic review of research literature, we sought to establish how contextual factors, such as culture, political systems, social practices and organizational structures, influence the early career teaching and describe the implications of these contextual factors for*

**Article  
Info**

**Article History:**  
*Received*  
September 12, 2019

*Accepted*  
August 15, 2020

**Keywords:**

*School administrator, Early career teaching, Mentoring, School leader, Principal engagement, Contextual factors.*



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*school leaders' involvement in and administration of mentoring programs. After a brief description of theoretical framing and our systematic review method and sampling procedures, we synthesize the findings from the extant literature on each of the contextual factors and discuss their influence on school leaders' involvement in mentoring. Finally, we discuss the complexity of contexts and practices in mentoring ECTs and conclude with the implications for policy, practice, and future research.*

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**Cite as:**

Kutsyuruba, B., Godden, L. & Walker, K. (2020). The effect of contextual factors on school leaders' involvement in early-career teacher mentoring: A review of the international research literature. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 5(3), 682-720. DOI: 10.30828/real/2020.3.3

## **Introduction**

Among a myriad of professional tasks, school leaders are responsible for teacher development and support in their schools. This responsibility includes induction, mentoring, and early career teachers' [ECTs] personal and professional development. Teacher induction programs aim to help, guide, and support ECTs through challenges and stresses of first years of teaching and provides them with the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful in the profession (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008). Mentoring (whether a part of induction or a standalone program) typically includes pairing of ECTs with more experienced colleagues to provide coaching, guidance, advocacy, counselling, help, protection, feedback, and information critical for ECTs' success, professional development, and retention (Hobson & Malderez, 2013; Waterman & He, 2011; Wong, 2004). While various benefits of ECT mentoring have been described at length in the literature (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009), the benefits are not without

limitations, including: inappropriate mentor-mentee matches, lack of mentor training, evaluative stance or “judgementoring,” and personal factors (i.e., personality tensions, stress, and burnout) that may lead to failed mentoring efforts (Hobson, 2016; Johnson & Kardos, 2005; Towers, 2012). Overall, mentoring success depends on interpersonal interactions and the social context within which it operates (Du & Wang, 2017).

How ECTs socialize and acclimate into the school culture rests within the scope of the principals’ role as they publicly establish the vision, mission, and goals of the school (Delp, 2014). A school administrator’s leadership is critical in directly supporting ECTs and in creating a structure supportive of the induction and mentoring processes. Moir and colleagues (2009) claimed that principal engagement is critical for induction and mentoring supports because effectiveness of those programs depends on a school’s context and their alignment with vision, instructional focus, and priorities set by the principal. Moreover, scholars have argued that administrators’ commitments to mentoring programs for new teachers either supports and promotes the retention of novice teachers or undermines the success of induction and leads to teacher attrition (Bleach, 1998; Jones, 2002; Turner, 1994; Wechsler, Caspary, & Humphrey, 2008). To this end, school administrators need to be informed about the needs of novice teachers and various supportive structures and programs available to them (Rhodes, Nevill, & Allen, 2005). However, because ECTs’ work is situated in a dynamic contextual landscape that both influences their development and practice and dictates professional expectations for instruction and professional learning, we also argue that school principals need to understand the contextual factors that affect the experiences and needs of ECTs.



Our extensive international systematic review explored the implementation of induction programs within widely different contexts and to identify how successful induction programs have responded to the contextual challenges affecting ECTs worldwide (Kutsyuruba, Walker, & Godden, 2019). In this article, we seek to establish how culture, political systems, social practices and organizational structures influence early career teaching and describe the implications of contextual factors for school leaders' involvement in and administration of mentoring programs. In particular, we present: a) an overview of the contextual factors (social, political, cultural, organizational, and personal) that influence the mentoring and professional practices of ECTs; and b) a description of potential influence of these contextual factors on the school administrators roles as they seek to create and implement effective mentoring supports for the ECTs in their schools. Following our brief description of the systematic review method and sampling procedures, c) we synthesize the findings from the extant literature on each of the contextual factors and discuss their influence on school leaders' involvement in mentoring. Finally, d) we offer a heuristic model as a visual representation of the complexity of contexts and practices in mentoring ECTs and conclude with the implications for policy, practice, and future research.

### **Systematic Review Approach and Methodology**

Our original systematic review (Kutsyuruba et al., 2019) was undertaken using the EPPI-Reviewer software (EPPI Centre, Institute of Education, London) to analyze and interrogate international (English language) empirical research entries which were defined by terms of reference and the original research questions. We sought to

find out: a) geographic representation in the research on formal or programmatic support of ECTs; b) international research evidence on contextual factors that affect experiences of ECTs; and c) programmatic responses to the various contextual factors that affect ECTs.

Our conclusion from this initial systematic review was that the contextual factors were anchored in the various societal (e.g., cultural, economic, social, and political), organizational, and personal forces that influence the professional practices of teachers at the early stages of their career. We deemed this to be a significant finding. Subsequently, this article extends that work to examine the contextual factors more closely in relationship to the leaders' roles.

### **Theoretical Framing**

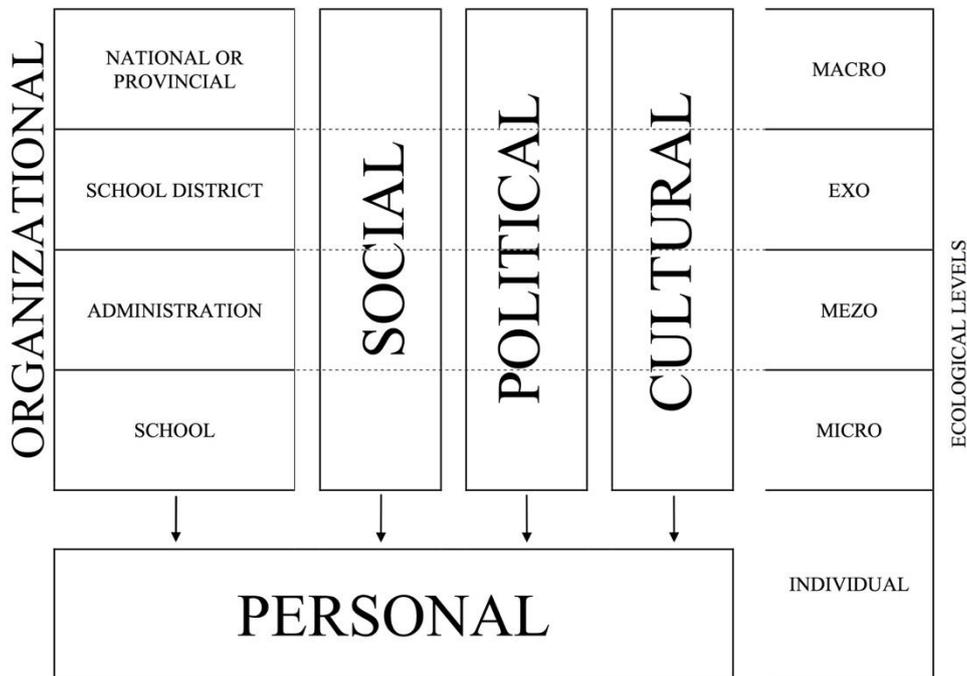
Based on the key findings from the systematic review (Kutsyuruba et al., 2019), and using Bronfenbrenner's (1994) ecological systems theory, we mapped out the complex and multi-layered contextual factors identified in our systematic review and used these as a framework to examine both their influence upon mentoring for early career teachers and their influence upon school administrators responsible for overseeing such mentoring and support activities. When employed in this framework, Bronfenbrenner's theory directs attention toward the interaction between the personal/individual, the social, political and cultural, the organizational contextual and environmental variances and nuances, and the potential sources of influence and impact upon induction and mentorship programming (see Figure 1).



Within our framework, ECT's personal factors are situated at the core; being both distinctive, and dependent on, and shaped by, organizational, social, political, and cultural contextual factors. Personal factors comprise the social identity of an individual ECT. The beginning teacher's personal factors were constantly shaped by both the individual environment and by encounters with other individuals situated within the immediate microsystem environment. The microsystem consisted of interpersonal features at the school organizational level. These factors included the school culture, and the ethical values and practices that were embedded into that culture. In addition, they included individual groups of factors relating to the entire school staff, who were unique to that school. Mezosystem refers to the school administration and their management of duties and responsibilities towards ECT support. Exosystem refers to organizational or institutional factors at school district level that shape or structure the environment within which the ECT's experiences of mentoring occur. These factors include the policies, procedures, community relationships, organizational structure, and overarching institutional culture of the school district. Macrosystem includes federal/national/provincial and state politics and initiatives, national ideologies and identities, and demographical diversity, including religion, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. The overarching purpose of this study was to use Bronfenbrenner's work to establish how culture, political systems, social practices and organizational structures influence early career teaching and describe the implications of contextual factors for school leaders' involvement in and administration of mentoring programs.

Figure 1.

Theoretical Framework of Ecological Levels and Contextual Factors



### Data Collection and Analysis

Whereas a full description of our original systematic review methodology, including inclusion criteria, has been detailed elsewhere (Kutsyuruba, Walker, & Godden, 2017; Kutsyuruba et al., 2019), we briefly describe the key research phases here together with the additional steps taken for this study. The search strategy for the original systematic review involved rigorous electronic and hand searching of key electronic databases and relevant journals, for which



titles and abstracts were screened for relevance to the research questions, as defined by our inclusion criteria. Databases we searched included ERIC, Academic Search Complete, ProQuest, and Education Source. Search terms included: beginning teachers, new teacher support, beginning teacher support, teacher retention, new teacher retention, beginning teacher retention, teacher attrition, teacher mentoring, mentoring new teachers, mentoring beginning teachers, teacher mentorship, teacher induction, new teacher induction, beginning teacher induction, new teacher transition, beginning teacher transitions, new teacher development, beginning teacher development, new teacher support, beginning teacher support, NQT, NQT “and” development, NQT “and” support, NQT “and” induction, NQT “and” mentorship, NQT “and” retention, NQT “and” attrition, early career teachers, early career teacher mentorship, early career teacher induction, early career teacher retention, early career teacher support, and early career teacher development. After three phases of rigorous screening of the entries against the inclusion criteria and removal of duplicates and unobtainable files, the initial electronic and hand database search result of 16,503 sources yielded a final sample of 113 entries. These were studies key-worded as focusing on social, cultural, political, and organizational contexts, with a population focus of compulsory education in the K-12 sector (students aged four to twelve) and featuring induction and mentorship programs for ECTs. Geographically, our final sample included studies from the United States (64), the United Kingdom (15), Canada (12), Europe (8), Australia and New Zealand (6), the Middle East (6), combined nations (more than one nation examined in one study) (2), and the Far East (1). Each entry in the final sample underwent data extraction by a member of our research team, including an assessment of the weight of evidence. Where there were

discrepancies in coding of the full-text articles, the research team discussed these until a full agreement regarding the key issues and themes was achieved before the studies were analyzed in-depth.

For the purposes of this article, we re-analyzed the 113 entries to explore the interaction between the personal/individual, the social, political and cultural, the organizational contextual and environmental variances and nuances, and the potential sources of influence and impact upon induction and mentorship programing applying the heuristic figure shown in figure 1 in a deductive process (Patton, 2002). The findings from 113 articles were organized into five contextual factors. The data were then inductively analyzed as we sought to establish the influence upon school administrators.

### Systematic Review Findings

The systematic review findings from our analysis revealed the following categories of contextual factors in mentoring of early career teaching: a) *social*; b) *political*; c) *cultural*; d) *personal/individual*; and, d) *organizational*. Upon summarizing review findings on how each of the types of contextual factors affects early career teaching, we discuss how they can also influence school leaders' involvement in mentoring of beginning teachers.

#### Contextual Factors

***Social context.*** Social contextual factors referred to the immediate physical and social setting in which people live or in which something happens or develops. It included the interpersonal interactions, social institutions, and people's behaviour and relations within broader society, communities of people, or other social structures. Research studies showed that ECTs valued professional



and social peer relationships and supports. Professionally, formal and informal mentoring relationships facilitated mutual sharing of ideas (Evans-Andris, Kyle, & Carini, 2006) and offered “just-in-time” assistance to beginning teachers (Davis & Higdon, 2008). Mentoring was seen as a social support, with mentors being role-models both as a teacher and staff member, and generally assisting novices to navigate the school within and beyond the school (Achinstein, 2006; Burris, Kitchel, Greiman, & Torres, 2006; Fletcher & Barrett, 2004; Friedrichsen, Chval, & Teuscher, 2007; Nasser-Abu Alhija & Fresko, 2010; Tillman, 2005). Emotional supports were cited by ECTs as an important factor in helping them through tough times in the new role (Clark & Byrnes, 2012; Dempsey & Christenson-Foggett, 2011; Fox, Deaney, & Wilson, 2010; Friedrichsen et al., 2007; Gellert & Gonzalez, 2011). ECTs that did not have formal mentors emphasized powerful feelings of isolation (Brindley & Parker, 2010; Cherubini, Kitchen, & Hodson, 2008). Furthermore, ECTs identified community members (Brindley & Parker, 2010), including parents of their students (Castro, Kelly, & Shih, 2010; Perry & Hayes, 2011) as important non-professional social relations.

*Political context.* Political context in a broader sense referred to the arenas where policymaking in various civil, national, and public environments led to action. These factors included such organizing aspects as structure, order, and behaviour at the government and local levels, the power distribution of power, the range and interests of involved organizations, and the formal and informal rules that govern the interactions among different stakeholders. Because many mentoring programs and their elements were the result of governmental mandates and policies at the national/federal (Anthony, Haigh, & Kane, 2011; Fresko & Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009; Parkinson & Pritchard, 2005) or state/provincial levels (Cherubini,

2009; Youngs, Holdgreve-Resendez, & Qian, 2011), ECTs' mentoring supports depended on parameters, guidelines, and constraints set by those programs. Mentoring of ECTs was also found framed by school district organization of programmatic supports in the forms of hiring and assigning instructional facilitators as full-time mentors (Kamman & Long, 2010), district evaluations conducted by superintendents (Chatlain & Noonan, 2005), and district administrators working directly with mentors (Achinstein, 2006). At the school level, ECTs were affected by micropolitics related to accessing resources (Anthony et al., 2011), political agendas of administration (Grudnoff, 2012), policy limitations (Sabar, 2004; Youngs, 2007), workload and relationships issues (Sabar, 2004), and social justice issues (Yendol-Hoppey, Jacobs, & Dana, 2009).

*Cultural context.* In a broader sense, cultural contextual factors referred to the eclectic environment wherein humans learn to organise their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors based on shared norms, beliefs, values, customs, and traditions that are common to a group of people. Culture as a way of life is defined by race, gender, ethnicity, age, and other broad geographical and demographical contributing factors. Cultural contexts can also be constrained to institutional and organizational frameworks within which individuals' social interactions occur. It was found to be important for ECTs to consider the cultural diversity and demographics of their students (Hagger, Mutton, & Burn, 2011; Hall & Cajkler, 2008); whereas mentors helped them to work effectively with students from diverse backgrounds (Fletcher & Barrett, 2004). In terms of institutional culture, lack of alignment or mismatch was found between the philosophy held by the ECTs and the school culture where they taught (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Fenwick, 2011). Mentor were found instrumental in helping protégés with their



socialization into school cultures (Achinstein & Davis, 2014; Harrison, Dymoke, & Pell, 2006). Research studies highlighted the need for the culture of mentorship and the key role of mentors in creating such culture for ECTs at the institutional level (Achinstein & Davis, 2014; Kapadia, Coca, & Easton, 2007). A significant positive correlation was found between school climate and teacher's retention decision, suggesting that the improvement of working conditions, a component of school climate, positively affected teachers' predisposition to plan to remain in the school (Wynn, Carboni, & Patall, 2007).

*Personal/individual context.* Personal/individual contextual factors referred to issues that matter and were unique to individuals based on their circumstances, interests, characteristics, and experiences. ECTs' sense of personal efficacy, prior background, and mentorship experience were pivotal in their professional growth and development. Studies found that personal efficacy, confidence, and competence of novice teachers increased when mentors and experienced colleagues validated and respected their decisions (Cherubini, 2009; Lambeth & Lashley, 2012). Taking initiative, developing autonomy, and using creativity were highly beneficial for the success of ECTs (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007; Haggarty, Postlethwaite, Diment, & Ellins, 2011). Emotional intelligence among novice teachers, as manifested through self-reflection, reading of others, and recognition and management of stress, stemmed from mentoring relationships (Achinstein, 2006; Irinaga-Bistolos, Schalock, Marvin, & Beck, 2007) and professional development opportunities in schools (Angelides & Mylordou, 2011; Forbes, 2004; Irinaga-Bistolos et al., 2007; Rhodes et al., 2005). Furthermore, ECTs' personal experiences were impacted by the quality and structure of mentorship (Birkeland & Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Forbes, 2004; Griffiths, 2011; Nasser-Abu

Alhija & Fresko, 2010), the type of support provided to them (Abu Rass, 2010; Anderson & Olsen, 2006; Gardiner, 2011), and the levels of mentors' preparation (Gardiner, 2012).

**Organizational context.** *Organizational context* referred to the dimensions represented in and shaped by the structure, size, functions, and nature of organization within which a group of people works together to achieve specific goals. Organizational context encompassed the operating environment determined by the internal characteristics of the organization and external orientations of the organization. Early career teaching experiences were affected by the structure of induction programs, which predominantly consisted of multiple elements (Glazerman et al., 2008), of which mentoring is usually the most common included component (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Implicitly and explicitly discussed was that the success of the mentoring relationship was driven by how involved, reliable, and accessible the mentor was to the new teacher (Catapano & Huisman, 2013; Gardiner, 2011) and how well the program elements were matched to ECTs' needs (Irinaga-Bistolas et al., 2007; Unruh & Holt, 2010). Finally, the success of program and mentoring elements were all contingent upon being situated within a supportive community that welcomed ECTs and related to the way program established the sense of belonging, offered sufficient time to focus on their needs, and to the longevity of the support (Birkeland & Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Forbes, 2004).

### **Discussion: School Administrator Role in Supporting Mentoring of ECTs**

Implicitly and explicitly, the preponderance of literature examined indicated that school leaders had an overall responsibility



for teacher development and support in their schools. As school administrators implement mentoring programs for ECTs, their efforts are affected by the dynamics of the contextual factors that both shapes their school's culture and influence the development of educators and the professional expectations for instruction and professional learning. We have divided the findings regarding the school administrators' role into the following sections: provision of mentoring support; administrators' impacts on the outcome of mentoring; and importance of leader's commitment to mentoring. Throughout these sections, we discuss the relevance and potential impact of the five contextual factors upon school leaders' responsibilities.

### **Provision of Mentoring Supports**

Literature revealed that principals played an important role in the responsibility for supporting ECTs through the set-up of mentoring structures and organizing supports and venues through mentoring program.

*Structures for mentoring.* Assignment of mentors to beginning teachers was the most widely detailed aspect of school administrator's role in teacher induction and mentoring processes (Abu Rass, 2010; Bianchini & Brenner, 2009; Bianchini & Cavazos, 2007; Bickmore, Bickmore, & Hart, 2005; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). One study suggested benefits for ECTs when administrators played a more active role in selecting a pool of qualified mentors, providing ECTs with choices in who to work with (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Bickmore et al. (2005) found that matching mentors and mentees in the same content area was beneficial. Others recommended that mentors and mentees be matched based on close proximity, similar teaching assignments, opportunities for common meeting times, and

a match in gender, age, teaching philosophies, and complimentary personality types (Abu Rass, 2010). The *social contextual* factor of peer relationships was a crucial source of professional, social, and emotional peer support. Through professional peer support, ECTs are able to receive the maximum benefit through mentoring, however, sufficient time for this must be provided by the school leader.

*Time for mentoring.* Many factors that support ECTs' positive development have implications for school leaders in how they allocate sufficient time for effective mentoring of ECTs (Sabar, 2004). In an exploration of the school contexts and professional roles of ECTs of Mexican descent (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011), authors revealed that the *personal and individual contextual* factors of novice teachers' commitments were "inspired by teachers who served as role models and motivated them to do the same for their students" (p. 2536). All of these mentoring selection strategies have time considerations for school leaders if they are to be managed effectively. Other time-taking responsibilities for school leaders included bi-monthly and monthly meetings with ECTs and mentors, and regular professional development for ECTs and the entire school staff (Bickmore et al., 2005).

A key responsibility included the provision of shared in-school planning time for ECTs and their mentors, including scheduled planning days for ECTs to observe peers, attend workshops, develop units and lessons, and experiment with new software or other technology (Clausen, 2007). This speaks to the benefits of *cultural contextual* factors of socialization for ECTs. For example, researchers noted that collaborative, collegial and supportive ways of working in groups with experienced teachers may compensate to some extent for any lack of formal mentoring (Harrison et al., 2006). A New Zealand



study highlighted the value of a culture of socialization and collegiality, whereas ECTs “appreciated ‘knowing that they were not alone’ in terms of receiving professional support and talked about the value of working in a school that ‘shares information, resources and ideas’ and where other teachers ‘talk openly about their teaching and what is going on in their programmes’” (Grudnoff, 2012, p. 479). Cultural socialization for ECTs is easier to achieve if a culture of mentorship is apparent in a school.

*Organizational contextual* factors such as the school leaders’ attendance at their own designated orientation (Glazerman et al., 2008) added additional time implications for school leaders, not only through their required attendance, but in the implementation of their subsequent responsibilities to providing support for ECTs. These events provided school leaders with valuable information to support ECTs’ participation in mentoring and corresponding involvement of mentors they might assign. The orientation events also provided overviews of ECTs’ needs for support and development, and were aimed at helping school leaders to minimize conflicts that could impede efforts to schedule time with beginning teachers. In rare instances of *personal and individual contextual* factors, the school administrator used their own personal time to provide direct mentoring to the beginning teacher. For example, Tillman (2005, p. 264) found that one “teacher’s indecisiveness provided an opportunity for the principal to personally mentor her by encouraging her, implementing support structures, and reducing the isolation she felt.”

**Resources for mentoring.** The implications for school leaders falling at *organizational contextual* level included providing a culture of socialization and collegiality where ECTs can benefit from the

sharing of “information, resources and ideas” (Grudnoff, 2012, p. 479). In some cases, studies mentioned a lack of resources and supplies in school (Bang & Luft, 2013) and differential access to resources by beginning teachers in multiple-teacher programs as opposed to single-teacher programs (Burriss & Keller, 2008). In such instances, ECTs are supported when school leaders are able to address the issue and secure what is needed by the ECT in the form of supplies or resources (Castro et al., 2010). If the school administration did not provide or promised to and not provided resources, ECTs went higher up the chain of command. For instance, after researching the legal issues associated with special education and presenting her findings to the school level administration, one ECT was able to secure support from two additional teacher aids to assist her at various times during the day (Castro et al., 2010). ECTs often had to negotiate complex organizational contexts beyond the classroom level that included considerable variability in access to resources appropriate to the needs of individual teachers (Anthony et al., 2011). Helping ECTs navigate the *political contextual* factors and ensuring adequate district funding for facilities and resources needed for them to effectively do their job was deemed an essential positive role for school leaders (Wynn et al., 2007).

*Places and spaces for mentoring.* School leadership was deemed important for supporting ECTs in both the broader geographical location or place of schools, and spaces within schools. For example, early career special educators within rural schools’ settings stressed the importance of collegial support from school leaders and colleagues who were “available to answer questions and acculturate them into the culture, community and procedures of the school” (Irinaga-Bistolos et al., 2007, p. 21). Similarly, Kono (2012) argued that school administrators can create meaningful teacher mentoring



programs that incorporate diverse and unique features to help new teachers adjust to their new rural schools. Such *political contextual* factors as district size, policies, and funding either promoted or hindered the effectiveness of mentoring for ECTs at the district level. A small district size can be perceived by ECTs as friendly, engendering the sense of community, being conducive to curricular freedom and tight-knit professional network, whereas the large district could potentially lead novices to “get lost and swallowed up” (Anderson & Olsen, 2006, p. 367). In understanding the place within which mentoring programs are implemented, school leaders can adapt features accordingly to support the place-based needs of ECTs.

Buckley, Schneider, and Shang (2004) highlighted the value of the physical spaces within schools for ECTs, suggesting benefits of facility improvement for teacher retention were equal or above pay increase value while also being cost-effective over the long term. More specifically, *culturally contextual* actions undertaken by school leaders perceived as helpful by ECTs encompassed a warm welcome and orientation to the school (Sabar, 2004), encouragement (Abbott, Moran, & Clarke, 2009; Kapadia et al., 2007), informal interactions and formal meetings with principals (Chatlain & Noonan, 2005), and instructional support through mentoring (Achinstein & Barrett, 2004; Cherubini, 2007). Attention to the *cultural contextual* factors allowed school leaders to create positive spaces for addressing and embracing cultural diversity in their schools. In a study in England, teachers admitted not anticipating the importance of understanding of students’ family, cultural backgrounds and being taken aback at the extent of their experienced colleagues’ knowledge of individual students (Hagger et al., 2011). Implications for school leaders working with Indigenous ECTs’ are situated at the *political contextual* level in regard to providing a space for Indigenous ECTs to self-identify as

Indigenous peoples first, and then as new Indigenous teachers. Researchers confirmed that ECTs need spaces to establish their own identity as Indigenous teacher they seek in turn to better cultivate their students' identity formation as Indigenous peoples (Cherubini, Niemczyk, Hodson, & McGean, 2010). Furthermore, ECTs working with students with English as an additional language, highlighted the role played by students themselves in helping ECTs to overcome the challenges of teaching in culturally diverse environment (Hall & Cajkler, 2008). Challenges faced by ECTs in learning about different languages and cultures, especially among monolingual new teachers, predicting the country of origin and native language of the ELL student; feeling ill-prepared to teach ELL students; requiring more background knowledge on European (Portuguese and Polish), Asian, and African languages (Somali, Shona) all spoke to important roles for school leaders in creating mentoring spaces within their schools, through allocation and employment of suitable resources (such as students in their schools) where ECTs are supported. Subsequently, such challenging environments did not present overwhelmingly difficult problems for ECTs when they had received adequate support from school leaders and mentors as they worked through these issues (Gaikhorst, Beishuizen, Korstjens, & Volman, 2014, p. 31).

### **Administrator's Impact on the Outcome of Mentoring**

Several of the reviewed studies provided empirical data on the direct and indirect impact of school leaders engagement on the effective outcomes of mentoring programs and ultimately, teacher retention and development.

*Impact of school leaders on mentoring.* Glazerman et al. (2008) observed variation in the level of school leader support, ranging from extremely supportive and actively encouraging teachers to make the



most of the mentoring opportunities, to school leaders who actively resisted participation and would not permit teachers to be released for program activities. School leaders' support was one of the two most frequently described *social and personal contextual* sources of support (Friedrichsen et al., 2007) where ECTs sought out school leaders to help resolve conflicts with individual students and/or parents. In these instances, ECTs viewed school leaders as problem solvers rather than curriculum consultants or mentoring managers. Main (2008) found that ECTs who believed school leaders and other teachers were using supportive and accountable *organizational and structural contextual* mechanisms aimed at improving the ECTs' capacity to teach were more likely to report the mechanisms as useful and pedagogically oriented. ECTs also reported *personal and individual contextual* outcomes of higher self-efficacy and satisfaction with mentoring.

Kapadia et al. (2007, p. 30) reported three supports that had the greatest influence on new elementary school teachers and made them more likely to report a good teaching experience and intention to remain in the same school: "encouragement and assistance from their principal, regularly scheduled opportunities to collaborate with peers in the same field, and participation in a network of teachers." Principals were seen as being responsible for the *social context* factor of clear communication regarding various expectations for ECTs (Greiman, Walker, & Birkenholz, 2005). However, the onus to be informed and up-to-date about ECTs' development was not solely the responsibility of school leaders. Achinstein (2006) highlighted the importance for ECTs to also understand their school's *organizational and political contexts* and be aware of the overall role of school leadership for overall teacher development, as well as their position in relation to ECTs' support within the broader context of schooling.

The school leaders' role in the pairing of a mentors and ECTs were important. When mentors and ECTs pairing was not optimised, this contributed to challenging and difficult experiences for the ECTs in their beginning days of teaching, to the extent that the ECTs actively sought teaching positions outside of their school districts and eventually accepted positions other school districts (Youngs, 2007). School leaders need to be mindful of variations in district policy related to mentor selection and assignment, together with their and other educators' understandings of mentoring support.

Cherubini (2009) found that intentional *culturally contextual* directedness of school leaders' partiality for mentoring and sustaining school cultures, affected the meanings attributed to programs by ECTs (Cherubini, 2009). Similarly, determining the relationship between the presence of school leader-facilitated support for mentoring and perceived helpfulness of mentoring suggested that ECTs perceive their experiences with mentors as more likely to occur and more helpful when leadership support is built into the mentoring program (Clark & Byrnes, 2012). Another finding from this study suggested that if a school leader needs to choose between different forms of support (i.e., common planning time and release time for observation), common planning time was the more important school leader-facilitated type of mentoring support to provide.

*Outcomes of school leaders' role in mentoring.* Besides school leaders undertaking a *social context* supportive role, several studies highlighted the expectations of school principals to supervise and evaluate the work of the ECTs (Abu Rass, 2010; Chatlain & Noonan, 2005). Related to the school leaders' evaluative role was the duty to maintain confidentiality. For example, in a study of two US-based programs, mentors were strongly cautioned against sharing specific



information with school leaders that could affect the ECTs' job evaluations and compromise the confidentiality and openness in the mentor/mentee relationship (Glazerman et al., 2008).

Exploring the *personal contextual* needs support function of school leaders, revealed that ECTs positively viewed school leaders as key to meeting their personal needs for respect, belonging, self-esteem, confidence, and autonomy (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010). Lambeth and Lashley (2012) found that the support of on-site administrators could facilitate effective teacher development across a school. As a result of this, researchers highlighted progress in the development of one novice teacher who "alluded to her tenacity, her emerging sense of happiness in her work, and her growth as a teacher, which they witnessed" (p. 45). Similarly, Blömeke and Klein (2013) examined the effects of school leaders and teacher support on teaching quality in Germany and found that ECTs positively rated the school leaders' support and the quality of school management. All indicators of teaching quality improved if the teachers perceived more autonomy and more frequent appraisal. They concluded that principals have a key *social and cultural contextual* role in providing high-quality management through their leadership and ability to build a climate of trust if they want to support their ECTs in terms of autonomy and appraisal. Overall, these authors argued "principals have a crucial role in all respects if the quality of a school's environment is to be improved" (Blömeke & Klein, 2013, p. 1044).

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### **Importance of School Leaders' Commitment to Mentoring**

School leaders' commitment to and recognition of mentoring may positively or negative influence ECTs' justification of their own commitment to and understanding of mentoring (Cherubini, 2009). As Birkeland and Feiman-Nemser (2009) noted, the success of school-based support for ECTs relied on the commitment and investment of school leaders who strove to develop supportive professional *cultural contexts*, fostered school-wide understandings that learning to teach well takes time, and the entire school shared in the responsibility of helping ECTs to succeed. School leaders, through *organizational and*



*structural contexts* educated the wider stakeholders (including board members and parents), about the importance of helping ECTs to develop their practice, through prioritizing mentoring in the school budget (such as protected time for mentors and ECTs to meet, and release time for mentors). Irinaga-Bistolos et al. (2007) described the full extent of the time and financial commitment needed by school leaders to fully meet the needs of ECTs; including not only time for ECTs and their mentors to meet, but also including the time needed for observations and attending professional development seminars. Furthermore, Wynn et al. (2007, p. 222) highlighted the overall importance of effective school leadership, finding that "teachers who were more satisfied with the principal leadership in their schools were more likely to report planning to stay in the school district and at their school site."

Cherian and Daniel (2008) outlined a number of roles for school leaders related to mentoring with the recognition of the entire school collective responsibility and commitment to supporting ECTs to develop teaching practice. The principal played a vital role in creating supports for the successful mentoring process, through a focus on *organizational and structural contextual* facets of mentoring including its structure, strategy, environment, implementation, experimentation, and adaptation. In addition, school leaders were called upon to manage the *political contextual* issues that affected power relationships and status. Finally, although the notion of instructional leadership was important to school leaders (Cherian & Daniel, 2008), their leadership roles were often reduced to management of people, budgets, and behaviour (teachers' and students'). They concluded that school leaders' role in providing and managing effective support for ECTs was imbued with strong tensions between *personal and individual contexts, organizational and*

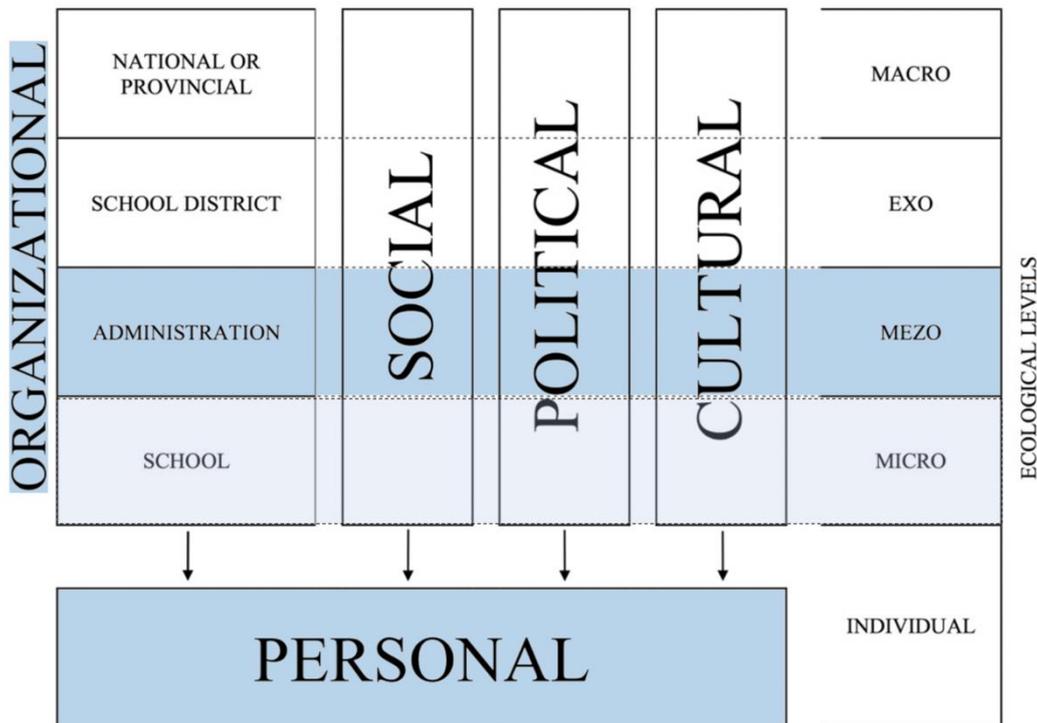
*political context* tensions, and contradicting institutional objectives (Cherian & Daniel, 2008).

### **Conclusions and Implications**

The analytical approach undertaken in this article was to revisit the original systematic review looking specifically at the role of school leaders' involvement in and administration of mentoring programs, with particular focus on how this involvement was determined and affected by the five categories of social, cultural, political, organizational/structural, and personal/individual. For this purpose, we further refined our heuristic to draw attention to how school leaders' responsibilities, impact, and commitment to mentoring support of ECTs cuts across the five categories, as shown in the highlighted section of Figure 2. As depicted, the school administrator's primary level of influence on ECT mentoring occurs at the mezo level through the direct enactment of organizational factors embedded in their roles, responsibilities, and mandates for professional growth and development of teachers (shown in darker shading). In addition, school administrator's secondary level of influence occurs indirectly at the micro level, through their work devoted to building up school culture and ensuring supportive conditions of work, provision of instructional leadership, and involvement with mentorship processes and programs (shown in lighter shading).

Figure 2.

*A Heuristic Framework of Contextual Factors Influencing School Leaders' Roles in Early Career Teacher Mentoring*



In sum, the above heuristic framework represents a conceptualization, evident from the extant literature, of the sources and levels of influence and relationships between the contextual factors and school leaders' roles in mentoring of ECTs. It can be used for a purposeful, intentional recognition of the full richness of formal, facilitated, and spontaneous avenues of mentoring programming that support early career development of teachers.

Practically speaking, we see the heuristic as a helpful means for the assessment and evaluation of the existing or planned programs.

Considering the instrumental role of school administrators in the mentoring processes, it may offer an assistive lens to school administrators by identifying the areas where ECTs' needs are being or not being met by the programs. The heuristic also provides school leaders with a better understanding of the source and type of challenges faced by an ECT, so that they can then measure the respective alignment or misalignment of the program supports necessary to mitigate those challenges.

We suggest that this heuristic framework is helpful for policy makers and educational leaders in the process of designing, implementing, and maintaining the mentoring programs. Application of the framework allows for the planning, analysis, and evaluation of program development and implementation cycle by offering a broad picture of the gamut and nature of factors that have an impact on effective programming and successful mentoring of ECTs. We contend that the policy environment surrounding the mentoring processes matters, and that this heuristic brings it into focus by examining the increasingly diverse contexts of schooling and the ever-increasing policy requirements for an administrator's role.

In terms of further research, we encourage colleagues to adopt, adapt, and apply this heuristic in their research endeavours. With the empirical support for the significance of mentoring within the induction programs, we emphasized the need to further explore the role of mentoring in mitigating contextual challenges (especially through forming effective and long-lasting mentoring relationships). While it is evident that school administrators have an important role in terms of involvement within mentoring program provision, further examination of the specific role of administration in mitigating contextual challenges is warranted. Further studies would do well to



examine the mechanisms and structures that can help school administrators develop trusting and collaborative relationships with mentors and beginning teachers. Stemming from this point is the need to explore the effect of mentoring and supporting structures available for new administrators and the subsequent shaping of their role as supportive figures for ECTs in their schools. Finally, we highlight the need to take this research further and deeper into examining the role of mentoring in developing the wellbeing capacity of school administrators who will in turn promote the wellbeing of ECTs with whom they work and whom they assist with professional growth and development.

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## Principalship and Mentoring: A Review of Perspectives, Evidence, and Literature 1999 – 2019

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Abstract	Article Info
<p><i>The aim of the present article is to review literature on mentoring of school principals. The review focuses on the importance of mentoring in fostering effective leadership as a principal by presenting the pervasive definitions and perspectives on mentoring in the field. Second, based upon predefined selection criteria, we present empirical evidence from a number of studies organized by emergent themes on how mentoring in the principalship is conceived and valued. The bulk of the article presents evidence from studies organized along themes. Two central themes emerged in the review focused on determinants of effective mentoring relationships: a) the mentor and protégé pairing and b) length of time in the mentoring relationship including enough time for mentoring sessions. The article concludes with methodological recommendations and an outline of possible directions for future research concerning these commonly overlooked, yet critical features of successful mentoring programs.</i></p>	<p><b>Article History:</b>  <i>Received</i>                      September 22, 2019   <i>Accepted</i>                      August 02, 2020</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p><b>Keywords:</b>  <i>Mentoring, School principals, Head teachers, Leadership development, Narrative review.</i></p>

**Cite as:**

Hayes, S. D. & Mahfouz, J. (2020). Principalship and mentoring: A review of perspectives, evidence, and literature 1999 – 2019. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 5(3), 722-751. DOI: 10.30828/real/2020.3.4



## Introduction

Although mentoring has been established in the field of teacher education for many years (McCann & Radford, 1993; Wilkin, 1992; Zimpher & Rieger, 1988; Hunzicker, 2018), mentoring is still considered a recent phenomenon within educational leadership (Daresh, 2004; Oplatka & Lapidot, 2018). Mentoring models for novice principals were developed in the late 1980s and early 1990s by university-based principal preparation programs and policymakers as a means to indoctrinate novice principals into the profession by promoting reflective practice and providing technical expertise, role clarification, and socialization in a more authentic context (Barnett, 1995; Bush & Chew, 1999; Crow & Matthews, 1998; Daresh, 2004; Daresh & Playko, 1991; Kirkham, 1995). The focus in early studies on mentoring was on skill attainment for novice principals, specifically on how a veteran principal (mentor) supports a novice principal (protégé) in acquiring the needed skills in order to gain confidence in managing the school (Daresh, 2007; Oplatka & Lapidot, 2018). As new principals enter the profession, mentoring has become an integral element for successful first years for principals by providing an invaluable opportunity to socialize novices into the changing landscape of the field (Alsburry & Hackmann, 2006; Bandura, 1997; Daloz, 1998) and preparing them for effective leadership and wellbeing.

Mentoring is becoming a recognized method of supporting and developing novice principals as they begin their careers; however, there has not been much investment in mentoring processes internationally (Daresh, 2004; Hansford & Ehrich, 2006). Subsequently, many mentoring programs have provided inadequate training for mentors and protégés, lacked a clear set of goals and

responsibilities, and employed poorly conceived methods for mentor selection and mentor/protégé pairing (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Bush & Chew, 1999; Daresh, 2004; Gimbel & Kefor, 2018; Villani, 2006). Thus, this study provides a review of international empirical research on mentoring for principals published in peer-reviewed educational journals between 1999-2019, specifically answering the following research questions:

1. What have researchers in the past 20 years attributed to the benefits and outcomes of mentoring school principals and/or head teachers?
2. What have researchers in the past 20 years attributed to the challenges and impediments to mentoring school principals and/or head teachers?

For the purposes of this article, we first define mentoring by presenting the pervasive definitions and perspectives on mentoring in the field. Second, we explain the research methods for the narrative review and then present empirical evidence from a number of studies organized by emergent themes on how mentoring in the principalship is conceived and valued internationally. We then discuss the central themes that emerged in the review and present summaries of the relevant findings focusing on the benefits and outcomes as well as challenges and impediments to mentoring. We conclude the article with methodological recommendations and an outline of possible directions for future research concerning these commonly overlooked, yet critical features of successful mentoring programs.



## Perspectives on Mentoring

The tradition of mentoring is rooted in Homer's epic poem *The Odyssey*. In the epic poem, Ulyseus entrusted his son, Telemachus, to his wise friend, Mentor (Athena in disguise), to counsel and guide him during Ulyseus' long absence in The Trojan War. The word *mentor* evolved to mean trusted advisor, friend, teacher and wise person (Mertz, 2004; Playko, 1991). In mentoring relationships, a mentor and a protégé develop a dyadic relationship in order to support the protégé as he/she matures in his/her role or craft; consequently, mentoring is a fundamental form of human development where one person invests time, energy and personal know-how in assisting the growth and ability of another person (Mertz, 2004). Mentoring has multiple definitions in the literature, and researchers' beliefs about mentoring have developed and transformed over the past few decades from a hierarchical traditional view on mentoring to a more relational view on mentoring.

### Definition of Mentoring

Traditionally, mentoring is defined as a relationship between an older, more experienced mentor and a younger less experienced protégé for the purpose of supporting and developing the protégé's career (Ragins & Verbos, 2007). In this capacity, mentors serve their protégés, by providing acceptance and support, dispensing advice and guidance, coaching in the ways of the organization, communicating important and sometimes privileged information, offering visibility and exposure, and extending protection (Jacobi, 1991). Traditional definitions of mentoring assume a power differential inherent in mentoring relationships, and traditional mentoring is often depicted as a hierarchical relationship with the

mentor in the top/superior position and the protégé in the bottom/inferior position. This type of mentoring is often referred to as a *functionalist perspective* of mentoring.

Functionalist conceptions of mentoring formulate mentoring as a rational and hierarchical process that involves an experienced mentor and a novice protégé. Implicit in the functionalist perspective are assumptions about knowledge and power. Learning in the functionalist perspective is considered to be a method of transmitting knowledge from the mentor to the protégé. Functionalist mentoring implies a power relationship in which the mentor has the power as the expert, and the protégé is the beneficiary of the mentor's expert knowledge. As an example, novice principals are often assigned to a veteran mentor in order to support them transition as a school leader. Early school researchers (Bush & Chew, 1999; Crow & Matthews, 1998; Daresh, 2004; Daresh & Playko, 1991; Southworth, 1995; Weingartner, 2001) primarily commended mentoring as a means to support novice principals with the day to day operations of the school. The mentor would use their expertise to guide and advise the novice principal in scheduling, budgeting, managing personnel, problem-solving, and time management (Weingartner, 2001). In this capacity, mentoring would be considered as a functionalist because the primary goal of mentoring is to transfer knowledge from the principal mentor to the protégé to support novice principals in their new leadership role (Hayes, 2020).

In contrast, *relational mentoring* draws attention to a mutual and reciprocal growth-producing relationship (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007). In lieu of viewing the mentor as the established source of power and knowledge, relational mentoring recognizes that high-quality relationships involve the capacity for mutual influence, growth, and



learning. Crow (2012) used the term *critical-constructivist* (p. 233) when referring to relational mentoring as the mentor and the protégé learn together through an intense developmental and long-term relationship (Eby, 1997) that deepens over time with a ripple effect (Varney, 2009). Crow explained that in a critical constructivist perspective, the essential nature of mentoring is learning, and learning involves the “social construction of knowledge in which knowledge is co-constructed through the social negotiation process of relationships” (p. 233). Rather than identifying and transmitting knowledge, the mentor and the protégé construct the knowledge of how to be a school leader that makes sense to the protégé (p. 233). Mullen (2012) also alluded to a critical-constructivist perspective when she referred to mentoring as a journey encompassing the mentor and the protégé in “learning that is open-ended, creative, and uncertain, as well as subject to unknowns” (p. 7). In relational mentoring, both the mentor and the protégé enter the relationship expecting to grow, learn, and be transformed by the relationship; consequently, relational mentoring has been identified as an outstanding approach for leadership development (Boerema, 2011; Crippen & Wallin, 2008; Hayes, 2019; Dimmock & Walker, 2004; Reyes, 2003; Villani, 2006).

It should be noted, however, that both the functionalist and relational mentoring perspectives usually occur throughout a mentoring relationship. In practice, the two perspectives are used to both support principals in the transition to the role of campus leader and in their leadership development. A mentor may begin working with a protégé by providing advice and guidance in the protégé’s early career, and then both the mentor and protégé develop a more mutually beneficial and meaningful relationship as they learn and grow through the mentoring process. Although support functions are

set, the mentoring process is always fluid, reciprocal, multi-dimensional, and dynamic, thus presenting both benefits and challenges to mentoring.

### Research Strategies for the Narrative Review

We conducted an extensive search of all articles published between 1999 and 2019 via EBSCO, JSTOR, ERIC, and Google Scholar databases to identify peer reviewed empirical studies that focused on mentoring. In the initial query, we used the search terms *mentoring*, *mentoring relationships*, and *principal*, which yielded 453 articles. We then searched for *mentoring*, *mentoring relationships*, and *head teacher* and identified 26 articles. We read the abstracts of all 479 articles and removed articles that discussed “principals mentoring teachers” and focused only on articles where researchers studied the mentoring of school principals. This query yielded over 63 articles. We determined that the research scholarship on principals/head teachers and mentoring is delineated into three primary categories:

- Aspiring Principals/Head Teachers (those still in university-based programs)
- Aspiring Principals/Head Teachers (those that are currently Assistant Principals or Teachers)
- Principals/Head Teachers (novice and veteran)

After reviewing the abstracts of the 63 articles on principals/head teachers and mentoring, we determined our inclusion criteria in order to answer the research questions for our narrative review. The inclusion criteria included:

- Mentoring of practicing principals (excluded assistant principals, interns, and aspiring principals);



- Peer-reviewed empirical studies conducted between 1999-2019 (excluded books, book chapters, dissertations, theoretical/conceptual articles, editorials, reports, and literature reviews);
- The research questions and/or the purpose of the article were primarily on mentoring or mentoring relationships of practicing principals (excluded articles where mentoring may have been included as an implication or suggestion for further research or where the focus of the study was on coaching).

After applying the inclusion criteria, we re-examined the articles and created a matrix to include the citation of the manuscript, the abstract, keywords, research methodology, and country. Each manuscript was reviewed independently by the two researchers. A structured codebook was developed to assess the eligibility of inclusion and to extract relevant data. Based on the inclusion criteria, we identified 32 empirical articles for our narrative review. Table 1 outlines all of the empirical studies from 1999-2019 on mentoring principals that were included in this paper. The majority of these studies (n=21) were conducted in the United States.

Table 1.

*Empirical Studies on Mentoring Novice Principals 1999-2019*

Author & Date	Study Design	Sample & Context	Data Collection
Alsbury & Hackmann (2006)	Quantitative	69 mentors & 63 mentees in Iowa (USA)	Pre & post surveys that included open-ended responses
Anderson & Wasonga (2017)	Quantitative	511 mentee principals in the USA	Survey with a 7-point Likert-type scale
Aravena (2018)	Qualitative	8 mentors in Chile	Interviews and document analysis
Augustine-Shaw	Quantitative	185 Kansas (USA)	Survey that focused on

(2015)		Superintendents and 489 Kansas principals	key attributes for 1st year principals
Bakioglu, Hacifazlioglu, & Ozcan (2010)	Mixed-Methods	1462 principals in Turkey	Longitudinal study with surveys with focus groups (5 groups of 10 principals) for interviews
Bickmore & Davenport (2019)	Qualitative	11 principal mentors in the USA	Focus Group Meetings
Boerema (2011)	Qualitative	8 principals in Canada	Semi-structured interviews
Cardno & Youngs (2013)	Mixed-Methods	300 experienced principals in New Zealand	Surveys, open-ended questionnaires, focus groups, observations, document analysis
Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran (2013)	Qualitative	11 Mentors and aspiring principal mentees in a rural school district (USA)	Interviews, document analysis, researcher notes
Daresh (2007)	Qualitative	20 experienced principals who serve as mentors (USA)	Interviews of participants. Both one-to-one interviews and focus groups.
Della Sala, Klar, Lindle, Reese, Knoeppel, Campbell, & Buskey (2013)	Quantitative	9 mid-career principals in rural schools and 65 observers (USA)	Surveys repeated throughout the year had open-ended questions
Duncan & Stock (2010)	Quantitative	187 principals in Wyoming (USA)	Likert-scale survey
Gettys, Martin, & Bigby (2010)	Qualitative	6 principals in Missouri (USA) who participated a mentoring program	Semi-structured interviews. Document analysis of mentoring logs.
Gimbel & Kefor (2018)	Qualitative	8 mentoring dyads in Vermont (USA)	Open-ended questionnaire & Interviews



Gross (2002)	Qualitative	One mentor/protégé dyad (USA)	Case study of 11 interviews of one mentor/protégé pair
Gumus & Bellibas (2013)	Quantitative	200 randomly selected principals from lower secondary schools from 34 different countries	Survey using The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS).
Harris & Crocker (2003)	Qualitative	21 campus principal mentors in Texas (USA)	Interviews
Hayes (2019)	Qualitative	12 novice principals and 12 mentors in the Southeast Region of the USA	Semi-structured interviews; Focus Groups, & Field Notes
Hean (2003)	Mixed Methods	41 Secondary Principals in Singapore	Surveys and interviews
Msila (2016)	Qualitative	5 mentors in KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa)	Interviews & Field Notes
Normore (2007)	Qualitative	18 participants in an Urban School District in the southeast (USA)	Interviews, filed notes, observations, anecdotal data, and document analysis
Oksana, Zepeda, & Bengtson (2012)	Qualitative	16 participants in 4 different school districts in Georgia (USA)	Semi-structured interviews
Oplatka & Lapidot (2018)	Qualitative	12 novice principals in Israel	Semi-structured interviews
Peters (2010)	Qualitative	Mentor and mentee (USA)	Interviews
Riley, (2009)	Mixed Methods	90 experienced school leaders (USA)	Quantitative surveys, focus group interviews, participant reflections
Schechter (2014)	Qualitative	18 novice principals & 6 mentors in New York (USA)	Interviews & Document Analysis

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Schechter & Firuz (2015)	Qualitative	18 school principal mentors in Israel	Semi-structured Interviews
Scott (2010)	Qualitative	14 participants that included principals and their mentors (USA)	Interviews, document analysis
Sciarappa & Mason (2014)	Quantitative	54 novice principals in USA	Surveys
Service, Dalic, Thomson (2018)	Qualitative	14 principal mentors in New Zealand	Semi-structured Interviews
Smith (2007)	Qualitative	3 elementary school principals (USA)	6 focus group interviews over the span of a year
Tahir, Said, Daud, Vazhathodi, & Khan (2016)	Mixed Methods	200 Head Teachers in Malaysia; (n=6) Head teachers for Focused Interviews	Surveys, Focus groups, & Interviews

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### Central Themes

After reviewing and coding the mentoring studies listed in Table 1, we developed four primary themes on how mentoring novice principals or head teachers (referred to as principals for the remainder of this paper) is conceived and valued internationally. Generally speaking, the literature regarding mentoring is centered on these four primary themes: role clarification for both the mentors and the protégés; determinants of effective mentoring relationships, benefits and outcomes of mentoring, and challenges and impediments to mentoring. Through a synthesis of the literature, we discuss each theme as it pertains to developing novice principals.

#### Role Clarification: Mentors

Successful mentors are experienced principals who are knowledgeable of the school organization, are patient, have the



ability to understand others, and possess good listening and communication skills (Daresh, 2007). Experienced principals, who model effective leadership behaviors and have a strong grasp of effective instructional practices tend to be ideal mentors in supporting novice principals (Hansford & Ehrich, 2006; Parylo, Zepeda, & Bengtson, 2012; Peters, 2010; Scott, 2010). Effective principal mentors possess specific behaviors, and these behaviors can predict whether a principal will make a good mentor. Effective mentors should (a) exhibit strong leadership qualities (b) communicate well with others; (c) possess the ability to think outside the box; and (d) have the willingness to take risks (Gettys, Martin, & Bigby, 2010; Gumus & Bellibas, 2013). Dukess (2001) concluded that good mentors rendered three forms of assistance to new principals: (a) provide instructional support focused on student learning; (b) provide administrative support by helping novice principals manage their time to focus on learning and instruction; and (c) provide emotional support throughout the mentoring relationship. In the mentoring relationship, the mentor does not give advice but asks reflective questions to help their protégé reflect and think deeply to solve problems (Gimbel & Kefor, 2018).

Principal mentors should be respected within the field of administration, believe in and be committed to the professional development process, and be able to work with beginning principals to center their learning on their personal and professional needs and the needs of the school (Hayes, 2019). Moreover, mentors should be selected from principals who volunteer to serve because a willing mentor is more productive than one who is serving simply because of a duty of his or her position (Aravena, 2018; Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran, 2013). Principal mentors need to be able to support beginning principals, set goals, identify opportunities for learning, provide

constructive feedback, and encourage reflection of experiences (Gimbel & Kefor, 2018; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; Parylo, Zepeda, & Bengtson, 2012). Principal mentors need the ability to build and maintain their relationships with their mentees based on mutual trust, respect, and professionalism; moreover, they should be able to create a relationship that allows them to develop a genuine understanding of their mentees' ideas and needs and encourage their mentees to honestly share and reflect upon their experiences (Anderson & Wasonga, 2017; Bakioglu, et al., 2010). Mentors also need to understand that the mentoring relationship takes time to develop (Bakioglu, Gacifazlioglu, & Ozcan, 2010; Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran, 2013), and the relationship should develop naturally based on the needs of the protégé. Finally, mentors need professional development and training in order to learn how to be mentors who focus on supporting and developing novice principals (Hayes, 2019; Riley, 2009; Scott, 2010; Smith, 2007).

### **Role Clarification: Protégés**

New principals need support, encouragement, affirmation, and an understanding of the challenges of being a leader of learning (Boerema, 2011). Novice principals have repeatedly reported the benefits that mentoring provided them in helping them transition as school leaders (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Bakioglu, et al., 2010; Boerema, 2011; Duncan & Stock, 2010; Hayes, 2019; Hean 2003; Sciarappa & Mason, 2014). First year principals benefit from mentoring relationships through socialization into the profession, reflective conversation, and role clarification (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006); an emphasis on reflection skills and professional growth (Aravena, 2018; Gimbel & Kefor, 2018); and the receiving of professional support, empathy, problem solving skills, improved



communication skills, professional development, and improved confidence (Daresh, 2007; Hayes, 2019).

Although relational mentoring is characterized as a mutual learning partnership, Zachary (2000) emphasized the importance of the protégé taking the initiative in the relationship. By encouraging the protégé to intentionally pursue a mentor, Zachary suggested a move away from the concept of the mentor being in a superior role and the protégé serving as a passive subordinate to more of a two-way, power-free, and mutually beneficial relationship. Novice principals often feel insecure and shy away from asking for help for fear of being seen as incompetent (Bakioglu, et al., 2010), but in order to move towards a long-term and mutually beneficial relationship, the protégé needs to recognize their learning needs and communicate with their mentor (Della Sala, et al., 2013).

Novice principals also need to remember their strengths and how those strengths add to the mentoring relationship. A novice principal's growth can be stifled when they rely on their mentors for too much guidance and do not trust their own strengths and skills (Daresh, 2007). In the mentoring relationship the mentor helps the protégé become confident in problem solving and leading with their strengths thereby increasing the novice principal's efficacy in school leadership (Bush & Chew, 1999; Daresh, 2007; Gross, 2002; Hayes 2019, Peters, 2010). A successful mentoring relationship is not stagnant but is a dynamic process in which mentors and protégés grow and develop together.

### **Determinants of Effective Mentoring Relationships**

A quality mentoring relationship is the key to sustainable leadership development (Hansford & Ehrich, 2006). The success of

mentoring in the support and development of novice principals is dependent on the quality of the mentoring relationship between the mentor and protégé (Scott, 2010). Within the literature, we found two key determinants for effective mentoring relationships: a) the mentor and protégé pairing and b) length of time in the mentoring relationship and enough time for mentoring sessions.

***Mentor and Protégé Pairing.*** The literature suggests that the mentor and protégé pairing is the largest factor in developing a strong and effective mentoring relationship. Researchers have suggested that both gender and race (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Moorosi, 2012; Msila, 2016; Oplatka & Lapidot, 2018; Peters, 2010) as well as context (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Anderson & Wasonga, 2017; Aravena, 2018; Gettys, Martin, & Bigby, 2010; Gimbel & Kefor, 2018; Hayes, 2019; Msila, 2016; Schechter, 2014; Tahir et al., 2016) matter when it comes to insuring an effective pairing. When mentors and mentees are matched, variables such as professional goals, interpersonal styles, and learning needs should be considered (Oplatka & Lapidot, 2018; Schechter, 2014). Additionally, context matters--the “mentoring process must be developed in a specific context” (Aravena, 2018, p. 224). Anderson & Wasonga (2017) found that “mentoring relationships yield greater outcomes when paired with the right context” (p. 291), and Hayes (2019) found that protégés reported increased professional learning when matched with mentors in similar school contexts. Finally, both the mentor and the protégé must be committed to the mentoring process and allow the process to develop naturally over time (Aravena, 2018; Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran, 2010; Duncan & Stick, 2010).

Mentoring pairings can be either formal or informal, and researchers vary in their opinion on which is more effective. Formal



mentoring relationships generally occur in established mentoring programs. In a formal relationship, a mentor is assigned to a novice principal, and typically, personal factors or complementary characteristics of the mentor or protégé are not always considered when making the assignment. When mismatches occur in formal mentoring relationships, the mentor and the protégé are likely to have feelings of anxiety and stress and often have difficulty establishing a positive and productive mentoring relationship (Schechter, 2014). However, when personal characteristics and context are considered in making matches in formal programs, positive results occur in the mentoring relationship.

Informal mentoring relationships often occur more naturally and organically when protégés seek out a trusted adviser or friend with whom they have an affiliation, or they trust and admire. Informal mentoring relationships are usually built on shared interests and personal characteristics and most likely result in a good match between the mentor and the protégé. Anderson and Wasonga (2017) found that informal mentoring processes in the forms of socialization and internalization had a greater impact on leadership learning than formal relationships. Although informal mentoring relationships may appear to be ideal, there are some disadvantages including: the selected mentor may lack respect and/or knowledge as a leader; the mentor may not be able to meet the needs of the protégé; the mentoring sessions may lack the content needed to support the novice principal's transition to an effective school leader; and the mentoring relationship may primarily focus on socialization rather than professional development (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Gettys, Martin & Bigby, 2010; Hayes, 2019; Moorosi, 2012; Peters, 2010).

*Time.* The majority of the researchers in the mentoring studies indicated that both time for mentoring sessions and length of time in the mentoring relationships are critical when it comes to effective mentoring relationships. Developmental mentoring embraces a relationship that often lasts longer than a year and emphasizes longer-range expertise (Reyes, 2003). New principals need time with their mentors to share experiences in similar contexts (Harris & Crocker, 2006; Hayes, 2019). Hayes (2019) found that when mentors and protégés dedicate consistent time together on a monthly basis sharing similar experiences, the protégé's reported an increase in their efficacy as instructional leaders. Gimbel and Kefor (2018) recommended that mentors and protégés need ample time to learn and grow together and suggested creating ample time for contact hours to work on leadership development. Tahir et al (2016) also acknowledged that protégés need time with their mentors to develop their leadership skills and suggested using technology (e.g. video conferencing) as a means to support additional time in the mentoring relationship. Finally, several researchers (Hayes, 2019; Service, Dalgic, & Thornton, 2018; Tahir et al, 2016) suggested that protégés need to spend time observing their mentors by job shadowing them, and mentors need to model best practices for their protégés.

### **Benefits and Outcomes**

Mentoring has benefits for both the protégé and the mentor. Researchers have outlined numerous benefits that mentoring provides to novice principals, including indoctrination into the profession (Daresh, 2004); socialization and networking (Anderson & Wasonga, 2017); improving the school culture (Msila, 2016; Oplatka & Lapidot); and building confidence in instructional leadership (Gettys, Martin, & Bigby, 2010; Gumus & Bellibas, 2016; Hayes, 2019;



Normore, 2007). The first year as a school principal is difficult, and often lonely and isolated (Hayes, 2019; Walker & Dimmock, 2006); moreover, the only people who understand the extent of the principalship are other principals (Young, Sheets, & Knight, 2005). Mentoring provides novices with a trusted confidante and adviser to assist them as they transition to the principalship and eases the burden of first year challenges. Novice principals need support, encouragement, affirmation, understanding, information/resources, and interactions with other principals. Supportive mentoring relationships are essential to novice principals in developing the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to lead successful schools (Boerema, 2011; Daresh, 2004; Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Hayes, 2019; Parylo, Zepeda, & Bengtson, 2012). Tahir et al (2016) confirmed that mentoring benefits include psychological and social benefits, instilling professional values, improving leadership skills, and improving management skills (p. 440), and they concluded that “the mentoring process is definitely effective in improving leadership capacities” (p. 441) among novice principals.

While mentoring provides invaluable support to novice principals, there are many benefits to the mentors as well. Mentors have reported benefits such as collegiality, personal reflection, and gratification in helping a peer (Aravena, 2018; Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran, 2013; Daresh, 2004). Harris and Crocker (2003) outline several benefits that mentoring provides to mentors including the opportunity to share ideas, to help someone grow into the profession, to evaluate their own practice, and to be inspired by their protégé (p. 76). Msila (2016) found that mentors benefitted from a mentoring relationship through their own ongoing professional development, enhancing their own school culture, and forging healthy relationships with key stakeholders. Schechter and Firuz (2015) reported that

mentors found the act of mentoring rewarding in that they are able to help shape novice principals and guide them through the leadership development process. Researchers have also reported that through a mentoring relationship, mentors found their own practices as a school principal were enhanced (Bickmore & Davenport, 2019; Service, Dalgic, & Thornton, 2018), and they became better principals as a result of the mentoring relationship (Hayes, 2019; Parylo, Zepeda, & Bengtson, 2012).

### **Challenges and Impediments**

Harris and Crocker (2003) outlined three main difficulties in cultivating and sustaining effective mentoring relationships: time constraints, not understanding the mentoring role, and inadequate communication skills. Mentoring does not happen in isolation and not all mentors understand how to be effective mentors. Mentors need ongoing professional support (Aravena, 2018; Parylo, Zepeda, & Bengtson, 2012; Schechter, 2014), and without formal training programs and support for mentors, the protégés in the relationship often do not get what they need to be successful (Msila, 2016; Hayes, 2019). Mentoring is also confused with novice principal induction (Aravena, 2018), and many school mentoring programs are focused on induction rather than professional development (Brondyk & Searby, 2013). Other limitations include incompatibility between the mentor and protégé (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Msila, 2016; Oplatka & Lapidot, 2018; Peters, 2010), insufficient support from the school district (Gettys, Martin & Bigby, 2010; Msila, 2016), and inattention to the protégé's needs (Clayton, Sanzo & Myran, 2013).



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## Directions for Future Research

### Mentoring Studies and Practice-based Recommendations

Despite the existence of many mentoring programs, few programs are developed through formal set and established processes over the course of a principal's career. While mentoring programs may deem to be helpful for supporting principals and cultivating effective leadership skills, there is also a need to support principals not only as novice principals but over a long-sustained periods of time. Such programs may bring forth confidence due to the social network that is being nurtured through that mentoring relationship. Additionally, university preparation programs, in particular, could play a critical role in developing formal mentoring programs by connecting principals for mentoring relationships through an organic process.

Beyond preparation programs, further efforts need to focus on incorporating mentoring as an integral part of simply being a principal. Similar to how professional learning communities have trended over time and proven to be important for a healthy school system, mentoring could be designed to become normative through policies and an integral part of the schooling culture and system. In this way, education policies and systems may include the need for mentoring to be part of school culture and even principal preparation programs and thus be enabling for authentic transformative learning to happen giving agency for principals to develop the program as they see fit for their own personal leadership and school improvement. Further research is also needed to define the underlying aspects of mentoring schemas that are associated with non-traditional formats such as virtual mentoring, peer mentoring, group mentoring, and mentoring networks. Mullen (2013) discussed

alternative mentoring paradigms such as mosaic mentoring, collaborative mentoring, and multi-level co-mentoring, but we found little research exploring these mentoring paradigms with practicing school principals.

Additionally, the majority of the research is focused on novice principals and their induction into the principalship. There is limited information and studies on how mentoring can support mid-career principals. The mid-career stage is defined as that which occurs “after individuals perceive they have mastered the role’s basic knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values and before they begin to move toward retirement or termination of their role involvement” (Crow & Matthews, 1998, p. 129). Smith (2007) asserted that principals in mid-career tend to operate alone and do not always allocate time to reflect on their own practice and gather appropriate feedback from others. With the current reality of increased burnout rates and principal turnover, it is crucial to build a support system for principals through mentoring. Future mentoring studies could address how mentoring influences the mindful leadership practices of principals, specifically addressing job related stress and work-life balance. Additionally, such studies could inform the type of practices in mentorship that are needed to best address the needs of the mentors as well as mentees. Investigating various mentorships programs implemented in different contexts and cultures--internationally and locally-- could be key to solidifying the core best practices and policies that need to be integrated in effective and successful mentorship programs.

### **Methodological Recommendations**

This review underscores the crucial importance of mentoring in developing and supporting school principals. While this review only reported on the literature that is currently available, it may be



important for future researchers to focus on various aspects of principal mentoring. Given the gaps in research described above, the optimal design would be a meta-analysis that would match the specificity and reliability of direct measures with the in-depth qualitative perspective of indirect measures. Furthermore, it is important that an effort is made in future studies to describe precisely how mentoring influences the school administrator's performance in leadership. It would also be beneficial to study relationships between attrition and mentorship, mentorship/personality compatibility, etc. Researchers should also consider methodologies that contribute to developing a more consistent theory of mentoring. Developing mentoring programs and using randomized controlled trials to evaluate the efficacy are important to understand in depth the effects of such programs on mentors, principals, and school culture. Comparative international studies could also be important as they would reveal how various contexts and cultural differences affect the implementation process, receptivity of mentorship programs, and influence on schooling. We also suggest descriptive/longitudinal studies and case studies to examine on a deeper level the relationship dynamics and processes that have not yet been explored in the literature.

### **Conclusion**

The review of literature presented in this study builds upon other literature reviews and book chapters conducted by other researchers. Most notably, Hobson and Sharp (2005) conducted a systematic review of literature on mentoring new head teachers primarily in the United Kingdom (UK). In their review, Hobson and

Shaw (2005) found four main themes pertaining to mentoring head teachers:

1. Types of mentoring employed with new head teachers;
2. The effectiveness of mentoring programmes for new head teachers;
3. The stated benefits of new head teachers (for both mentor and protégé)
4. Factors which are said to influence the success of mentoring schemes for new head teachers. (p. 32)

In the past fifteen years since the publication of Hobson and Shaw's systematic review, the research on mentoring has continued to focus around these four general themes—little has changed. Researchers have continued to study the effective practices of mentoring principals for professional learning through: role clarification for both the mentors and the protégés; determinants of effective mentoring relationships, benefits and outcomes of mentoring, and challenges and impediments to mentoring. All of the studies included in this review assert that mentoring continues to be one of the most significant ways to indoctrinate novice principals as effective school leaders; however, many of the researchers have expressed that in order for mentoring to be effective, then high quality training, mentoring pairings, context, and time must be considered for a successful mentoring program. This study contributes to the growing body of research on principal mentoring and extends the previous research by consolidating all the research studies for a unified perspective on the outcomes and challenges of mentoring in the past 20 years. Although the majority of mentoring studies have been conducted in the US, we feel research on mentoring is gaining more recognition in international contexts. As



researchers continue to conceptualize mentoring and mentoring programs, we feel it is important to progress future research on mentoring from simply understanding the dyadic relationship and the impact it has on the development and support of school principals and move towards finding innovative and effective practices in mentoring as a professional learning tool for principals to address context specific problems in leading schools (e.g. mindful leadership, leadership for social justice and equity, etc.). Additionally, mentoring networks and virtual mentoring are emerging as trends in mentoring school principals and warrant further research. These two innovative paradigms have the potential for broadening the mentoring research by understanding how mentoring can be used as professional learning and growth within and across international contexts.

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**Investigating the Existence of Mentoring  
Support to School’s New-Entrant Substitute Teachers  
in the Greek Educational Context: The Role of  
School Leadership**

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<b>Abstract</b>	<b>Article Info</b>
<p><i>Teacher mentoring is one of the most well-known and widespread methods of personalized guidance and support for school’s new-entrant substitute teachers (Bezzina, 2006; Andrews &amp; Quinn 2005; Moyles, Suschitsky &amp; Chapman, 1999; Nemser-Feiman, 1996), providing multiple benefits (Ingersoll, 2003; Ingersoll &amp; Kralik, 2004; Lambeth, 2012). However, in the Greek context, teacher mentoring as a practice, although it is institutionalized in 2010, has not been yet implemented. For that reason, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether school’s new-entrant substitute teachers receive mentoring support and guidance, even informally, from their colleagues (peer mentoring) and their principal. Additionally, it explores the role of leadership in mentoring support as described above. A quantitative research approach has been adopted. Self-administered questionnaires were</i></p>	<p><b>Article History:</b>  <i>Received</i>                      September 22, 2019   <i>Accepted</i>                      August 02, 2020</p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords:</b>  <i>Mentoring support,                      Peer mentoring,                      School leadership,                      School’s new-entrant                      substitute teachers.</i></p>

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completed by 120 school's new-entrant substitute schoolteachers using the convenience sampling technique. The questionnaires included a Likert type scale with 51 items measuring different aspects of teachers' views about their informal peer mentoring support (Huling-Austin & Murphy, 1987) and leadership style of their principal (Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire- Hoy & Clover, 1986). According to the results, school's new-entrant substitute teachers seem to receive in a small extent informal mentoring support and guidance from their colleagues and principal. However, colleagues provide to a greater extent mentoring support than school principals. In addition, school leadership, especially supportive leadership style is positively correlated with mentoring support

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**Cite as:**

Michopoulou, S., Stavropoulos, V. & Xafakos, E. (2020). Investigating the existence of mentoring support to school's new-entrant substitute teachers in the Greek educational context: The role of school leadership. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 5(3), 753-784. DOI: 10.30828/real/2020.3.5

### **The Greek Educational Context**

In 2010, the implementation of mentoring support and guidance to the school's new-entrant teacher in the Greek public school is being introduced by a law for the first time. More specifically, the role of the mentor is determined by the school counselor in collaboration with the headmaster of the school unit. The mentor should have the tendency and therefore the desire to be involved in innovative actions and to be well-versed in school culture and the wider area of the workplace.

Nevertheless, nowadays the institution of 'mentoring' remains inactive (Mpoumpoulentra, 2016; Ntavaros, 2015; Pappa & Iordanides, 2017). In addition, according to teachers' views who participated in Ntavaros's research (2015), there is no official information on the



mentoring institution in Greek schools. Those teachers who have been informed on this subject have received random information from the internet or from conversations with colleagues (Karveli, 2017). Moreover, many teachers are not even aware of the mentoring institution (Mpoumpoulentra, 2016). Furthermore, every year thousands of school's new-entrant substitute teachers are being occupied in Greek public school units. This is an employment status that has been established in the Greek educational system over the last ten years with no prospects to change. This established situation creates a series of problems to the school's new-entrant substitute school teachers (Maurogiorgos, 1996; Vasiliadis, 2012; Stavropoulos, 2013; Arvanitidou, 2014; Dafkou, 2014; Ntavaros, 2015).

In conclusion, the results of this study will be useful, as the "mentoring" institution has not yet been adopted in Greek public schools, at a time when the school's new-entrant substitute teacher is the new entrant every school year and needs an appropriate reception and support in the new school environment.

## **Literature Review**

### **Mentoring**

Mentoring is one of the most well-known and widespread methods of providing personalized guidance and support to school's new-entrant substitute teachers (Bezzina, 2006), as its importance has been confirmed by many researches (Andrews & Quinn, 2005; Moyles, Suschitsky & Chapman, 1999; Nemser-Feiman, 1996), highlighting the multiple benefits it provides to both the school's new-entrant substitute teacher and the school unit itself (Ingresoll, 2003; Ingresoll & Kralik, 2004; Lambeth, 2012). For this reason, mentoring support is one of the priorities of lots of educational systems, and this is reflected

in the significant increase in the number of mentoring programs (Green-Powell, 2012).

In particular, the benefits of mentoring support relate to the professional development of the teacher (Green-Powell, 2012; Lambeth, 2012), as developing a close interpersonal relationship with the mentor, the mentor helps the school's new-entrant substitute teacher to organize and plan his/her professional goals, while at the same time the mentor enhances his/her confidence in professional success and better personal development (Green-Powell, 2012). In addition, the quality and dynamics of this relationship have a direct impact on the development and performance of the new teacher (Athanases, Abrams, Jack, Johnson, Kwock, McCurdy & Totaro, 2008) both inside and outside the classroom (Lambeth, 2012).

Furthermore, related researches have shown that mentoring programs reduce the possibility of teachers leaving the profession (Ingresoll, 2003; Ingresoll & Kralik, 2004). However, there are skeptics who believe that mentoring programs do not correlate with the satisfaction of teachers' work (Glazarman, Isenberg, Dolfin, Bleeker, Johnson, Grider & Jacobus, 2010). The same conclusion is reached by LoCascio, Smeaton and Waters (2016) in their subsequent research.

However, apart from the conflicting views, the importance of any kind of support for the school's new-entrant substitute teacher cannot be questioned. Indeed, the necessity of establishing mentoring programs in the Greek educational context is unquestionable, as it is highlighted below by the following surveys.

### **Peer Mentoring and the Role of School Leadership**

Peer mentoring initiative in a school unit aims at developing all teachers capacities to participate successfully in learning communities



throughout their teaching careers (Cornu, 2005). Mentoring and peer-networking enhance teacher collaboration and mutual support, raise teacher confidence, facilitate teacher learning and embed improvements in professional practice (Law, 1997; Smith, 1999; Lieberman & Miller, 2000; Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002).

More specifically, the emerge of “peer support groups” in school units increases the professional development of its members and contributes in the establishment of a climate that is conducive to self-review and learning (Smith, 1999). The mutual support offered by other colleagues can also increase the confidence and self-esteem of all the teachers (Lieberman & Miller, 2000). According to Boreen & Niday (2000), mentoring decreases the feeling of isolation of the school’s new-entrant substitute teacher and make him/her feel more welcomed among the other colleagues in the school unit.

School’s new-entrant substitute teachers integrate into a school environment which has already been shaped by developed friendships between teachers and existing social groups who are familiar with the history and culture of the school. On the contrary, the new teacher does not know the culture of the new school and has limited time to develop social relationships. This can lead the new teacher to isolation and emotional loneliness (Walsdorf & Lynn, 2002). The school environment that is unknown to the school’s new-entrant substitute teacher can be an obstacle for him/her to develop self-confidence and professional security, resulting in mental exhaustion and stress (Gavish & Friedman, 2010).

For this reason, mentoring programs often emphasize on teacher emotional support and less on guidance for more effective teaching (Wang & Odell, 2002). Positive interactions between the senior schoolteachers and the new teacher can be a major factor in the smooth

integration of the new teacher into the new school environment. Through the organized group lessons, the exchange of information, informal discussions in the school corridors, and meetings with colleagues outside the school, the school's new-entrant substitute teacher can learn what he or she does not know about the new school's climate and functioning (Lambeth, 2012).

The school leadership also plays a crucial role in new teacher's integration. The headmaster of a school unit is the first person a school's new-entrant substitute teacher comes in contact with and plays a particularly important role in supporting the school's new-entrant substitute teacher (Everard & Morris, 1999), as the first must be available to discuss with the last any concerns and difficulties that may arise.

The importance of the role of school leadership is underlined by the fact that one of the reasons for teachers not remaining in the profession is the lack of appropriate support from the director (Murphy, DeArmond, & Guin, 2003). For this reason, school districts should strive to collaborate with school principals to provide new entrants with the necessary support and guidance (Lambeth, 2012). Principals who recognize the need for implementation of support programs and are trained in such issues are successful in promoting effective mentoring support to the new entrant (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2010).

According to Wood (2005), the school principal is the person who builds the school culture, is the leader in mentoring support and also the coordinator of the mentoring process. When the principal organizes processes related to the development of professional relationships between new teachers and old teachers, then new



teachers develop greater self-confidence and comfort by feeling respected for their profession (Wood, 2005).

Therefore, it is particularly important that leadership behavior must be characterized as supportive, both for the new teacher and for the other members of the school unit. Hoy and Clover (1986) attribute the following characteristics of supportive leadership behavior, stating that the school principal:(a) behaves beyond its formal role by providing assistance to teachers, (b) criticizes constructively, (c) explains the reasons for criticizing, (d) adopts teachers' suggestions, (e) takes care of the common good, (f) treats teachers equally, (g) praises teachers, (h) is easily understood by teachers, (i) behaves beyond his or her formal role to show his / her appreciation to all the teachers of the school (Stavropoulos & Sarafidou, 2011). The above features of leadership behavior appear to be supported by subsequent and contemporary research on this issue.

It is unquestionable that the principal plays an important role in the implementation of mentoring support programs for the new entrant and it is particularly important to encourage both the school's new-entrant substitute teacher and the teacher or team that has assumed the role of mentor (Menchaca, 2003).It is important for the school's new-entrant substitute teacher that the principal encourages collaboration among the members of the school to create a climate of creativity and support among all teachers, including the new members, in order to achieve better learning outcomes as a result of the school unit's educational process (Brown, 2002) .

The importance of collaboration between principal, former teachers and new teacher is also supported by Johnson (2001). In addition, he states that the principal has to look at many elements and avoid situations that will bring additional difficulties to the new

entrant. He also explains that it is important for the principal to avoid assigning school's new-entrant substitute teachers to difficult pupils that the older teachers of the school did not want to undertake, and to avoid demanding extracurricular activities that he has not yet become accustomed to.

The difficulties faced by the school's new-entrant substitute teacher can be encountered as long as the principal contributes positively to meet the new entrant's particular needs through personal interaction and by orchestrating a healthy school climate. In particular, Bickmore and Bickmore (2010) explain that when the principal's interactions with the incoming teacher include the necessary emotional support, then the principal contributes to the teacher's sense of belonging to the school and enhances his or her confidence and self-esteem. In addition, they argue that random discussions with the principal in the corridor, organized activities involving the school's new-entrant substitute teacher, and designated meetings with the principal help to reduce stress and increase the sense of autonomy and respect for the incoming teacher.

The school principal in general should be involved and implement actions of guidance and support for the school's new-entrant substitute teacher. More specifically, Hope (1999) explains that a supportive leadership behavior should characterize the principal as an accessible person rather than a rigid figure of authority, including coordinating relationships between colleagues to avoid the feeling by the school's new-entrant substitute teacher to be alienated from the others and providing opportunities for the development of his or her skills for general professional development.

Watkins (2005) proposes three effective strategies in supportive leadership behavior. The first is the implementation of a mentorship



program, where the role of the mentor plays a developing teacher who will inspire the new. The second strategy is to encourage the principal to implement and coordinate innovative actions. In this way, the principal builds a school environment that can embrace the newcomer, who brings new ideas. Finally, encouraging discussions about academic issues between new and old school members under the guidance of the principal helps to provide the new teacher with appropriate support on pedagogical issues.

Two provenly effective mentoring strategies are proposed by Roberson and Roberson (2009), which focus on the implementation of defined meetings' hours and the provision of meaningful and detailed feedback. The principal is an essential factor in the success of the school's new-entrant substitute teacher and the main component of these actions. The purpose of the scheduled meetings is to provide information on the teaching process, the new teacher's obligations and queries. Meetings should be a short activity integrated into the new teacher's schedule and take place at a predetermined time each week. Feedback is equally important because it can provide the new entrant with information on how the school unit operates and on the educational methods followed by the school members throughout the school year. The principal should provide this kind of feedback and encourage the other permanent teachers to do the same.

However, the school leadership behavior plays an important role in the way in which the school's new-entrant substitute teacher will receive positive or negative feedback and constructive criticism in support and guidance (Lambeth, 2012).

Various ways of principal supporting the school's new-entrant substitute teacher are also suggested by Wood (2005), some of which are: in-class visits aimed at formative evaluation and feedback of the

school's new-entrant substitute teacher, discussions in the context of meaningful communication, frequent communication between the principal and the mentor about the provided by the mentor systematic support to the school's new-entrant substitute teachers, providing useful textbooks and supervisory material, meetings aimed at organizing and planning the curriculum, meetings between mentors and new teachers and out of school for academic content discussions.

In addition, it is important the principal as the coordinator of the mentoring process to provide the mentor and the new entrant with a shared leisure time to collaborate, encourage their professional development and often praise the new teacher (Togneri & Anderson, 2003).

Finally, the development of a relationship of trust between the principal and the school's new-entrant substitute teacher plays a key role in the satisfaction of the school's new-entrant substitute teacher, his commitment to the educational process, and his stay at the particular school unit. This relationship is built when leadership behavior includes managing difficult students' behaviors, guiding and providing information to the school's new-entrant substitute teacher, and encouraging all teachers in the unit to work together (Youngs, Hyun-Seung, & Pogodzinski, 2015).

### **Greek Relevant Literature**

Concerning Greek literature, research on the issue of school leadership behavior towards the school's new-entrant substitute teacher is quite limited. This is because of the fact that the Greek education system is highly centralized, since the functioning of all school units is determined by the central authority (Katsaros, 2008). Greek public schools are not independent enough to form a relatively



autonomous administrative practice (Reppa, Dakopoulou, Koutouzis, Maurogiorgos & Chalkiotis, 2008). Therefore, the Greek education system is organized in such a way that Greek public schools have limited scope for initiative and autonomy. This puts the head of the school in an executive role. The responsibilities of the principal are mainly executive, while few are administrative, such as teacher guidance and control of school functioning (Reppa et al., 2008).

Specifically, in Pitsiou's research (2017), principals, although not organizing their own support actions, appear to encourage supportive behaviors for the school's new-entrant substitute teacher and promote a culture of collaboration among school unit members. In Glaraki's research (2014) and according to the statements of the participating teachers, it appears that the relationship between the school's new-entrant substitute teacher and the principal is cooperative and harmonious. In Tillelis' (2014) research, the view of the positive results of the mentoring institution was strongly and more strongly supported by the principals involved in the research. Last but not least, the study of Vrioni (2016), which included principals from Cyprus school units and school's new-entrant substitute teachers, was also noteworthy. The results of the research show that the leaders of the school units understand the needs of the new teachers and adopt actions to welcome them and inform them about issues related to school culture and their duties, providing them with the appropriate personal and professional support they need.

From the very first day of the school's new-entrant substitute teacher's present in the new school unit, the principal has to make sure that he/she is informed about the school rules, goals and tasks that he/she will need to undertake (Glarakis, 2014; Katsoulakis, 1999). In addition, it is important the principal to discuss with the school's new-

entrant substitute teacher any concerns, to advise him/her, to avoid assigning him/her with the most difficult and demanding classes, and to facilitate the relationships with the other school members (Katsoulakis, 1999). It is especially important that the principal welcomes and supports the school's new-entrant substitute teacher, as leadership behavior's role is crucial to the professional and emotional status of the school's new-entrant substitute teacher (Ntavaros, 2015).

In general, supportive leadership behavior can provide appropriate support in coping with the difficulties faced daily in the school unit and reduce the stress of the school's new-entrant substitute teacher (Stavropoulos, 2013). On the contrary, the absence of supportive leadership behavior can lead the teacher to emotional exhaustion (Saiti, Goumas & Stavropoulos, 2017).

In addition, there is much lower levels of emotional exhaustion for the school's new-entrant substitute teachers, where there is a culture of collaboration and togetherness, as well as favorable working conditions, cooperation and support among all school teachers (Saiti, et. all, 2017). Social support is an essential part of integrating the new teacher into the school unit. As Stavropoulos (2013) explains, the role of social support teachers receive in their workplace from the principal and other peers has a significant impact on the feeling that teachers experience about leaving or changing their school unit.

However, according to Stavropoulos (2013), school's new-entrant substitute teachers often feel unsatisfied with the professional and social support they receive from the school environment in Greek public school units, and the recognition and appreciation they receive from their colleagues, their principal and their students' parents. Moreover, in Kiriazaki's research (2018), beginning teachers feel that are not adequately supported and need counseling support.



Unfortunately, in the field of Greek educational reality, all the institutionalized mechanisms concerning the support and guidance of the school's new-entrant substitute teachers referred above are absent (Dourou, 2014). As it has already been mentioned above, teacher mentoring as a practice, although it is institutionalized in 2010, has not been yet implemented (Mpoumpoulendra, 2016; Ntavaros, 2015; Pappa & Iordanidis, 2017). Peer mentoring in greek public schools is an informal process and it takes different forms in each school unit. Any support to the school's new-entrant substitute teachers is being provided in an informal context (Ntavaros, 2015). The process of welcoming and supporting the new teacher seems to be a spontaneous initiative of the older teachers of the school unit and is not based on any organized action or planned mechanism (Pitsiou, 2017).

In conclusion, the above review on Greek literature reveals the following commonalities: the recognition of the importance of leadership in mentoring support and guidance for the school's new-entrant substitute teacher, the importance of peer mentoring and the positive attitude of principals towards implementing such a program. Nevertheless, there is a great lack of greek research on the international literature on the mentoring institution, which still remains inactive in greek public schools.

It is important to investigate the existence of an informal form of mentoring support as there is no institutionalised mentoring structure so far. If it is found to exist, this fact makes the need for a more systematic and specific way of mentoring by the official structures because the support can be offered in a different way by each school unit, as there are no specific instructions. Also, the existence of a possible informal form of mentoring should be taken into account for the future planning.

### **The Aim of the Study**

The main aim of the study is to investigate whether school's new-entrant substitute teachers receive mentoring support and guidance, even informally, from their colleagues and their principal. Additionally, the study explores the role of leadership in mentoring support.

#### **Research questions:**

1. To what extent does informal mentoring support and guidance of school's new-entrant substitute teachers exist by their colleagues and principal?
2. Which leadership style is more prevalent in principals, according to the views of the school's new-entrant substitute teachers?
3. Is there a correlation between school's new-entrant substitute teachers' views on their informal mentoring support and guidance and the leadership behavior of the school principal?

### **Research Method**

For the needs of this study, a quantitative research approach has been adopted and self-administered questionnaires were completed. More specifically, non-probabilistic design was carried out and in particular the convenience sample with avalanche characteristics (convenience sampling) was the way of collecting the research data (Robson, 2007), as one participant could inform about the research and refer the completion of the questionnaire to a colleague. Convenience sampling was chosen, as the researchers, due to their status, had direct access to primary education teachers in their network, which also ensured the immediate response of the participants.



The estimation error for this sample, at the 95% significance level, is quite large (9.1%), however the answers of 120 participants can provide useful information on the subject under investigation (Creswell, 2014).

For the analysis of the data the statistical package SPSS 23 was used utilizing both the descriptive and the inductive statistics. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was performed for the regularity of the distribution of the variables, which indicated the performance of a parametric control.

### **Sample**

Using the convenience sampling technique, self-administered questionnaires were completed by 120 school's new-entrant substitute teachers, 29 of them were men and 91 women (24,2% men and 75,8% women), who all worked for the first time at each school for the school year 2017-18.

However, in the majority of the sample teachers had many years' experience in other primary schools. This is because of the employment status that has been established in the greek educational system, according to which every year thousands of school's new-entrant substitute teachers are being occupied in greek public school units. As a result, most school's new-entrant substitute teachers are occupied in different schools every year.

### **Instruments**

The questionnaires included a Likert type scale with 51 items measuring different aspects of teachers' views about their informal mentoring support and principal's leadership style.

### *Mentoring Support Scale*

The exploration of teachers' views was carried out through a standard questionnaire (Huling-Austin & Murphy, 1987), which outlines the main axes of the theoretical framework of research, as evidenced by the literature review. Questionnaire statements were delivered using the double-translation method.

In order to find the degree of internal reliability regarding mentoring support and guidance, two corresponding groups were computed. As shown in the table below, in both cases a high degree of internal reliability was observed.

This scale was used because it enabled us to explore what resources might be available in the school unit to provide informal mentoring support to new teachers. In particular, the present study examined two sources of support: colleagues and school principal.

Table 1.

#### *Mentoring Support Subscales*

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
<b>Mentoring by colleagues</b>	,908	14
<b>Mentoring by school principal</b>	,943	14

### *Leadership Style Scale*

We used a part of the Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire (Hoy & Clover, 1986) OCDQ-RE in order to investigate the leadership style. This scale was chosen because it is credible and also widely and internationally known, as it can still clearly capture principals' leadership behavior.



The scale includes three subordinate behaviors, which are: supportive, directive and restrictive. In particular, the first sub-scale (directive) refers to leadership that provides specific instructions to teachers without leaving much room for autonomy. The second (restrictive) refers to the leadership which does not allow the autonomy of new-entrant substitute teachers at all and the school principal has complete control. The third sub-scale (supportive) refers to a leadership that mostly supports new-entrant substitute teachers in various ways, such as teaching, psychological support, etc. More specifically, supportive leadership implies that the principal abandons his/her formal role to provide assistance, adopt the suggestions and ideas of other teachers and takes care for the common good. Moreover, a directive principal criticize in a constructive manner, corrects and explains the mistakes of other teachers, supervises sometimes their work and gives advice. On the other hand, a restrictive principal rules with an iron fist, loads teachers with a lot of bureaucratic work and decide by himself/herself how to plan the teachers program with no discussion

The scale was translated from English into Greek using the back-translation method (Saiti, Goumas, & Stavropoulos, 2017) and consists of 23 statements, which are answered on a four-point scale "rarely happens" 1, "sometimes" 2, "often" 3, and "very often" 4.

Table 2.

*Leadership style subscales*

<b>Leadership style</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
Directive	,78	9
Restrictive	,78	5
Supportive	,89	9

**Results**

The results are presented according to the research questions.

Research question 1: To what extent does informal mentoring support and guidance of school's new-entrant substitute teachers exist by their colleagues and principal?

The mean values of the variables indicate that there is a neutral attitude on the part of colleagues and the principal towards the new school teachers, provided that the mentoring and guidance provided to the latter occurs in "few times" according to the responses of the respondents.

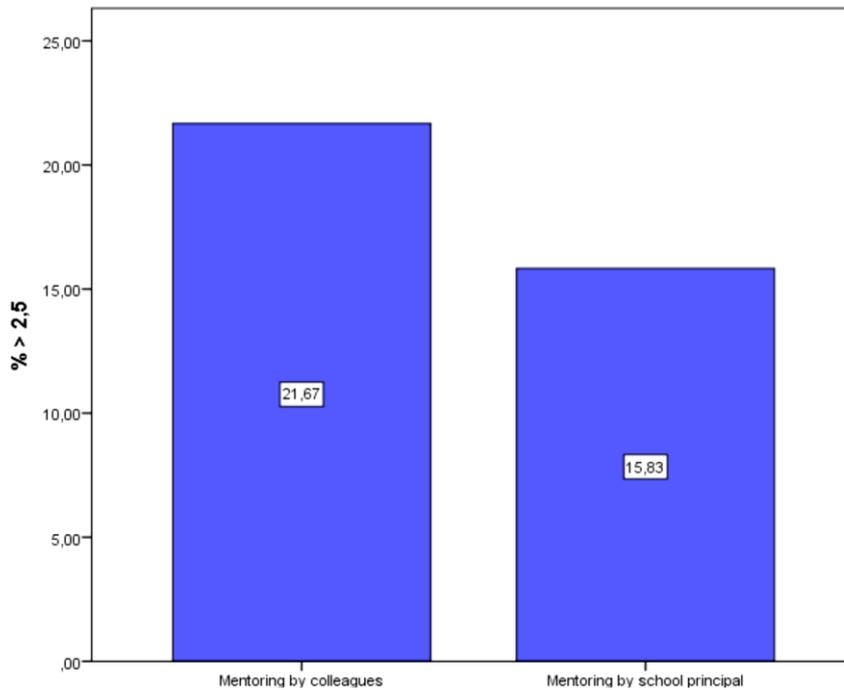
Table 3.

*Means values of mentoring support*

	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
<b>Colleagues</b>	120	1,14	4,00	<b>2,08</b>	,59
<b>Principal</b>	120	1,00	4,00	<b>1,90</b>	,67

Graph 1.

*Clear agreement on the extent of mentoring support*



However, according to the graph 1 above, it is observed that mentoring support and guidance is provided to a greater extent by their colleagues compared to the principal support.

**Research question 2:** Which leadership style is more prevalent in school principals, according to the views of the school's new-entrant substitute teachers?

The mean values show that the leadership style most frequently encountered is supportive. However, directive and restrictive leadership has sometimes been observed.

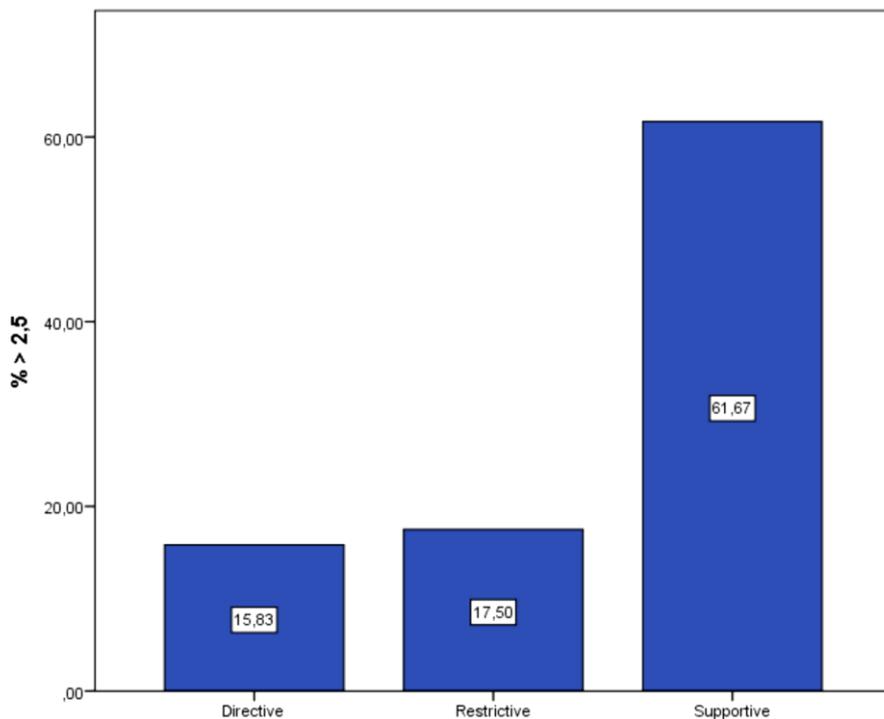
Table 4.  
*Mean values of leadership styles*

<b>Leadership</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
<b>Directive</b>	120	1,00	3,56	<b>1,97</b>	,53176
<b>Restrictive</b>	120	1,00	4,00	<b>1,94</b>	,63732
<b>Supportive</b>	120	1,00	4,00	<b>2,63</b>	,70596

A fairly large proportion of new school teachers often meet supportive leadership in the school unit (61,67%). However, the percentages of respondents who meet frequently to very often directive (15,83%) and restrictive (17,50) leadership in the schools cannot be considered as negligible (see Graph 2 below).

Graph 2.

*Clear agreement on the extent of leadership style*





Research question 3: Is there a correlation between school’s new-entrant substitute teachers’ views on their informal mentoring support and guidance and the leadership behavior of the school principal?

Correlations were found between supportive leadership and mentoring by colleagues ( $r = .432, P < 0.001$ ), as well as mentorship by school principal ( $r = .503, P < 0.001$ ). A negative correlation was also found between restrictive leadership and mentoring support ( $r = -.273, P < 0.001$ ), but also with mentor support from school principal ( $r = -.270, P < 0.001$ ). Finally, a moderate to strong positive correlation was found between restrictive and directive leadership ( $r = .592, P < 0.001$ ), whereas there was a negative correlation between supportive leadership and directive leadership ( $r = -.369, P < 0.001$ ) and between supportive and restrictive leadership ( $r = -.491, P < 0.001$ ).

**Pearson’s Correlations**

Table 5.

*Correlations between mentoring and leadership styles*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1 MC	1,00				
2 MSP	,790**	1,00			
3 Dir	-,138	-,083	1,00		
4 Res	-,273**	-,270**	,592**	1,00	
5 Supp	,432**	,503**	-,369**	-,491**	1,00

\*\*p < 0,01, \*p < 0,05

MC=mentoring by colleagues, MSP=mentoring by school principal, Dir=Directive leadership style, Res=restrictive leadership style, Supp=supportive leadership style

## Discussion

This study focused on the role of school leadership as for mentoring support in Greek educational context.

According to the results of this research, informal peer mentoring and mentoring support by the school principal is not applied on high levels and does not meet all needs of the school's new-entrant substitute teacher.

In general, it is found that there is a neutral attitude on the part of colleagues and the principal towards school's new-entrant substitute teachers, since the mentoring support and guidance provided to the latter is not very high and not at all parameters. The results of the present study regarding the necessity of implementing a mentoring support program appear to be in line with earlier studies (Vassiliadis, 2012; Arvanitidou, 2014; Tillelis, 2014; Vogiatzi, 2015; Ntavaros, 2015; Pappa, 2015; Hanioti, 2015; Vlachou, 2016; Mpoumpoulentra, 2016; Laskaratou, 2016; Nikolakopoulou, 2017; Pappa & Iordanidis, 2017; Pitsiou, 2017), as the support received by school's new-entrant substitute teachers is poor (Ntavaros, 2015). Therefore, it is concluded that the adoption of mentoring is a strong necessity within the context of Greek data in the field of education, with the aim of improving the adaptation of the school's new-entrant substitute teacher to the new school environment (Vassiliadis, 2012).

However, according to the results, it is particularly encouraging that the leadership style most commonly encountered by school's new-entrant substitute teachers is a supportive one. It is also noteworthy that the supportive leadership style is also positively correlated with the mentoring support from colleagues' teachers.



The positive correlation between colleagues' and school principals' mentoring support highlights the importance of a cohesive organisational school climate which embraces teachers' and principals' leadership initiatives towards continuing professional development. Nonetheless, the implementation of the aforementioned initiatives is based on a supportive leadership style, which flourishes mentoring support of schools' new entered teachers. It is very hopeful that teachers' responses reflect a supportive climate towards mentoring from both the principal and colleagues, although the later tend to be more supportive. Perhaps, this finding reflects that almost 1/3 of the principals in this study are supposed to be either directive or restrictive. Correlations showed that only restrictive principals' behaviour had a negative impact on mentoring support. This finding reflects the need for principals' training programs in order to appreciate the need for giving room to staff's support and continuing professional development instead of burdening with school's paperwork and other administrative issues. Furthermore, relevant legislation has to be updated in order to optimize experienced and qualified school staff in terms of mentoring roles and responsibilities.

Research restrictions refer to sample size and selection, thus the results highlight trends on a specific type of schools and its' staff. In order to produce more generalized findings, future research should focus on primary and secondary teachers' views from a greater and representative sample so as to gain voice to policy makers for necessary initiatives in educational practice.

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## Mentoring-Based Learning Culture at Schools: Learning from School Administrator Mentoring

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this study is to examine the mentoring roles and behaviors of school administrators in the context of developing a learning culture in schools comprehensively and holistically. The study was designed as a phenomenological study and we utilized the interview as the data collection technique. A total number of 10 school administrators working at the public schools in Turkey participated in the study. Results revealed that mentoring is an essential component in the process of creating and maintaining an effective and collaborative learning culture. The findings of the research were discussed in the context of mentoring and learning culture with the theme of administrators' competence areas, perspective and contribution on learning and development, professional learning activities, mentoring roles, learning barriers, self-assessment and benefits of mentoring.*

### Article Info

#### Article History:

*Received  
September 18, 2019*

*Accepted  
July 25, 2020*

#### Keywords:

*School  
administrator,  
Mentoring, Learning  
culture, Mentoring-  
based learning  
culture, Qualitative  
research.*



**Cite as:**

Sezgin, F., Sonmez, E. & Nailliođlu Kaymak, M. (2020). Mentoring-based learning culture at schools: Learning from school administrator mentoring. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 5(3), 786-838. DOI: 10.30828/real/2020.3.6

### **Introduction**

School administrators have an essential role in creating learning-focused school environments (Deal & Peterson, 2009; Hallinger 2011; Tichnor Wagner, Harrison, & CohenVogel, 2016). The task of school administrators is to establish and organize a link among the purpose, reason and practice for the benefit of the students. This task contains several questions in its content: "How do the school administrators build and sustain learning, generate the conditions that will encourage learning, and what strategies should they use?" (Walker, 2010). School administrators indirectly influence the conditions for a productive learning culture and student learning (Boyce & Bowers, 2018; Day & Leithwood, 2007; Hallinger, Bickman, & Davis, 1996), and indirectly contribute to student learning (Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Accordingly, the school administrator can consult to various ways to provide a shared understanding and a sustainable learning culture (Walker, 2010). Among these ways, mentoring of school administrators is remarkable (Hudson, 2013; Portner, 2008).

School-based education mentoring is important in creating a school culture that focuses on teacher development (Bakiođlu, Hacifazliođlu, & Özcan, 2013). Mentoring-based learning can be seen as part of the information shared by organizational learning that promotes collaboration and cooperation of employees (Sabaityte, Davidaviciene, & Karpoviciute, 2020). Mentoring changes the

teaching and learning method and the relationships of partners (Margolin, 2011). In mentoring, identifying learning goals, supporting progression and increasing mentees' control over their learning take an important place (Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education [CUREE], 2010). In addition, mentoring roles or skills exhibited in different proportions are essential components that shape change and development (Aguilar Goxiola, 1984; Cohen, 1993, 2003; Galbraith & Cohen, 1997; Hall, Draper, Smith, & Bullough, 2008; Naillioğlu Kaymak, 2017; Sowell, 2017; Turpeinen, 2018).

Sustainable learning culture in the school is a product of a collective effort. Although the creation of this culture brings essential responsibility to all stakeholders of the school, the key actor is the school principal/administrator. Principals think that mentoring improves their professional values considerably as school leaders and provides the creation of an information-sharing culture that increases self-confidence levels and increases their practical knowledge of school leadership (Tahir, Said, Daud, Vazhathodi, & Khan, 2016).

School leadership is a challenging task, and new principals need to take comprehensive induction and mentoring programs that will drive a strong learning community and make schools safe by being sensitive to the culture in which they participate (Villani, 2006). In addition to being a leader of education to reach the teaching goals of the school by using human and material resources, the school administrator should manage his / her school in the best way (Hunt, 2012). A school leader is like a painter. S/he creates intuitive and original tasks for the school, creates favorable working conditions for teachers and guides teachers on democratic participation values (Alegre-de la Rosa & Villar Angulo, 2012). In this way, teachers are supported and developed professionally, teacher standards are



raised, and their learning is facilitated (Fransson, 2012). However, support to reduce the stress factors that lead to the retirement of new teachers and ensure their continuity to the profession can be provided through a mentoring process implemented in schools and the mentoring of competent school administrators who take part in this process (Bakiođlu et al., 2013).

The international literature about mentorship of school administrators, including school heads or principals, began to diversify with a relatively practical mentoring research. Research in Turkey showed that mentoring process is vital in the professional and social development of administrators in schools (Bakiođlu, Özcan, & Hacifazlıođlu, 2002; Balyer & Gündüz, 2012; Ereş, 2009; Sezgin, Koşar, & Er, 2014; Yılmaz, Kurşun & Köksal, 2015), the mentor roles of school principals are effective in increasing the academic success of the school (Yıldırım, 2013; Yıldırım & Yılmaz, 2013), the effect of trust is important on mentoring experiences of managers in different career stages (Bakiođlu et al., 2013), and to be more active in carrying out mentoring processes and creating a learning culture at school is expected from school principals (Ozdemir & Sahin, 2020). As mentioned above, the international literature emphasizes the importance of the mentoring of school administrators for the managers, their employees, and their schools. The relevant literature has seen the school principal as a person who is receiving and providing mentoring in a mentoring relationship. However, the studies examining the mentoring offered by the principal in the development of learning culture in schools with a mentoring mindset are quite limited. Thus, this study aims to examine the mentoring roles and behaviors of school administrators in the context of developing a learning culture in schools comprehensively and holistically.

The study was designed as a phenomenological study and utilized the interviews conducted with the school administrators. The findings of the research were discussed in the context of mentor school administrators' competence areas, perspectives and contributions on learning and development, professional learning activities and mentoring roles in creating a learning culture, learning barriers encountered in the implementation of mentoring in learning culture, and self-assessment and benefits of mentoring. The study will contribute to the literature to show the viewpoints of school administrators' regards to mentoring and creating and maintaining learning culture at schools. To discover viewpoints of school administrators on mentoring, and to maintain learning culture at schools can contribute to the acceleration of school development.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Mentoring of School Administrators**

The word mentor, which is used in the sense that a patient and an experienced counsellor can guide his less experienced young colleague (Playko, 1991; Shea, 2001), has preserved its original name from mythology and has been established without being translated into that language (Yirci, 2009). The mentor is an experienced employee who guides and directs the development of the talents and careers of the inexperienced youth entrusted to them in the fields of professional and personality development (Noe, 1988). A friend, in whom the mentor shares his knowledge and experience and supports him to become more successful in his field, is called "Protégé or Mentee" in the literature (Yıldırım & Şerefhanoglu, 2014). Mentoring has been one of the techniques for the school administrators to manage the school effectively. School administrators are volunteer



mentors who can renew themselves, technologically literate, scientific thinkers and writers with their knowledge and experience (Bakiođlu et al., 2002).

Mentoring has two dimensions: career and psychosocial development (Kram & Isabella, 1985). The purpose of the career function is to facilitate and improve the career development of the employee. In this function, the mentor coaches protect and supervise the person under his / her mentorship in dealing with the most challenging tasks. Mentoring is the heart of a successful professional development process, the first step in increasing the effectiveness of lifelong learning and teaching (Kutsyuruba, 2012). Mentoring relationship at school is of great importance for novice teachers to be successful in adjusting their teaching needs (Smith, 2002). A collective competence-based collaboration and collegial culture (Hopkins Thompson, 2000) are described as the best ways for teachers to learn by mentors. Formal collaboration/cooperation opportunities in effective schools with an influential learning culture are primarily created by administrators (Tichnor Wagner et al., 2016). According to Kuter (2016), cooperative mentoring is an important role of school mentors in the development of personal and professional skills of adults. On the other hand, it is important to make mentoring an integral part of basic career development, as principal preparation programs cannot provide effective content on how to deal with the challenges of the profession (Bakiođlu et al., 2013; Parylo, Zepeda, & Bengtson, 2012; Searby, 2010).

As a second dimension of mentoring, in psychosocial function, the mentor serves to improve the employee's identity, competence, and roles in the workplace (Kram, 1983). The experienced mentor provides technical and psychological support to the supervised

person in doing all these and finds ways to satisfy the employee with his/her work. Professional socialization and sponsorship behaviors include introducing the mentee to other colleagues and supporting the mentee's career (in obtaining a job, solving financial problems, researching, or publishing) (Aguilar-Goxiola, 1984). Through the role of sponsorship, the professional support provided to the mentee by mentors and the professional personal learning experiences of the mentee are increasing (Lankau & Scandura, 2002).

In the mentoring process, the mentor should have features such as mutual trust, understanding and empathy (Bakioğlu & Hacifazlıoğlu, 2000; Yılmaz et al., 2015). To ensure the welfare of the school as an organization, trust is one of the primary components. The support and appreciation of the principal for the work of the teachers help build trust in the school community. Teachers or counsellors who are appreciated by encouragement and support increase their sense of self-worth and motivation to invest in additional solutions to fulfil their assigned duties (Arar & Masry Harzallah, 2019). Mentors establish and maintain their relations with their mentees based on mutual trust, respect and professionalism. Such a behavior creates an environment that encourages honest sharing of ideas and needs (Portner, 2008). In a mentoring relationship, the collective mindset and solidarity promote individual development by easing to develop a sense of friendship, loyalty and attentiveness among mentors and mentees (Young, Alvermann, Kaste, Henderson, & Many, 2004).

The roles expected from the mentor in the mentoring relationship are also considered as mentoring roles of the mentor (Naillioğlu Kaymak, 2017; Naillioğlu Kaymak & Sezgin, 2020; Sezgin, 2002). Mentoring roles contain some concepts like role modelling,



advocacy, facilitating professional socialization, sponsorship, providing emotional support and active encouragement (Aguilar Goxiola, 1984; Klopff & Harrison, 1981; Levinson, 1978). Galbraith and Cohen (1997) define the roles of mentors in six dimensions: interest-based role, knowledge-based role, facilitator role, the role of confrontation, role modelling and role of supporting the vision of the mentee.

The mentor exhibiting role model behaviors serves as a role model of intellectual stimulus or career-related behavior; it conveys the values of the profession, serves as an example of admiration and imitation, and shapes the professional identities of the students (Aguilar Goxiola, 1984). On the other hand, it is the motivation that prominent behavior in the role model in Sezgin's (2002) and Galbraith and Cohen's studies (1997). Here is, the mentor aims to 'raise his thoughts and feelings, report belief in talent, ensure to take a safe risk, and provide opinions on his behavior' against the mentee.

The desire to be like the mentor may motivate the protégé to be more proactive in information-seeking (Lankau & Scandura, 2002; McCauley & Young, 1993; Morrison, 1993), and result in increased learning. Through modeling or observation (Bandura, 1977), protégés may strengthen work habits exhibited by mentors. The most basic behavior believed that advisor mentor teachers should have is that they are exemplary with their own lives (Naillioğlu Kaymak, 2017).

Another role of the school principal that can be associated with mentoring and learning culture is the role of being a source of learning. School principals perform as a resource provider, instructor, communicator, and presenter with in-depth knowledge and understanding of the evaluation of curriculum and teaching work in schools. Moreover, they have strengthened the development of

teachers with these roles (Shakeshaft & Grogan, 2013). According to Aravena (2018), mentors learned the importance of being a suitable respondent and source of knowledge. One of the six primary roles in mentoring roles displayed to mentees as a knowledge-based role (Cohen, 1993, 2003; Galbraith & Cohen, 1997). In the study of Sezgin et al. (2014), the role of resource provision is a role emphasized by the teachers and assistant principals involved in the knowledge-based upbringing behavior in the category of school principals.

Another component that can affect the mentoring of school principals is the competences that principals should have as a manager. School administrators should have three qualifications which are technical competencies which involve management processes, financial and organizational competencies; humane competencies which involve motivation, teamwork, individual psychology, and conceptual competencies which involve philosophy of education, management and organization theories and theories of leadership (Töremen & Kolay, 2003; Uslu, 2013). If management processes do not include the human dimension much in the organization, they may fail in managing a complex school structure and operation. Because of the dynamics of change in the external and internal environment, traditional competencies as human, technical and conceptual should be developed, and school principals' competencies include leadership, communication, program development, learning and teaching processes and performance assessment skills (Kondakci & Zayim, 2013).

In the literature, some of the mentoring researches point to manager competencies and behaviors within the context of mentoring. Kram and Isabella (1985) define mentoring functions as vocational support, psychosocial support, and role modelling.



According to Lankau and Scandura (2002), these functions create a sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in the role of a mentee in the organization. In the personal development sub-dimension of the mentoring scale of the principals (Yılmaz et al., 2015), developing empathy in human relationships, relieving the employees when facing with anxiety and stress, and valuing the personality of the employees are among the behaviors of mentor school principals.

### **Learning Culture at School**

Research shows that the development and effectiveness of schools are affected by many factors. These are school administrators' leadership approaches (Day & Leithwood, 2007; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood, Anderson, Mascall & Strauss, 2010), teacher-related characteristics (Darling Hammond, 2006; Tschannen Moran & Barr, 2004) and the learning capacity of the school (Collinson & Cook, 2007; Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998). Besides, the importance of a healthy and positive learning culture to support school development is emphasized in making meaningful changes in schools (Haiyan, Walker, & Xiaowei, 2017). Tichnor Wagner et al. (2016) concluded that the element (or direction) that differentiates effective schools from other schools is an influential learning culture. In this context, a strong learning culture consists of formal cooperation opportunities, common goals focused on universal high expectations, participatory leadership, and academic support to students. Garvin, Edmondson and Gino (2008) emphasized three main elements of a learning-oriented organization: a supportive learning environment, concrete learning processes and practices, and supportive leadership behavior.

Schein (2010) states that learning in organizations with a strong learning culture is seen as a value, and there is a "learning gene" in

the DNA of these organizations. Schein mentioned that with the world becoming more complex, organizations are more flexible and learning-oriented. He listed the characteristics that should be present in a culture that includes continuous learning and flexibility: proactivity, commitment to learning, positive assumptions about human nature (Y theory), belief that the environment can be managed, commitment to reality through pragmatism and questioning, positive orientation towards the future, full and clear engagement-related communication, commitment to cultural diversity, commitment to systemic thinking, and belief that cultural analysis is a valid lens set to understand and develop the world. Tichnor Wagner et al. (2016) examined learning culture in four dimensions. These dimensions include collaboration among adults, a community of learning among adults, support for the culture of learning among adults, and the culture of learning among students. In schools with a productive learning culture, there are high expectations that all students will succeed. These schools seek to promote a learning culture that prioritizes learning and success. In these schools, students are responsible for their learning. School leaders adopt a participatory understanding and are encouraging and supportive for cooperation (Tichnor Wagner et al., 2016). Successful instructional leaders care about empowering teachers by talking to them about teaching processes, encouraging collaboration/cooperation among teachers, empowering them by decision-making, autonomy, and self-efficacy (Walker, 2010). Successful teaching leaders encourage teachers and students to form a learning community (Knapp, Copland, & Talbert, 2003). Activities carried out together are important in establishing learning relationships in the institution. Working together, taking part in joint projects and jobs can be part of the learning relationship at work.



Eating together, exchanging opinions, training together or going on other trips provide learning relationships among people (Lim, 2012).

### **Benefits of Mentoring for Creating a Learning Culture**

The mentoring practice that includes collaborative work culture becomes the main component of the teaching and learning program and changes the teaching and learning method and the relationships of the partners by creating new learning environment and opportunities in the community, also by providing an environment for innovative ideas and problem-solving (Margolin, 2011). Mentoring is a professional development attempt to increase knowledge transfer among colleagues, and it helps to create a learning culture. It differs from other professional development interventions, such as education, management, consulting, and coaching (Morgan & Rochford, 2017). Besides, leadership by communicating with people emerged as the main feature of mentoring and learning (Lim, 2005). While communicating, teachers who became school principals after the mentoring experience can learn how to build a sense of trust from the mentors who act as essential models devoted to education (Lim, 2012).

The impact of coaching and mentoring activities on organizations was mostly on the organization's culture. The positive effects of mentoring and coaching of school administrators on mentees are increased reflectivity and clarity of thinking, improved psychological well-being and trust, better problem-solving skills, gains in practitioner knowledge and skills, improved application sharing, better communication and relationships, more positive attitudes towards professional and career development and self-management and self-learning skills. The most critical reflection of coaching and mentoring activities in educational organizations and

the requirements for the promotion of learning culture is that 'reflection encouraged by practical mentoring and coaching approaches promotes a supportive learning culture in organizations' (Lord, Atkinson, & Mitchell, 2008).

Mentoring is a useful tool in creating a long-term sustainable learning culture (Morgan & Rochford, 2017). It is enabling learning communities to have a more positive understanding of the role of cooperation in learning (Mullen, 2003; Mullen & Tuten, 2010) and to achieve self-learning (Bennetts, 1995; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Portner, 2008). It lets mentees to make a change in the self-organized learning from external regulation to guidance-based self-regulation (Schunk & Mullen, 2013). A mentoring practice that includes a systematic co-working culture based on co-learning and development can change the structure, method, and relationships of the partners in the teaching and learning program (Margolin, 2011). School principals' perspective on learning and development is essential in the effective functioning of mentoring programs and in increasing the effectiveness of lifelong learning and teaching (Kutsyuruba, 2012).

Mentoring also has various contributions to executives who take the role of educational leaders. Training leaders see mentoring sessions as information sharing sessions between mentees and mentors. In order to help teachers achieve the goals and objectives of the school, practical experience is significant (Tahir et al., 2016). Besides, mentoring activities support the learning culture of an organization and increase the sense of professionalism. Therefore, the benefit for schools involved in mentoring practice is the transferability of mentoring skills to other aspects of school settings. A school staff, enriched with mentoring experience and managed by senior mentors, is likely to provide more natural change and



improvement. When mentoring and coaching approaches are 'harmonized' to the context and ethos of an organization, the impacts may be more significant, especially around collaborative learning culture. Therefore, mentoring and coaching training for school leaders can be incredibly efficient in influencing and changing school culture (Lord et al., 2008).

Mentors personally benefit from the mentoring process. One of the important benefits of mentoring for mentors is increased personal satisfaction (Ragins & Verbos, 2007). In particular, mentors' personal satisfaction increases when they think they help others improve their job performance (Schechter & Firuz, 2015) and when they present and share personal experiences that are considered to be beneficial for their colleagues (Crow, 2006). Similarly, Bolam, McMahon, Pocklington and Weindling (1995) reported four benefits of mentoring for mentors as interacting with colleagues and adapting new knowledge, learning about good and bad leadership practices, networking with colleagues, and gaining opportunities to continue professional development. One of the benefits that mentorship provides to the mentor is the personal satisfaction and job satisfaction of seeing that prospective teachers/students achieve something, increased enthusiasm, motivation, and energy to teach (Botha, 2012).

### **Methodology**

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the mentoring roles and behaviors of school administrators in creating and developing a learning culture in schools. By employing qualitative modes of enquiry, this study follows a phenomenology design. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) argued that a phenomenological study enables to reveal various reactions or perceptions of a

phenomenon. Van Manen (2014) argued that “phenomenology aims to grasp the exclusively singular aspects (identity/essence/otherness) of a phenomenon or event.” In this study, the phenomenology design was employed because it was intended to elucidate the views, experiences, and perceptions of school administrators on creating and developing a learning culture in schools.

The participants of this study are determined by criterion sampling method and they are school administrators who have at least three years of school management experience. Mentoring, by its nature, involves the process of supporting the inexperienced by the experienced. At least three years of experience in school administration has been chosen because it can be a period that can affect both mentoring and shaping the learning culture of the school.

Maximum diversity method – namely diversity in sample selection to allow for a more excellent range of application of the findings- have been applied to reveal different views, thoughts, and perceptions (Merriam, 2009). Thus, the participants were diversified in terms of demographic characteristics such as gender (male, female), education status (undergraduate, master, PhD), experiences (very experienced, less experienced) and school type (primary, secondary, high school). Table 1 shows the participant information.



Table 1.  
*Participant information*

Participants	Gender	Education status	Seniority of school administration	Seniority of school administration at their school	School type
SA1	M	Undergraduate	15 years	3 months	Secondary school
SA2	F	Undergraduate	5 years	3 years	Primary school
SA3	M	Master	5 years	3 years	Primary school
SA4	M	Master	8 years	2 months	Primary school
SA5	M	Master	5 years	5 years	Primary school
SA6	M	Undergraduate	23 years	3 months	Secondary school
SA7	M	PhD	8 years	5 years	High school
SA8	M	Master	13 years	5 years	Primary school
SA9	M	Master	21 years	3 years	Primary school
SA10	M	Master	16 years	4 years	High school

Note: SA: school administrator, F: female, M: male

One of the participants is a female school administrator. In Turkey, only 7.2% of school principals are female (OECD, 2019). This data is reflected in the number of female participants in the study. Most of the participants have graduate degree ( $n = 7$ ). Also, three participants have undergraduate degree. When the seniority of the participants is examined, it offers a variety from very experienced (23 years) to less experienced (5 years). Similarly, the seniority of school administrators in their schools is varied (from 2 months to 5 years).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with school administrators. Patton (2002) argued that the aim of interviewing is to allow the researcher to get into the other person's perspective. Therefore, the opinions, thoughts and perceptions of school administrators were examined in depth through the interview technique. Interview questions were determined with a three-step strategy. Firstly, the researchers created an interview question pool of twenty questions based on the relevant literature on mentoring and learning culture. Secondly, a field expert and a language expert examined the questions in the question pool. Based on their views, some questions were removed while some questions were changed. Finally, a pilot interview was held with two school administrators to determine the understandability and appropriateness of the questions. After these interviews, the question form was finalized. Typical questions are *"As a school administrator, what is your perspective on learning and development? Do you contribute to the learning and development of someone or are you willing to learn from others? What do you think about learning and developing together in school?"* A total of 10 interviews with school administrators were conducted face to face. Interviews were held at pre-determined appointment times in the schools of the participants. The interviews took about 60 minutes, except for one of them; they were audio-recorded with the permission of the participants.

Content analysis was conducted in analysing the data. In the content analysis, the original codes, categories and themes of the research are obtained from the data collected within the scope of the research. This analysis technique contributes to the researchers to interpret and summarize the obtained data (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). The qualitative data were analysed by the researchers in a three-stage strategy: (i) transcription, (ii) reading each text (texts produced as a



result of transcription) in detail and coding according to pre-developed initial code list, and (iii) reaching significant themes from the codes and reporting findings. Firstly, researchers transcribed audio-recordings verbatim. Following transcription of the audio-recordings, each text was read in detail by two researchers. Subsequently, the interviews were coded by utilizing the code list. In the coding process, some codes were changed, some of them were removed, and new codes were generated. Finally, similar codes were combined, significant themes in the mentoring process were determined, and the report of findings was written.

In qualitative research, it is vital to collect highly valid and reliable data. In this study, various strategies have been used to reach valid and reliable results. Firstly, in this study, the expert review was used in order to gain a different perspective and improve the quality of the study process. Therefore, two qualitative research experts supported us during the examination of the interview form and presentation of the findings. Secondly, the triangulation strategy was used to increase the consistency and intelligibility of the research and to obtain various perspectives. Thirdly, the researchers presented the opinions of the participants in full by making detailed description (or quotations) in the reporting of the findings. Finally, the consistency strategy was used to achieve more reliable results. Two researchers (author 2 and author 3) carried out the coding and conceptualization processes of the data obtained from the participants separately. The consistency of the coding and conceptualizations produced by both researchers was determined according to the Miles and Huberman formula. In this model, a similarity rate called internal consistency and conceptualized as the consensus among coders is reached. The similarity rate reached in this study is 84% according to this formula. The consensus between coders is expected to be at least 80%. In this

respect, it can be said that there is consistency between coders (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

## Results

### Mentor School Administrators' Competence Areas (1)

In the theme of mentor school administrators' competence areas, the findings were grouped into 'conceptual, human and technical competence areas' categories. The prominent codes in mentor school administrators' views on 'conceptual competence area' are to demonstrate a coherent/inclusive management approach, to participate actively, to take initiative, to have a visionary perspective, to create a common goal (to raise awareness about goals, to talk about goals, to ensure participating in goals), to make a joint decision, and to evaluate whether the goals have been achieved. It was stated by the participants that all stakeholders should have a say in the school and that managing together is a more accurate and easy management style. The participant views on this subject are as follows:

*Authority increases as it is shared. I think it is a more accurate and easy way to manage the school with teachers and parents. You can't do anything alone. We need to get everyone involved. (SA4)*

The codes that come to the forefront in 'human competence area' can be expressed as giving psychological support to their employees, motivating them, giving importance to honesty, kindness, creating a positive school climate, adopting fair and humane management and valuing the individual. Finally, 'technical competencies area' includes competences such as dominating the legislation, creating resources, identifying, and coordinating business processes, benefiting from technology and displaying professional behaviors.



## **Mentor School Administrator's Perspective and Contribution on Learning and Development (2)**

In the theme of mentor school administrator's perspective and contribution on learning and development, the findings were grouped into 'learning and development perspective' and 'contribution to learning and development' categories. Codes that stand out in their views on 'learning and development perspective' are being open to learning, adapting to the changing world, valorizing the learner, co-learning and development. According to the participants, to work as a mentor, the administrator should be open to continuous learning, renew herself and be equipped to adapt to changing conditions. However, it is emphasized that the mentor school administrator should value the learner, provide the necessary facilities for her/his and learn and develop with all employees. Moreover, it was stated that the mentor administrator should conduct the learning process with a systematic working strategy and develop himself personally. The participant views on this subject are as follows:

*I think people should be open to learning. The teaching role or the developing role should not be only on the school administrator or school principal. The school administrator should also look at this. What can I learn too? For example, he should ask for what I can learn from everyone. (SA7)*

Codes that stand out in school administrators' views on 'contribution to learning and development' are supporting learning, encouraging learning, caring about the contribution to learning and leading the learning, and reflecting the excitement of learning. Some participants stated that they cared about contributing to the learning and development of others, leading to learning, and reflecting the

excitement of learning. One of the participant views on contribution to learning and development are as follows:

*If development and learning have slowed down in an institution, it will, of course, be difficult for the institution to develop and to work towards improving its vision. If someone learns that excitement while learning, to see it in the eyes of that person and that stakeholder, of course, we will be very pleased. (SA9)*

### **Professional Learning Activities in Creating Learning Culture (3)**

The findings obtained in the theme of ‘professional learning activities in creating learning culture’ are grouped in the categories of ‘evaluation of existing professional learning activities’, ‘personal and institutional learning activities’ and ‘support to career development’. The professional learning activities mentioned by administrators are in-service training, workshops and seminars conducted by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and provincial organizations, attended by teachers and administrators. The prominent codes in ‘evaluation of professional learning activities’ are insufficient programs and non-professional studies, the problem of time, difficulty in creating a suitable environment for learning, closed management approach to learning. The participant views on this subject are as follows:

*I do not think the current professional learning works very well. Because there are no suitable programs to develop teachers at the moment by the MoNE or provincial organizations. (SA7)*

Codes that stated by school administrators on the category of ‘personal and institutional learning activities’ are academic training (congresses, conferences, workshops, seminars, postgraduate training, etc.), in-service training (central and local training), specialist training (investigator, therapist, etc.), group meetings,



cultural visits (museum visits), civil society activities, arts, sports and social activity courses. The aims of the administrators to participate in these activities in and out of school are to increase the level of personal knowledge (e.g. foreign language) and skills, to improve their career and/or to gain knowledge and skills that will contribute to corporate work and operation. Institutional learning activities are being carried out with stakeholders both inside and outside the school. Almost all of the participants stated that they made a significant effort to involve employees in institutional learning activities such as conferences and seminars in line with the needs of teachers, various courses and in-service training. Some participant views on the subject are as follows:

*I apply for in-service activities. I applied to in-service training to eliminate my lack of knowledge about project writing. (SA2)*

*When you ask for learning and development together at school, I think of the activities implemented in the school. However, if each individual provides his / her personal development, learning and development can be achieved together in school. (SA10)*

Finally, in the 'support to career development' category, school administrators stated that they care and support their employees' career development to create an effective learning culture. In this context, the majority of the participants firstly stated that it is valuable to be an example to the teachers and then need to encourage the teachers for getting a graduate education. Most of them stated that therefore they were getting a graduate education. The participant views on this subject are as follows:

*...I encourage them to do graduate studies. I have teachers that I refer to and assist in their interviews. I sent my teacher to meet my teachers at the university, I was a reference. We provide convenience for teachers in their*

*graduate studies. One day or afternoon in the schedule of teachers are emptied.  
(SA1)*

#### **Mentoring Roles in Creating Learning Culture (4)**

In the theme of 'mentoring roles in creating a learning culture', participants' views were determined in seven categories. These are 'being a learning resource role', 'cooperation role', 'providing feedback role', 'social capital provision and sharing role', 'being a role model', 'development and enculturation role' and 'intellectual stimulation role'.

##### ***Being a learning resource role***

This role has been examined in three categories as being a source of communication, information, and experience expert. To be a source of communication, administrators use of correct and constructive language in relationships, especially with the parents. They stated that as a communication expert, they conveyed their knowledge and skills to teachers about how to establish communication. To be a source of information, they share knowledge on education and training issues, legislation and official correspondence and teaching field. They emphasized that they are constantly renewing themselves, researching and supporting the employees on their demands to be a source of information for teachers. Finally, they stated that they conveyed their experiences to teachers in and outside of the school and made them gain different perspectives as a source of experience. They said that working in different socio-economic regions, in different schools and with different teachers make them gain experience. The following statements are examples of school administrators' views as a source of learning:



*I see it as a source of experience. Because every year you go through different events. You encounter different sources of stress. You face crisis situations. Moreover, there are things you get from here, I think it is more important to give them to the staff as a source of experience. (SA9)*

### **Cooperation role**

Cooperation role is grouped into the sub-categories of 'coordinating', 'monitoring and evaluation', 'supporting' and 'creating colleague solidarity'. In the cooperation role, it has come to the forefront to organize meetings suitable for teaching purposes and to coordinate teaching activities. In addition, the school administrators stated that they formed teams to develop colleagues' solidarity among teachers, and they matched experienced and inexperienced teachers in these teams. Furthermore, issues such as monitoring and evaluating the teaching process and teachers' learning development and directing teachers to in-service activities and school rituals were emphasized. The following are participatory views on vocational learning and improving cooperation:

*I think that teachers' learning at school is based on colleague solidarity. Learning takes place at an activity where experienced teachers match with less experienced teachers. (SA10)*

### **Providing feedback role**

The providing feedback role to create an effective learning culture based on the opinions of school administrators is considered valuable. The findings obtained in this category are grouped into sub-categories of 'feedback subjects' and 'feedback purposes'. Feedback subjects are warnings on class attendance, school shift, and so on issues, assessment of in-school activities, assessment of children's behavior, classroom management, classroom visits and course supervisions. However, school administrators provide feedback for

specific purposes. The codes for these feedback purposes are analyzing the current situation, giving positive feedback, consultation (one-to-one interview), verbal constructive stimulation/criticism, reward (verbal or written thank and appreciate praise) and developing self-awareness. Administrators stated that they observed teachers in in-school processes such as on duty, entry and exit, activities at school, and behaviors with students. Also, they made classroom visits and therefore observed teachers' classroom management skills such as time management, teaching methods and techniques, and relations with students. After the observations, the school administrators stated that they carried out one-to-one interviews with teachers and made a situation assessment with their providing feedback role. Some participant views on providing feedback role are as follows:

*How do you know where you are without feedback. (SA6)*

*...For example, during a class visit, I noted the positive things I saw in the back of my grade sheet. I have written positive features such as materials, student behavior, class dominance. After class observation, I read to my teacher friend what I wrote. He said there's nothing negative here. I said these are the positive things we've seen. Other than that, I talked about the negative things I saw, I had suggestions...I use feedback without forgetting that the other person is our colleague, without breaking his heart. (SA4)*

### ***Social capital provision and sharing role***

Within the scope of social capital provision and sharing role, sub-categories of 'social capital acquisition and contribution' and 'reflection of social capital to teachers' have been established. Firstly, the sub-category of social capital acquisition and contribution includes the views of the administrator on ways of acquiring social networks and the contributions of the social capital to himself. Almost all school administrators stated that their social environment



and networks were exceptionally large. School administrators stated that they obtained their social capital from past or ongoing union relations, relations during graduate or postgraduate education and/or personal social relations. Moreover, it was emphasized that social capital contributes to broadening the point of view, enabling to see the differences, and seizing the opportunity to learn from others. Secondly, in the sub-category of the reflection of social capital to the teachers, it is mentioned about the reflections of the social capital of the school administrators on the teachers. In this context, opinions were expressed on being a reference for teachers and creating various ways of interaction. A participant view on the role of social capital provision and sharing is as follows:

*I have a very wide social network because I was the president of the union before. My recognition is high. I have a network of bureaucracy, principals, and teachers... In the evenings, we do consultations with my friends. I'm in constant communication... I invite school principals, provincial district directors and senior bureaucrats to the programs I do at my school. I make my teacher friends interact with my environment through such means. (SA4)*

### ***Being a role model***

The findings obtained in being a role model were grouped into 'the exemplary life role model' and 'professional role model' subcategories. Firstly, in the exemplary life role model sub-category, it was stated that being presentable, obeying working hours, being impartial and fair, paying attention to behaviors (being kind) and being sincere. Secondly, the professional role model sub-category focuses on field expertise, successful management characteristics, demonstrating exemplary executive behaviors, and becoming a training leader role model. Here are some views on the role of role model:

*As an education leader, we must be role models... I think I'm a role model for teachers. I'm trying to be a role model with my dress, coming before them in the morning, chatting with them and getting involved. (SA1)*

### ***Development and enculturation role***

Another mentoring role of school administrator was determined as 'development and enculturation role'. The findings obtained in this category are grouped into 'orientation', 'developing a sense of belonging', and 'facilitating guidance' sub-categories. Within the scope of the orientation, the school principals carry out studies to welcome, recognize, introduce, and integrate the teacher, introduce the school and the environment, and provide appropriate working environments. However, codes of developing a sense of belonging are organizing activities, ensuring family participation, and supporting participation. School administrators organize and participate in activities for teachers such as breakfast days and celebrations on special days to adapt to school and to develop a sense of belonging to the school. The activities support the participation of teachers with their families to establish more genuine social interactions. Some school administrators stated that they guide teachers on issues such as bureaucratic issues, communication with parents, classroom management, and sharing innovative practices. Some participant views on the role of development and enculturation are presented below:

*If we know that the new teacher will come, I will greet him with flowers at the door when the teacher arrives. (SA1)*

*I make informative speeches about professional and bureaucratic procedures, whether or not they concern them. From time to time I host them in my room, I want them to see the functioning. (SA9)*



### *Intellectual stimulation role*

In this role two categories were determined as 'developing teachers' intellectual accumulation' and 'to gain them intellectual rich perspective'. Within the scope of developing teachers' intellectual background, administrators encourage teachers to participate in professional studies, follow professional and academic publications, and research and monitor innovative practices. One participant's say, "I think that the school principal should encourage our teachers to think differently. I think they need to give them a new direction." (SA8) is vital to show that school administrators should have a "stimulating" role for teachers. Participants stated some codes for the category of "gaining intellectual rich perspective to teachers " such as encouraging, developing abstract thinking-giving depth, paving the way and giving different examples, suggesting a multifaceted look.

### **Learning Barriers Encountered in The Implementation of Mentoring in Learning Culture (5)**

School administrators addressed various barriers in the theme of 'learning barriers encountered in the implementation of mentoring in learning culture'. These barriers were examined in two categories: 'personal problems with teacher characteristics' and 'time and space constraints'. School administrators emphasized teacher characteristics most among the learning barriers. Accordingly, participants often think that the teacher structure, which is closed to learning and change, hinders learning processes in the school. In particular, the teachers who are reluctant towards professional development, approaching retirement (in the upper age group), sees himself self-sufficient, using traditional teaching methods were not involved in learning processes at school. Some managers expressed the concept of peer opposition. According to this, teachers who are closed to

learning and development at school negatively affect other teachers, and they form a resistance group to the professional learning activities in the school. The other obstacles in terms of teacher characteristics are teachers who are experiencing burnout with incompatible teacher structure. Learning barriers related to teacher characteristics are stated as being closed to learning and change, the structure of old and discordant teachers, childcare, problems in the career system, colleagues' opposition and professional burnout. In this context, they mentioned the perception of lack of knowledge and experience and perceptual and generational conflicts. Accordingly, administrators emphasized that the inadequacy of the school in terms of physical facilities such as classrooms, conference halls, sports halls and meeting rooms caused some problems. On the other hand, some participants stated that lack of time and excessive workload prevent learning processes. They stated that the school's management, technique, care, parent relations and other tasks lead to a significant waste of time. Therefore, they have difficulty in monitoring the development and learning of teachers. Below are some views on the learning barriers encountered in the implementation of mentoring in learning culture:

*The teacher profile in the school consists of teachers in the middle and upper age group. They don't want to get tired. There is resistance to innovations due to the retired teacher profile...(SA1)*

*I talk to teachers all the time, I recommend some website. However, teachers have a state of despair. They do not think that what they have learned will contribute. There is no career step in teaching...(SA4)*

*In national education, teachers are mainly female. I think women performance in education falls after she gets married and has a child. (SA6)*

*As a senior administrator in terms of my professional work-life, I can experience perceptual and generational conflicts in my dialogue with a teacher friend who is close to retirement during the mentoring process. (SA9)*

### **Self-Assessment and Benefits of Mentoring (6)**

The findings obtained in this theme are grouped in the categories of 'self-assessment of mentoring' and 'benefits of mentoring'. In the category of 'self-assessment', the school administrators stated the strengths and weaknesses of their mentoring. School administrators expressed their strengths in the mentoring process primarily as an empathic approach, adaptation to teamwork, cooperation and influence. School administrators generally think that they have practical communication skills, are prone to cooperation and can influence employees through persuasion. They also stated taking an impartial and fair approach as their strengths. However, school administrators also think that they have some weaknesses in the mentoring process. Some participants stated that they lacked in subjects such as other teaching field knowledge and adult education skills, while others stated that they were impatient. One participant sees himself as weak in the mentoring process as he does not have the authority to reward employees, such as giving appreciation or certificates to employees. Some participants' views on their strengths and weaknesses in the mentoring process are as follows:

*I think I'm good with an empathetic approach... In any crisis, I try to act by thinking about the situation of our friend in front of us, that is, by calculating the mood at that moment. (SA9)*

*If you do not adopt a neutral and fair approach, you cannot act as a manager. (SA1)*

*I am an energetic person with high communication skills...(SA2)*

*I feel that we are inadequate because it is not in our hands to reward, that is, to give a certificate of appreciation. (SA10)*

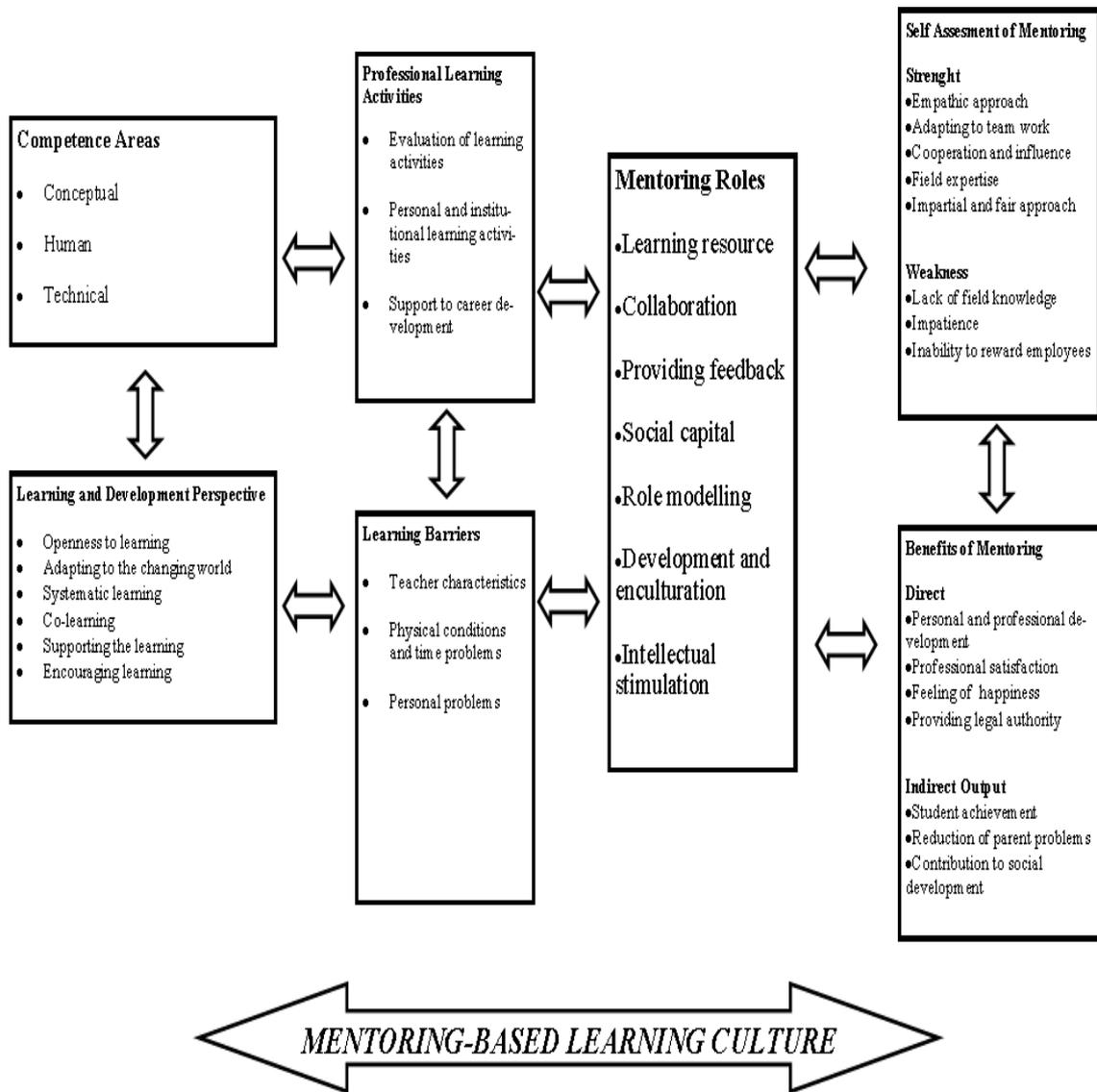
In the category of 'benefits of mentoring' the school administrators stated that the mentoring process has many direct and

indirect benefits both individually and organizationally. Direct benefits stated by school administrators are the personal and professional development of them and the teachers, the happiness of raising someone, the professional satisfaction and the rising legal authority power of the administrators in the school. According to the administrators, one of the essential components of the mentoring process is the personal and professional training of the mentee. In the mentoring process, administrators have emphasized that they have made themselves accepted by employees through the transfer of knowledge and experience. Thus, they stated that their legitimacy of authority was ensured at school. The indirect benefits were emphasized as the increase of student achievement as a result of the teacher's self-training, reduction of problems experienced with parents and rising social development. Some participant views within the scope of this finding are as follows:

*Reduction in problems with parents, complaints are reduced. My mentoring for teachers makes them grow. The more the teacher develops himself, the less problems with the parents are experienced and I get less complaints and less problems. (SA5)*

Figure 1

*Mentoring-Based Learning Culture Model (How mentoring was used by school administrators to support a professional learning culture)*



## **Discussion and Conclusion**

This study aims to examine the mentoring roles and behaviors exhibited by school administrators in the context of creating and the development of learning culture in schools comprehensively and holistically. The findings of the research were discussed in the context of mentoring and learning culture with the theme of administrators' competence areas, perspectives and contribution on learning and development, professional learning activities, mentoring roles, learning barriers, self-assessment, and benefits of mentoring. The conclusions of the study primarily were handled according to the findings of themes, and then holistically. The mentoring of school administrators, the learning culture in schools, and the mentoring experiences and benefits of school administrators in the creation of this culture have been utilized in the analysis of the conceptual framework. In the study, a mentoring-based learning culture model was created (Figure 1).

In the theme of competence areas as conceptual, human and technical is emphasized by school administrators in this study. The administrators who have conceptual competences set high goals, take initiatives for creating shared goals and evaluate whether the goals have been achieved. The conceptual competences can be stated as the ability of the school administrator to think abstractly and to look at the organization as a whole. Also, it may be said that the school administrators adopt a distributive leadership approach and care about making joint decisions with this competence. This conclusion is consistent with literature. Tahir et al. (2016) stated that in the model they developed, distributive leadership must be practically applied for successful mentoring. Lim (2012) stated that the role of school principals who are mentors in Singapore is to observe, to be a role



model, to work in collaboration and to provide opportunities for employees. In the findings of the human competence area of administrators, the emphasis has been placed on giving psychological support, motivating, and valuing the individual. The human competences can be seen as the ability to work in harmony and effectiveness with other people and to guide and help them come to the fore in the school. It can be said that the codes regard to human competence area are partly consistent with the literature (Kram & Isabella, 1985; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Töremen & Kolay, 2003; Yılmaz, et al., 2015). Under the heading of technical competencies, the technical knowledge and skills that the administrator must have in order to perform his / her administrative duties are explained. In this direction, the knowledge, methods, and techniques of the mentor school administrator about the internal and external processes are emphasized. It can be said that the codes regard to technical competence area are largely consistent with the literature (Töremen & Kolay, 2003; Kondakci & Zayim, 2013).

In the theme of mentor school administrator's perspective and contribution to learning and development, two categories were identified as perspectives and contributions to learning and development. In the category of 'learning and development perspective', the emphasis was placed on mentoring school principals being open to learning in general and adapting to change. According to the mentor school administrators, the point of view to learning and development and the concrete contributions provided are the guiding factors in the formation and development of learning culture in organizations. In this context, mentor school administrators should be individuals who are open to learning and change, have continuous learning skills, renew themselves and learn to learn. The importance of the view of "being open to learning" is expressed in the literature

(Hawkey, 1998; Sinclair, 2003). The mentors must be selected among those willing to develop themselves with a professional perspective and to contribute to the development of others (Daloz, 2012). The idea of “adapting to the changing world” is explained by the concept of “boundaryless career” as an awareness of change. The ability to change through normal development and learning is indispensable for a successful career (Hall, 1996). The administrators’ views on the learner reveal that the importance given to the learner as a mentor opens the doors of communication towards the culture of learning and development in the school. This approach, which one of the school administrators (SA7) expresses as ‘valuing or caring’ has been expressed in Bakioğlu et al. (2013) study as ‘showing care in the mentoring relationship’. The prominent view in administrator views on co-learning and development is that firstly personal development and then learning, and development together will emerge. This finding is consistent with the literature (Kutsyuruba, 2012; Margolin, 2011; Mullen, 2003; Mullen & Tuten, 2010). The understanding of ‘there is much to learn from colleagues (SA1)’ constitutes a mentoring perspective based on the teachers ‘and administrators’ efforts to develop their colleagues as a professional responsibility. Thus, a school culture based on participatory, open to learning and development, cooperative and cooperative learning is formed, and the professional development of teachers is supported.

In the category of ‘contributions to learning and development’, the emphasis was placed on administrators’ supportive and encouraging understanding for their employees to participate in learning processes such as graduate and in-service training. The codes that regard to ‘contributions to learning and development’ category are largely consistent with literature (Knapp et al., 2003; Walker, 2010). However, the finding of reflecting the excitement of



learning code reached in the study was described by Bolam et al. (1995) in the literature as an important mentor manager characteristic of having an open, warm and enthusiastic behavior.

In the theme of 'professional learning activities in creating learning culture', the majority of school administrators stated that they attach importance to professional learning activities to institutionalize learning and create an influential learning culture. Additionally, they emphasized that they participate consciously and willingly in personal learning activities and are aware of the value of learning. These findings are consistent with Lim (2012) regarding personal and institutional learning activities.

The majority of school principals have argued that employees care and support their career development in creating a productive learning culture. In this context, they believe the importance of being exemplary in terms of learning and development, encouraging and facilitating career development was emphasized. Findings of 'support to career development' category are consistent with the literature. İbrahimođlu (2013) concludes that while the mentor's extensive network of relationships supports the employee to establish new relationships within the organization, career support and psychosocial support can also reinforce the employee's sense of constant effort and persistence. The supporting career development behavior of school administrators is partly similar to vision support role behaviors (Galbraith & Cohen, 1997) displayed in mentoring roles.

In order to create a productive learning culture in schools, school administrators stated that they exhibited various mentoring roles. These roles are being a source of communication, information and experience as an expert. As a communication expert, they

provide guidance to teachers when and where necessary, especially in the use of correct and constructive language. They have mentioned that they are a source of information, especially in terms of education and training issues, legislation and official correspondence and teaching field. Finally, as being a source of experience, they convey their daily routines and professional experiences to their staff. The views that regard to 'being a learning resource role' category are largely consistent with the literature (Aravena, 2018; Cohen, 1993, 2003; Galbraith & Cohen, 1997; Sezgin et al., 2014; Shakeshaft & Grogan, 2013).

In cooperation role, the school administrators stated that they took initiatives such as coordinating, creating colleague solidarity, supporting and promoting teachers for their learning. They emphasized that they matched experienced and inexperienced teachers in teams and formed certain rituals. Thus, they create suitable environments for teachers to build bridges for learning culture with their cooperation role. These views that regard to 'cooperation role' category is largely consistent with literature (Hopkins Thompson, 2000; Kuter, 2006; Tichnor Wagner et. al, 2016). Additionally, in Aravena's (2018) study, the role of school principals to be supporters to new principals includes a more general definition than the role of support in developing the cooperation described in this study. Similarly, empowering and supporting are some of the five main themes that Schechter and Firuz (2015) found in the metaphors of mentoring.

In the study, the providing feedback role is considered valuable to create an effective learning culture by administrators. And most of the administrators stated that they were careful about giving constructive feedback. Feedback (Bolam et al., 1995) and especially



constructive feedback (Naillioğlu Kaymak, 2017) are priorities of a good mentor. Galbraith and Cohen (1997) argued that a mentor in the context of interest-based mentoring offers descriptive observational feedback and constructive feedback in the confrontational role.

School administrators emphasized the importance of social capital provision and sharing as another mentoring role in the personal or institutional learning process. In this role, the administrator is the person who contributes to the social capital that s/he and her/his environment has. Most of the administrators want to share their social capital with the employees of the institution to provide public benefit and cooperation and coordination instead of their own interests. They stated that these social networks were formed through union works, graduate education process and personal social environment. This finding evokes Coleman's (1988) concept of solidarity social capital. The social capital provision and sharing role is similar to that of the mentor's definition of professional socialization and sponsorship role which contain to introduce the mentee with other colleagues and to support the career of the mentee (Aguilar Goxiola, 1984; Klopff and Harrison, 1981; Levinson, 1978; Noe, 1988).

The school administrators emphasized that they were trying to be role models to the employees in the mentoring process to create an effective learning culture as their educational leader. However, they strive to provide an exemplary life and become a role model from a professional perspective. In this direction, they stated that they are trying to present an exemplary life in cases such as being presentable, obeying working hours, being impartial and fair, paying attention to behaviors (being kind) and being sincere. Findings of being professional role model are consistent with the literature (Aguilar

Goxiola, 1984; Scandura, 2002). The finding of being sincere as a mentor administrator is consistent with Yildirim's (2013) study.

Another mentoring role used by school administrators is 'development and enculturation role'. School administrators stated that they use strategies such as orientation, sense of belonging, and facilitating guidance to ensure teachers' personal and professional development and adaptation to school culture in the process of creating a learning culture. Some participants stated that they were working to develop a sense of belonging on teachers to the school to make the orientation process more effective. Also, the activities establish an enculturation environment for the school staff and administrators to transfer their culture to each other. Lydiah and Nasongo (2009) stated that the school's learning climate has improved with the participation of headteachers in the activities.

Finally, the role of intellectual stimulation mentoring was determined in this study. Within the scope of this role, codes about developing teachers' intellectual accumulation and to gain them intellectual rich perspective have emerged. These codes are compatible with various studies in the literature. In the study of Aguilar (1984), the number of grown in both sexes stating that mentoring has increased their skills and intellectual developments are 85% (highest rate). Similarly, 84% stated that mentors provided them with intellectual stimulation. According to Bakioğlu et al. (2013), the mentor, in the dimension of critical friendship, exhibits a sincere attitude in the communication with a mentee and uses strategies for the mentee to examine and criticize himself carefully. Aravena (2018) concluded that school principals play the role of a critical friend, who supports the development of intellectual inquiry into new principals.



In the process of creating an effective learning culture in schools, mentor administrators stated that they faced some learning barriers. These are personal problems with teacher characteristics and time and space constraints. When the participant views are examined, the most emphasized learning barrier is related to teacher characteristics as being closed to learning and change, the structure of old and discordant teachers. Bolam et al. (1995) and Luecke (2004) mentioned the importance of harmonious personality structure for the success of the mentoring process. A willingness to learn is defined among the characteristics of a successful mentee determined by executive mentors (Walker, Croy & Tin, 1993). School administrators talked about the physical conditions of the school and learning barriers related to the problem of time. School administrators stated that time and space constraints hindered learning processes. Time constrain is one of the most frequently mentioned problems in the literature during the mentoring process (Aguilar Goxiola, 1984; Nailliođlu Kaymak, 2017; Noe, 1988; Tahir et al., 2016). Similarly, according to Kuter (2016), the excessive workload of teaching affects the quality of mentoring support and slows down the mentoring process.

In this study, various strengths and weaknesses of school administrators in creating an effective learning culture and mentoring process has been stated with the views on self-assessment of mentoring. School administrators expressed their strengths in the mentoring process as showing an empathic approach, adapting to teamwork, cooperation and influence, field knowledge (their graduation fields), impartial and fair approach. On the other hand, school administrators have also indicated some weaknesses. These include knowledge of the field (outside their graduation field) and

adult education, impatience and inability to reward employees. It can be said that these findings are new for the literature.

The school administrators stated that the mentoring process has many direct and indirect benefits, both organizationally and individually. In this context, school administrators stated that teachers and themselves developed and renewed themselves personally and professionally during the mentoring process. The direct benefits of mentoring can be expressed as the happiness and motivation of raising someone, professional satisfaction and the rising legal authority power of the administrators in the school. The training of teachers in the mentoring process, like a butterfly effect, can contribute to the increase of student success, decrease the problems experienced with parents, and improvement of social development. The findings related to the direct and indirect benefits of mentoring are consistent with the relevant literature (Bolam et al., 1995; Crow, 2006; Lord et al., 2008; Ragins & Verbos, 2007; Schechter & Firuz, 2015).

According to the findings of this study, as a summary, the competence areas, perspectives and contributions of mentor school administrators are important factors for school administrators to exist as an effective administrator in the learning culture and to develop this culture among school staff. Professional learning activities act as a bridge in the creation and development of learning culture. Mentoring roles of the school principal revealed in this study as useful tools that will be used to create and maintain the learning culture among individuals and within the school organization.

Findings of this study are expected to contribute to the relevant literature on the development of educational administrators and the learning-oriented mentoring roles of the school principal.



Nevertheless, the learning barriers expressed in this study should be taken into consideration by administrators in the display of mentoring roles that will support the learning culture in schools. The learning-oriented mentoring roles identified in this study and contributions of the mentoring in developing the learning culture can be suggested as research topics for the researchers.

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## Institutional Mentorship in West Africa: Comparing Government-Regulated and University-Led Models

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**Abstract**

*This paper compares two institutional mentorships in the West African context: one is an institutional affiliation required by the National Accreditation Board (NAB) between a mentor public university and mentee private university in Ghana; the second one is a university-led mentorship between a mentor private university in Ghana and a mentee private university in Niger. The research questions are the following: How do the two models of institutional mentorship contrast? What is the role of the mentor and mentee in ensuring the effectiveness of institutional mentorship? To investigate these questions, qualitative data was collected through document analysis and interviews of key informants, who were involved in the mentoring relationship across the three institutions. Goleman’s (2000) leadership styles theory was applied as the theoretical framework in analyzing the case studies. The NAB institutional affiliation was coercive and created a disempowering and constraining effect upon the mentee, whereas the university-led mentorship displayed an authoritative leadership style and empowered the mentee through the inspirational example of the mentor. The understanding of responsibilities of the mentor and mentee in ensuring effective mentoring was regulations-driven under the NAB affiliation model and values-driven under the university-*

**Article Info**

**Article History:**  
*Received*  
September 27, 2019

*Accepted*  
July 28, 2020

**Keywords:**

*Institutional mentorship, Higher education, National Accreditation Board, Ghana, Niger, Agency.*



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*led model. The study showed the importance of the sense of agency of both the mentor and mentee in contributing to the mentoring relationship and what both forms of institutional mentorship could learn from each other. The findings of this study are important and relevant in informing the NAB to improve its institutional affiliation program and for new universities that are seeking models for building mentoring relationships with other institutions to expand their potential and impact.*

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**Cite as:**

Mino, T. (2020). Institutional mentorship in West Africa: Comparing government-regulated and university-led models. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 5(3), 840-868. DOI: 10.30828/real/2020.3.7

## **Introduction**

From the 1990s, Africa experienced a surge in the number of private universities in response to a rise in demand for higher education and the introduction of policies that welcomed private sector higher education growth (Varghese, 2004). Despite their contribution to expanding access to higher education in Africa, concerns about the poor quality of private universities persist (Tamrat, 2017). In Ghana, the government established the National Accreditation Board (NAB) to ensure the quality of higher education in the country; the NAB created a system of institutional affiliation for new private universities to be mentored by more experienced and chartered public universities (Utuka, 2011). Under the NAB arrangement, the mentor institution oversees the quality of the mentee institution's admissions, academic delivery, exams, personnel, administration, and facilities and issues diplomas for the mentee institution until it obtains independent charter (Utuka, 2011). Alongside this system, other forms of mentorships have been

established between universities that are not supervised by the government. At one private university in Ghana, both forms of institutional mentorship were experienced: one was its NAB-required institutional affiliation with a Ghanaian public university; the other was the Ghanaian private university's mentorship of a new private university in Niger, which was set up through a mutual agreement between both parties.

While there have been many studies conducted on mentoring relationships at the individual level in higher education (Colvin & Ashman, 2010; Darwin & Palmer, 2009), few analyze institutional mentorships. The studies that analyze institutional mentorships in Ghana (Ansah & Swanzy, 2019; Tsevi, 2015; Utuka, 2011; Yakubu, 2015) scrutinize NAB's affiliation system and center on the role of the mentor or the NAB rather than that of the mentee. There is virtually no literature on other forms of institutional mentorships in Ghana and West Africa and on the role of the mentee institution in the mentoring relationship. This study seeks to fill this gap in the literature through a qualitative study that analyzes two different forms of institutional mentorship: a government-regulated institutional affiliation between two Ghanaian universities and a university-led mentorship between a Ghanaian and Nigerien university. This study will address the following research questions:

1. How do the two models of institutional mentorship at the case study contrast?
2. What are the roles of the mentor and mentee in ensuring the effectiveness of institutional mentorship?

Since institutional affiliation is a requirement of all new universities in Ghana, this research will inform the work of Ghanaian policymakers and the NAB. Learning from the university-led



institutional mentorship model can help improve NAB institutional affiliations, and lessons from government-regulated affiliations can be applied to enhance university-led mentorships. Beyond Ghana, this research will provide valuable information to universities in Africa as they explore institutional mentorship as a potential means of improving education quality at their institution and creating greater impact on other institutions in the continent.

This study is organized in the following way. I first provide a literature review on private universities in Ghana, NAB institutional affiliation, and individual mentorship. I also introduce the theoretical framework of Goleman's (2000) leadership styles. Second, I introduce the multiple case study methodology and qualitative methods employed to collect data for this study. Third, I share key findings that explore this study's research questions by applying Goleman's (2000) framework to the two institutional mentorship case studies. Fourth, I provide an analysis of the findings and identify the key factor of agency that influenced the case study mentoring relationships. Finally, I outline the contributions of this study to the literature and conclude with recommendations for higher education stakeholders and future avenues of research.

### **Literature Review**

Institutional affiliation began long before Ghana's independence from Britain. The establishment of higher education in Ghana, like other African countries, was strongly influenced by its European colonizers (Sawyer, 2004). The first public universities in Ghana were managed and mentored by the University of London. This meant that London determined the appointment of personnel, curriculum, and exams of Ghanaian affiliates to ensure that they

maintained international standards (Sawyer, 2004). Consequently, the first Ghanaian institutions closely mirrored their mentor institution in Britain. After Ghana gained independence, the University College of Gold Coast, which was established in 1948 under the University of London, was released from foreign control and renamed as University of Ghana (Botwe-Asamoah, 2005, p. 190). Later, Kumasi College of Technology also gained university status and was renamed as Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Ansah & Swanzy, 2019). The University College of Cape Coast was subsequently established in 1962 and initially affiliated with the University of Ghana until 1971 when it was given university status (Ansah & Swanzy, 2019).

For decades, the higher education sector in Ghana was dominated by these three public universities, but recent years have witnessed an explosion in the number of private universities. While there were no private universities and three public universities in 1993, these figures increased to 20 public universities and 81 private universities in 2019 (NAB, 2019). The NAB was established in 1993 as the national quality assurance and accreditation agency in higher education (NAB, 2007). The NAB requires that new higher education institutions be mentored for at least ten years before being able to apply for independent charter, which would enable them to award their own degrees (NAB, 2010). The mentee applies to be in an affiliation with a qualifying chartered institution of their choice. The mentor institution is mandated to have departments that offer the degree programs of the mentee institution and a coordinator, of at least the level of senior lecturer, to liaise with the mentee institution (Government of Ghana, 2010). This institutional affiliation system involves three parties: the mentor, the mentee, and the NAB. While the mentor institution submits an annual report on the mentored



institution's activities to the NAB, the NAB also conducts its own annual affiliation barometer to evaluate the status of the mentee institution as part of the accreditation process; however, some universities believe this system is redundant (Ansah & Swanzy, 2019).

The literature analyzing the NAB's institutional affiliation system reveals some of the grievances of mentee universities. Although the NAB helps regulate higher education by investigating and exposing substandard institutions, some private universities view the NAB's approach as a form of control rather than quality assurance, and they express the need for greater flexibility in order to maintain institutional autonomy (Utuka, 2011). For instance, the NAB employs a single questionnaire for the evaluation of all kinds of higher education institutions, which prevents the adaptation of its evaluation standards to diverse approaches (Utuka, 2011). Furthermore, the mentees' already strained budgets are burdened by payments of accreditation fees to the NAB and annual institutional and program affiliation fees to their mentors (Ansah & Swanzy, 2019). Ansah and Swanzy (2019) suggest that compulsory institutional affiliation can stifle innovation at mentee universities and doom mentee institutions to simply become more similar to their mentors on the path to gain legitimacy. The attention of mentor universities also tends to be divided. Some mentor universities supervise dozens of mentee universities at once and lack the capacity and the commitment to support the unique needs of each mentee institution (Owusu-Mensah, 2015).

The general mentoring literature examines the dynamics of individual mentoring from various angles, including the functions of mentoring and the traits of effective mentors and mentees. Kram

(1988) explains that mentoring in workplaces fulfills both career and psychosocial functions; therefore, the mentor not only helps the mentee develop professionally through sharing their expertise but also provides emotional support and encouragement to boost the mentee's self-confidence and personal growth. Effective mentors exhibit caring, integrity, and prudence while displaying strong relational, emotional, and cognitive skills and respect for the mentee's independence (Johnson, 2003). However, not all mentoring relationships are positive. Detrimental mentors can be disabling and manipulative and undermine the mentee to protect their own status (Morton-Cooper & Palmer, 2000). On the other side of the relationship, effective mentees take personal initiative in setting the agenda for and arranging meetings with their mentor, and they are willing to challenge their mentor and be challenged while maintaining respect, good humor, and open-mindedness (Clutterbuck, 2004). The literature also points to the importance of the mentees choosing their mentors; one study found that new teachers were more likely to seek help from those with whom they developed a personal connection rather than the mentors matched to them through a program (Tellez, 2016).

To sum up, the literature on NAB institutional affiliations concentrates on policy-related challenges and rarely draws connections to the research on mentorship between individuals, and the scholarship on individual mentorship has not extended to investigate situations where multiple people from different institutions are engaged in a mentoring relationship. This study seeks to draw a link between individual and institutional mentorship by building on the literature in both fields and contributing to the gap in the literature on university-led mentorships. I take an



interdisciplinary approach to bridge this gap by employing a theoretical framework from the field of leadership studies.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Goleman's (2000) leadership styles will be applied to analyze the two forms of institutional mentorship in this study. While mentors are not always in managerial roles in relation to mentees, mentors are leaders in the sense that they guide others, who in this case are the mentees, to achieve a common goal. Goleman's framework is useful in comparing the quality of interactions taking place in both institutional mentorships. Goleman describes six different leadership styles that work best in different contexts and argues that the most effective leaders use a mix of styles to suit each situation. Some leadership styles are not effective in creating a conducive work climate. Coercive leadership, in which a leader takes forceful, top-down decisions, can lower the morale of employees by making them feel that their perspectives are not valued in the workplace, and pacesetter leadership, in which a leader sets high standards and expects their team to swiftly produce results, negatively impacts the workplace climate because employees can become overwhelmed. Authoritative leaders who inspire their followers, affiliative leaders who empathize with their followers, democratic leaders who encourage active participation, and coaching leaders who help their followers grow all contribute to creating a positive climate by emotionally connecting with those they lead. This theory is limited in bringing out the role of the mentee because it zeroes in on how the mentor's leadership style affects others. Nevertheless, the framework provides a starting point for evaluating the quality of different mentorship models. In applying Goleman's

leadership styles to compare the institutional mentorships in this study, this study hypothesizes that the mentors displaying these leadership styles create the same kind of empowering or disempowering effects on their mentees. Determining the quality of interactions through this approach creates a suitable framework for comparing the two institutions and understanding the role of mentor and mentee in the mentoring relationship.

### **Methods**

Qualitative multiple case study methodology was employed for the study. The first case studied is the institutional affiliation between a Ghanaian public university (University C) and a Ghanaian private university (University A). This case was selected because the private university recently obtained independent charter after 15 years of being in an institutional affiliation and had the opportunity to experience both being mentored and operating without mentorship. The second case is a university-led mentorship between a mentor Ghanaian private university (University A) and a mentee Nigerien private university (University B). In this case, the Ghanaian private university, which was a mentee in the NAB institutional affiliation, served as a mentor for a new university in Niger. This second case provides a window into understanding an alternate approach to institutional mentorship that is yet to be explored in the literature. Unlike the first case of NAB institutional affiliation, the second case of institutional mentorship is relatively new and, at the time of the study, had been in place for one year. While this alternative form of university mentorship may not be common within the African context, investigating this case provides valuable information to



universities that are seeking to expand their potential and impact through mentoring or being mentored by other universities.

These two dissimilar cases of institutional mentorship were selected for comparison and to draw conclusions about the characteristics of an effective mentorship. Since University A was part of both of the case studies, there may be some inherent bias in respondents' views. On the other hand, this perspective is important because the university had the unique opportunity to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of both approaches. Because University A experienced NAB institutional affiliation prior to its mentorship of University B, respondents from University A were able to reimagine a more ideal institutional relationship when they had the opportunity to lead it themselves. Information about the three universities involved in the case studies are listed below in Table 1.

Table 1.

*Traits of case study institutions in 2019*

	<b>Private/Public</b>	<b>Founding year</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of students</b>	<b>Number of degree programs</b>
University A	Private	2002	Ghana	1,173	6
University B	Private	2017	Niger	524	6
University C	Public	1962	Ghana	74,720	210+

The main data collection methods employed were semi-structured interviews and document analysis. First, the administrations of the three institutions involved in the cases were approached to obtain suggestions of key informants. The target population was comprised of members of the administration, staff,

and faculty who were most involved in the mentorship arrangement. This was a relatively small group. While mentoring does impact the entire university, studying the influence of mentoring on the entire university population was outside of the scope because the study focuses on the quality of mentoring relationships rather than assessing the outcomes of mentoring on the campus community. Each interviewee was provided with an informed consent form, and I met with interviewees both in person and over the phone to conduct interviews. 13 interviews were conducted in total, and each interview was transcribed and coded by hand in order to identify common themes in relation to the research questions. The data from the interviews were triangulated with document analysis of NAB documents on institutional affiliation and the memorandum of understanding for the university-initiated case study.

### **Findings**

Before contrasting the two models of institutional mentorship, I provide a brief description of both kinds in terms of their initiation process, the content of engagement, and goals.

#### **First case study: Government-regulated institutional affiliation**

As required by the NAB, University A selected University C to be its mentor, and this institutional affiliation continued until the mentee obtained charter, which was the ultimate goal of the affiliation in addition to quality assurance. Institutional affiliation typically consisted of three components: First, every semester, the mentee sent final exam questions to their mentor for pre-moderation, and after the exams were administered, the mentee sent graded exams to the mentor to moderate their marks. Second, the mentor verified that all of the mentee's degree candidates met graduation



requirements, including reviewing and approving students' final projects. Third, the mentor institution awarded its certificates to the mentee's students. Every five years, during the accreditation review, the mentor sent a representative to visit the mentee institution and monitor its progress. The mentee was required to be under the mentor after 10 years. However, it took 15 years for University A to obtain independent charter because it had to work on meeting various costly requirements in terms of equipment and facilities.

The process of obtaining an independent charter (NAB, 2020) is described in this section. First, the applicant university fills out a charter accreditation form that serves as a form of self-evaluation and submits the application with a fee. The NAB reviews the application to see if the institution has fulfilled the required criteria. Criteria include at least half of faculty as full time and with terminal degrees, rising student enrollment over ten years, financial capability, effective institutional governance structure, good student to staff ratio, good environment, good quality assurance system, and high staff retention rate. The board can reject the application and advise the institution to correct any areas that need further work. If the board decides to proceed, experts are commissioned to look at the institution's governance, financial sustainability, and physical facilities. The mentor institution also prepares and submits a report on the readiness of the mentored institution to award its own degrees. After compiling and reviewing these reports, the NAB visits the applicant to have a discussion with the leadership to confirm all claims made in application. When all conditions are met, the NAB makes a recommendation to the Ministry of Education for the institution to be granted a presidential charter.

**Second case study: University-led mentorship**

A new university in Niger (University B) was inspired by a more experienced institution in Ghana (University A) and requested for help to learn from the older institution. The founder and president of University B connected with the founder and president of University A and discovered that University A was a perfect role model for his university. University B also began to participate consistently in an annual conference for African universities hosted by University A. It is important to note that Niger does not have an institutional affiliation system, so University B was not required to have a mentor but sought out the mentorship on its own accord. Prior to the official beginning of the mentorship, a relationship had already begun to form between the two parties through these interactions, but it was formalized through the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU), which outlined the purpose, scope, and areas of cooperation of the mentorship. The general areas of cooperation included curriculum design and review; faculty, staff, and student exchange; parallel teaching and sharing of curriculum; administrative and managerial work process design and review; and strategy and policy design and review.

According to the MOU, the mentorship consists of various programs, which each have their own targets and timelines, and while there is no set duration for the mentorship, the relationship can be terminated at any time by either party. The MOU also stipulates that financial arrangements will be made on a program by program basis between the two universities. For instance, University A could agree to fly its representatives to visit University B, while University B caters for the visitors' accommodation, food, and transportation. The mentoring relationship is of mutual interest to both universities



because it allows the two institutions to strengthen their academic and scholarly links while providing opportunities for cultural exchange and collaborative research. For the mentor, this mentorship is one way that it can scale its mission to foster the next generation of leaders in Africa. While University A can only graduate a limited number of students every year, supporting another university to raise the same caliber of graduates enables the mentor to impact more lives and regions in Africa. The mentee's goal is to learn from the experience and model of the mentor in order to develop its own capacity to provide the highest quality university education in Niger.

At the time of this study's interviews in 2019 and 2020, a few administrators, faculty, and staff members from University A had visited University B to advise on areas of need, including curriculum development and mental health counseling. Several faculty members, administrators, and students from University B also visited University A for the annual higher education conference hosted by University A.

### **Comparative analysis of the two cases**

#### ***Coercive mentoring***

When Goleman's leadership styles are applied in this analysis, the NAB-required institutional affiliation primarily aligned with the description of coercive leadership. Because the mentor already had an idea of the traits of a quality institution based on its own experience and the standards given by the NAB, the mentor steered the mentee in that direction. There is an element of coercion involved because the affiliation was a compulsory arrangement that the mentee was obligated to follow in order to obtain accreditation from the government. All interviews from the mentee side shared a common

concern that this relationship was rigidly imposed, which prevented the mentee institution from being able to freely innovate. When asked about the achievements of the mentorship, most respondents from both the mentor and mentee sides said that obtaining charter was the main success. This seems to suggest that the other aspects of improving the quality of the education provided at the school was not the central purpose of the mentoring. The end result rather than the process was emphasized.

As expected, this coercive relationship had a disempowering effect upon the mentee because there was little to no mentee choice: University A was expected to fit into a system of standards that already existed rather than having the space to experiment in its own way. As Goleman explains, coercive leadership prevents flexibility and makes top-down decisions that destroy new ideas. From the mentee's perspective, the mentor institution was a police-like authority figure. Interestingly, the respondent from University C did not recognize major points of conflict: "[Disagreement] doesn't come in. Because you only discuss with the [mentee] school what they want to do, and you guide them. We are not supposed to impose." This response differed significantly with the respondents from the mentee. Informants from the mentee institution spoke about how they had to advocate for their stance in cases where they did not agree with the mentor institution. This may have been due to institutional differences. Beyond differences in terms of private versus public and student population size, the institutional norms and values of University A and C also differed significantly. University C had been mentored according to mainly British-influenced standards, which can be traced back to the time that London mentored Ghanaian public universities, whereas University A wanted to create more of an American-style liberal arts experience.



For instance, the mentor institution had allocated 60 percent of students' grades for any given course to the final, whereas the mentee wanted a much lower percentage allocated to the final with a greater emphasis on process assignments. The two institutions compromised at 40 percent for the weight of the final, but the respondents maintained that, in this form of mentorship, they did not have the freedom to decide the best percentage for themselves. In another example, the mentor institution did not understand why some of the mentee's lecturers wanted to evaluate their students with a final paper instead of a final exam. Therefore, all of these aspects where there were pedagogical and philosophical divergences needed to be negotiated with the mentor. As one faculty member from University A described, the mentor "fear[ed] what they don't know." The mentor institution did not feel comfortable with significantly veering away from its own practices; at the same time, the mentor was simply doing its job by playing the quality assurance role expected by the NAB and was also required to follow those set standards.

From both the mentor and mentee side, the mentoring relationship appeared to be externally imposed instead of internally motivated. When asked about what the mentorship meant to the mentor institution, the respondent said the mentorship was "a mandatory thing that every newly private institution needs to follow... their graduates received [our] certificate. So, if a school is taking your certificate, it is incumbent on you to monitor their process." This comment suggests that the mentor institution's motivation to engage in the mentorship and to ensure its success was to comply with government expectations and to ensure that its reputation was upheld. It did not necessarily come from a place of wanting to see another institution grow. An administrator from the

mentee university noted that “if the mentorship was not required, we wouldn’t have gone for it.”

If given the choice, the mentee institution would have opted out of a mentorship since it did not see the benefit of affiliation for their development as a new university. Another faculty member shared that this affiliation system at least helped the mentee institution adapt to Ghanaian standards, but others shared that most of it was “annoying” and “a bother.” Because of the nature of this externally imposed process, the mentee lacked agency in the relationship and felt the mentorship was more of a chore than a privilege. Interviewees from University A felt that the mentorship was detrimental in that it held the new university back from achieving its vision.

#### *Authoritative mentoring*

The university-led mentorship most closely matched the authoritative leadership style. The mentor inspired the mentee through its own example and vision, which the mentee also strove to achieve. The point of difference here is that the mentor did not have to persuade the mentee to buy into the vision because the mentee already had the same vision even prior to engaging with the mentor. As explained earlier, this is where Goleman’s theory’s limitations lie. The mentees’ agency is not taken into consideration in the leadership style framework. Both University A and B shared the aspiration of providing a new kind of innovative student-centered education that would enable their graduates to become transformative leaders in their countries. Both were also influenced by American models of higher education since the founders of both universities received their tertiary education in the US and were supported by American universities to develop their curricula and structures. This values



alignment was the reason why University B selected University A as its mentor in the first place. University B wanted to become what University A was but in its own way. Both institutions were united in purpose in terms of the kind of higher education they wanted to see develop in Africa. The authoritative leadership style resulted in empowering the mentee by allowing it space to innovate and take well-informed risks towards achieving the shared goal. The standards of success were clear and agreeable to the mentee because the mentor was already achieving them.

Mentoring between University A and B was based on a mutual understanding and a self-motivated desire between both institutions as equal partners in the relationship. The mentor played the role of a guide rather than an enforcer, and the mentee could decide to accept or reject any of the mentor's suggestions. Both universities recognized that they were situated in different cultures even if they were both located in West Africa and that what worked at one university may not be suitable for another. Unlike coercive mentoring, there was no need for extended negotiations over decisions taken by the mentee that differed from the mentor's recommendations because the mentor respected the independence of the mentee. One administrator from University A shared: "What we are doing with the universities we are mentoring is more like a friendship. We are there to give them advice. We are not insisting that they do anything. There is no supervision as that of [University C]." A faculty member from University A maintained that "the institution must remain themselves in terms of their purpose and version, so that we also maintain our purpose and vision, but we work hand in hand to help each other." A respondent from University B echoed this thinking: "The two parties must know that the mentorship is an inspiration. Every university should hold on to

their purpose no matter the school that is mentoring them.” The mentor’s purpose was not to dilute the brand of the mentee. This idea of the institution remaining true to itself was repeated across interviews from University A and B. Accordingly, this mentorship was about helping the mentee become the best version of itself rather than a copy of the mentor institution.

In this highly empowering mentorship, the mentee communicated to the mentor about its areas of weakness that required support, and the mentor addressed the mentees’ needs and provided advice and examples from its own experience. University B saw the mentorship as highly beneficial because “we can learn faster and focus on what is more important. Mentorship also helps avoid mistakes because your mentor would have may be experienced a challenge and will prevent you from encountering the same challenge.” The mentee institution is able to learn from the challenges of the mentor and the systems that the mentor designed in addressing its challenges.

Unlike NAB institutional affiliation, which primarily consisted of back and forth communications on various required items that were requested by the mentor, the university-led mentorship worked organically and included training by the mentor institution to help the mentee institution develop the capacity to improve on its delivery. Advice on administrative aspects such as organizational design and financial planning was provided to help the mentee develop effective institutional policies and procedures. Overall, the mentoring relationship was underpinned by the mentor’s care for and belief in the mentee: one respondent from University B explained that the mentor institution “genuinely wants to see you become great.”



### *Role of mentor and mentee*

The mentor and mentee both play a role in ensuring the effectiveness of a mentoring relationship, and this is the aspect that Goleman's (2000) leadership styles fail to capture. In the NAB affiliation, the roles of both the mentor and mentee to ensure quality at that mentee institution are well-documented procedures that are part of the NAB's affiliation system, and they are not flexible in case either the mentor or mentee do not agree with the protocol. The roles are enforced through accountability of the mentee institution to the mentor institution and the NAB's supervision of both institutions. The rigidity of this policy tended to make institutional affiliation inherently coercive whether the mentor institution intends to make it so or not. The responsibilities of mentor and mentee were regulations-driven in the first case.

In the second case, the roles were not spelled out in detail and could also change over time as both institutions learned and realized that their initial ideas could be improved. As one University B administrator described, the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship depended on "the mindset" and "the culture" of both parties. In explaining the role of the mentor, university A administrator claimed that

*mentoring does not necessarily force the individual to be like their mentor. They just encourage them to their best. In all relationships, there should be value in both sides. I personally did not see the value in [University C]. It will be better if the mentors guide the mentees to create their own systems instead of depending on their mentors' systems.*

University A was primarily motivated by its desire to help another African institution flourish and to contribute to improving higher education on the continent. One staff member from University

A said that “We can’t have multiple [University A’s] across Africa – the impact is greater if multiple people are doing it.” Mentoring was one concrete way for University A to share its creative approaches and spread its impact beyond its own campus. This contrasted with the NAB institutional affiliation, which focused on the mentor’s obligations to meet government requirements and to ensure that the mentee institution met the same academic standards as itself.

In the university-led mentorship, the mentee could not be passive and wait for the mentor to tell it what to do. The mentee needed to determine the direction of the mentoring interactions and areas of focus. Lack of understanding about its shortcomings and needs was one of the challenges shared by University B. Initially, the university did not know what it was seeking from the mentorship and where it needed the most help. An interviewed staff member from University A also noted that University B did not seem prepared in understanding what it wanted to achieve through the mentorship. This made it difficult for the mentor to know how to support the mentee. The university-led mentorship required the mentee to play the leading role in some ways because it was not designed to provide clear-cut answers or commands.

One administrator from University B explains:

*The mentee should have a clear vision and objective of where they want to go. On the side of the mentors, they should clearly listen to the needs of the mentees, so that they can help the mentees based on what they need, because the mentor can also learn from the mentees... [The mentee should] explain [their] weakness well to [their] mentors so that they can help [the mentees] accordingly.*

One University B administrator noted that “[this] mentorship will help you to think but will not give you answers. You must find



out the answers yourself.” The mentor has already walked the path and can share its experience, but it serves as more of a guide than an authority figure. Next, after determining what it needed and receiving guidance from the mentor, the mentee needed to take actions to implement suggestions that it saw as fit. One of the weaknesses mentioned by the respondents from University A is that the mentee institution seemed overwhelmed by many other challenges, such as high staff turnover, and that it was not able to follow through on some of the recommendations it agreed to implement. In other words, the mentee needed to take full ownership of the process in order to make the mentoring relationship effective. Nevertheless, the actions of the mentor and mentee were values-driven: even if the roles were not always outlined or enforced, both the mentor and mentee naturally made efforts to ensure the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship based on their shared values.

### **Analysis**

The analysis of the above findings demonstrates the importance of developing models to understand mentorship that incorporate the agency (or lack of agency) of both the mentor and mentee. This was an aspect the Goleman (2000) framework was not able to capture because the framework assumed that the leader, or mentor, had full agency, and the followers, or mentees, were reactive rather than proactive in the relationship. The findings reveal that the sense of agency is critical in developing a mentoring relationship of value to both sides. This resonates with the literature on individual mentorship emphasizing the importance of mentee choice (Tellez, 2016) and the mentee’s personal initiative and ownership of the

mentoring process (Clutterbuck, 2004). The mentee needed to determine what it sought from the mentoring rather than being passive in the relationship (Clutterbuck, 2004). This also echoes concerns raised by the research on institutional affiliations about the stifling nature of NAB institutional affiliations (Ansah & Swanzy, 2019; Utuka, 2011).

Both the mentor and mentee's sense of agency can be reduced in rigid bureaucratic systems. One common strategy of organizations that deal with many different individuals or institutions is to streamline the process with structured steps to make it easier for the supervising organization to keep track of the certification of many diverse entities. Even though the creation of these kinds of guidelines are helpful and clarify what each individual needs to do to move forward in their application for accreditation, an over-reliance on such processes makes the system inflexible and constraining. The findings from University A respondents demonstrated that they felt the NAB-required institutional mentorship limited their institution's freedom to develop their own alternative approaches to education. Rather than being something that supported their development as a new university, the mentoring process was a hoop that they had to jump through in order to obtain greater autonomy from the government. Some respondents claimed that the institutional affiliation was actually a burdensome hindrance and that the government should change its policy of requiring new universities to undergo affiliation. This is the disadvantage of using a blanket policy that fails to sufficiently individualize the programs for the benefit of each institution. Institutional affiliation, as currently devised by NAB, could be more effective and helpful if it was based on a differentiated approach that took into consideration the unique strengths and needs



of each institution and created space for the mentee institution to fully actualize its own vision.

The NAB can learn from the example of the university-led mentorship to understand how agency is incorporated in many aspects of the mentoring process from the matching to the planning of every aspect of the mentoring program. Mentorships that promote a sense of agency are based on the mentor's trust and support for the mentee institution. At the same time, the university-led mentorship can learn from the NAB in terms of creating stronger processes of accountability in order to keep the mentee on track. As explained earlier, University B was slow to implement concrete suggestions made by the mentor because it was overwhelmed by other tasks it needed to do, and one can also conjecture that the mentee may not have felt a strong obligation to follow through with action items in a timely manner because it would not be penalized for failing to do so. Agency is helpful but can also slow down progress without adequate structure. Therefore, both models of mentorship can learn lessons from the other in improving upon its weaknesses.

The limitation of this study was that it relied upon interviews and did not include observations of interactions between mentor and mentee institutions, especially because one of the mentoring relationships had concluded before this research took place. However, with a small sample size, the study was able to find fairly consistent answers across institutions to help demonstrate the reliability of the data.

## Conclusion

This study provided a comparative analysis of government-regulated and university-led institutional mentorships in the West African context. The main findings are that the NAB-required institutional mentorship was coercive and unable to flexibly meet the needs of the mentee institution, while the universities-initiated mentorship reflected the authoritative leadership style and was based on a mutual understanding as partners towards a shared goal with the mentor serving as an inspirational example. Furthermore, the mentor and mentee roles were regulations-driven under the NAB institutional affiliation, and they were values-driven under the universities-led mentorship. The analysis showed that the sense of agency of both the mentor and mentee institutions is critical in creating an effective mentoring relationship and must be incorporated into mentorship models.

This study makes unique contributions to understanding mentorship that have been previously unaddressed. First, it has provided a comparative analysis and two different forms of institutional mentorships, which could then be applied in other contexts to evaluate institutional mentorships. Second, rather than only outlining the challenges of institutional mentorships, this study has shed light on the role of mentors and mentees in improving the effectiveness of such a relationship. Third, the study has shown that there are strong conceptual links to explore between individual and institutional mentorship. Future avenues of potential research include research comparing the characteristics of successful (resulting in charter) and unsuccessful (not resulting in a charter) NAB institutional affiliations and research on institutional mentorships in other contexts. Theoretical frameworks should be developed to



understand the connections and distinctions between institutional mentorships and individual mentorships in order to structure further analysis of this less-studied field.

Despite the challenges often described by the literature, institutional mentorship can be highly effective and helpful if done well. It can be a way for new universities to learn from the experiences of older universities in order to better navigate its own path of development. Therefore, I recommend that new private universities explore potential means to improvement by learning and seeking mentorship from other institutions. In a time when South-South collaboration is greatly needed, institutional mentorships among African universities carry enormous potential to propel the development of higher education in Africa and must be studied in greater depth. These efforts will contribute to improving the quality of education for students and, in turn, the development of more capable individuals for the future of Africa.

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**The Strategic Support to Thrive Beyond Survival  
Model: An Administrative Support Framework for  
Improving Student Outcomes and Addressing Educator  
Staffing in Rural and Urban High-Needs Schools**

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**Abstract**

*This paper presents an empirically grounded conceptual model that positions the principal as the talent developer, who when provided mentorship on how to strategically scaffold their teachers, will improve their own self-efficacy and competencies to provide better administrative support. Not only will this mentorship decrease their feelings of job-related overburden and improve their retention, but they will also jointly increase teacher support (thereby reducing their turnover) and increase performance by improving student learning. The model advances scholarship by addressing administrative and leadership mentoring and role modeling in cross-cultural contexts through a multi-level framework (i.e., mentorship to school leaders on how to mentor and support teachers), with the goal of improving social justice through the advancement of social inclusion. The paper will interrogate how mentoring and development is conceived by distinguishing the different types of administrative support that leaders in rural and urban high-needs (high poverty and low-performing) schools must*

**Article  
Info**

**Article History:**

*Received  
September 17, 2019*

*Accepted  
August 20, 2020*

**Keywords:**

*Talent management,  
Teacher retention,  
Leadership  
development,  
Student  
achievement,  
Principal retention,  
Human resources.*



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*provide for their teachers in their respective settings. The relevance of these distinctions and the emphasis of the paper for an international context will be discussed.*

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**Cite as:**

Tran, H. & Smith, D. A. (2020). The strategic support to thrive beyond survival model: An administrative support framework for improving student outcomes and addressing educator staffing in rural and urban high-needs schools. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 5(3), 870-919. DOI: 10.30828/real/2020.3.8

### **Introduction**

In recent years, scholars and policymakers have increasingly encouraged the adoption of strategic human resources (HR) management to directly link HR practices to measurable organizational outcomes. Case in point, policymakers have invested significant financial capital and made efforts to independently address the three outcomes of student performance (Baker, 2017), teacher retention (Kolbe & Strunk, 2012), and principal retention (Grissom & Bartanen, 2019). These mostly disconnected and individualized attempts have yielded varying levels of success, with some yielding positive outcomes (Feng & Sass, 2018; Springer, Swain, & Rodriguez, 2016) and others less so (Imberman & Lovenheim, 2015; Spring et al., 2012). Perhaps a lack of more sustained progress can be attributed to the uncoordinated efforts that omit a strategic talent management perspective to link bundles of HR practices and employee talent to the school district strategy for improving student outcomes.

Talent Management can be defined in many ways, but we opt for Stahl et al.'s (2007) more general definition of recruiting, selecting, developing, and retaining critical employees. Within the context of

this study, we specifically focus on the development and retention of principals to develop and retain teachers. We treat educators (i.e., principals and teachers) as critical employees, recognizing they are the strongest within-school influence on student learning outcomes (Araujo, Carniero, Cruz-Aguayso, & Schady, 2016; Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2014). This is a more inclusive approach than other definitions of talent that may more narrowly focus on employer-identified “high potential” employees (Björkman et al., 2013). We use this broader definition because we recognize that even those who lack sufficient human capital can grow and gain (therefore becoming “high potential”) if they have access to the requisite social capital and growth opportunities provided by administrative support (Crane & Hartwell, 2019).

Research on student performance, teacher retention, and principal retention suggests that school leadership development may serve as a convergence point to mitigate teacher shortages, enhance teacher effectiveness, improve school performance, and create work environments more conducive to the principal’s own retention (Jacob, Goddard, Kim, Miller, & Goddard, 2015; Miller, 2012). While there are many useful theories concerning effective school leadership (Barber, Whelan, & Clark, 2010; Preston & Barnes, 2017), absent from the literature is an exploration of the potential for principal leadership development to affect educational (e.g., student achievement) *and* HR outcomes (e.g., principal and teacher retention) across “high-needs” (high poverty and low-performing) contexts. Urban and rural school environments deserve special attention because they often serve the most “at-risk” populations—i.e., populations largely consisting of academically underperforming, and economically disadvantaged students of color; and are often staffed with the least “qualified” teachers - across a variety of “quality”



indicators (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2010; Goldhaber, Lavery, & Theobold, 2015), reinforcing inequity and social injustice.

Disconnected policy initiatives ignore problems such as the systemic challenges that many schools face (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, & Dutton, 2012), that principal and teacher turnover are directly related (Jacob et al., 2015), and that educator turnover harms student achievement (Beteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2012). An example of this myopia: most of the efforts to address the teacher supply problem “have focused primarily on recruiting promising teachers into high-poverty schools, often with little attention to systematically supporting and retaining them once they are there” (Simon & Johnson, 2015, p. 2). Given that 19-30% of new teachers in the U.S. teaching workforce leave the profession within their first five years and that percentage dramatically increases for high poverty schools (Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, & Darling-Hammond, 2016), improvement initiatives need reassessing. We aim to intervene and suggest a more balanced approach.

Based on evidence from past research, we argue that a comprehensive theory of strategic talent management in high-needs academic contexts should address the following questions:

- 1) What is the relationship between geographic context (urban, rural) and the type of school administrative support needed?
- 2) What is the relationship between school administrative support and educator retention?
- 3) What is the relationship between school administrative support, educator retention, and student achievement?

In this paper, we present the *Thrive Beyond Survival* model, a conceptual model for talent management in high-needs school

settings, developed and based on an integration of scholarly theory and empirical research findings. The model is part of a progressive approach to employee management known as Talent Centered Education Leadership (Tran, 2020). As opposed to treating people as resources towards an end, this talent-centric approach starts with employee needs. Paying attention to the disparate needs of rural and urban contexts, and keeping in mind the aforementioned questions, we demonstrate how the implementation of the HR strategy of principal development can improve educator performance, principal and teacher retention, ultimately contributing to improved student success. Specifically, this paper will present the *Thrive Beyond Survival* model and sequentially discuss each of its components: *The role of the principal as a talent developer*, *the necessity of place conscious principal development to provide contextualized urban and rural administrative support to reduce principal and teacher turnover*, and *improve student achievement*. The paper concludes with recommendations for model implementation and future research. Our presentation of the *Thrive Beyond Survival* model is grounded in our exploration, analysis, and synthesis of an international body of scholarly literature on the specific topics of a) the principal's role in developing talent, b) principal mentorship in supporting teachers, and c) principal self-efficacy, while drawing specific attention to works addressing rural and urban high-need contexts.

### **Educator Turnover Challenges and its Detriment to Students**

While almost 20% of U.S. principals leave their positions each year (Goldring, Taei, & Owens, 2018), student enrollment is projected to increase the demand of new principals by 8% annually until 2026 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2016). High turnover rates and increased



demand contribute significantly to the principal staffing problem (Beteille et al., 2012; Tran & Buckman, 2016). Prior studies have established that principal departures are typically followed by higher teacher turnover (Miller, 2009) and downturn in school's academic performance (Miller, 2009; Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013). Because principal development has been linked to principal retention (Jacob et al., 2015), universities, school districts, and other principal preparation organizations should work in tandem to provide the requisite principal development to support both principals and teachers in urban and rural areas, both of which are disproportionately more affected by turnover.

The distribution of teachers and their turnovers are nonrandom across schools, with high-needs schools often experiencing the greatest shortage in both teachers in quantity and quality. The latter point holds true across a variety of teacher quality measures such as strong credentials or test score gains (Gawlik, Kearney, Addonizio, & LaPlante-Sosnowsky, 2012; Goldhaber, et al., 2015). To exacerbate the inequity, less effective and experienced teachers often replace those who leave high-poverty schools with large concentrations of students of color (Simon & Johnson, 2015; Springer et al., 2016).

To date, much of the policies instituted to address teacher supply issues have emphasized financial interventions (Feng & Sass, 2018; Podolsky, & Kini, 2016; Shifrer, Turley, & Heard, 2017; Springer et al., 2016), predicated on the theory that districts can "offset" the adverse working conditions and improve teacher supply in hard-to-staff contexts by offering financial incentives, such as bonuses. While financial incentives do affect teacher supply in hard-to-staff schools (Clotfelter, Glennie, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2008; Springer et al., 2016), and can yield temporary improvements, it does not address the root cause

for teacher attrition (Boyd et al., 2011). According to both prospective (Tran & Smith, 2020a) and active teachers (Balu, Beteille, & Loeb, 2009; Horng, 2009; Kraft, Marinell, & Shein-Wei Yee, 2016) school administrative support has been reported to be more critical than any other single factor for teacher retention in research throughout the globe (Ladd, 2011; Mancuso, Roberts, & White, 2010; Robinson, 2012; Rhodes, Nevill, & Allan, 2004; Tran & Dou, 2019). This is in line with the broader retention literature outside of education that suggests successful efforts to retain employees cannot be restricted only to financial factors such as salaries, as addressing pecuniary concerns is necessary but insufficient by itself (Ambrosius, 2018; Boyd et al., 2011; Tran & Smith, 2020b).

The literature suggests leadership support for employees, such as developing personal growth plans for individual career goals and getting to know individuals, has more potential as a long-term retention strategy (Mancuso et al., 2010; Margolis, 2008). According to Festing and Shafer (2014), organizations that make

*“...long-term development of talent through highly engaged TM [talent management] which focuses on developing not only job-specific but also long-term and firm-specific knowledge, skills, and competencies creates a higher emotional involvement and higher degree of mutual interdependence between talent and the employer...It reflects a long-term and stable orientation due to formalized obligations by the employer, with a scope and focus on a firm as a whole and not only the job” (p. 266).*

Beyond the direct impact of the strategies itself, they explain that the investment in developmental and retention support for employees signals to them that they are valued by the organization. Despite their relationship, policymakers rarely treat leadership development as a teacher retention initiative. Our model argues against this omission.



The *Thrive Beyond Survival* model argues that school districts and leadership preparation institutions can provide the support needed for school leaders; in turn, school leaders can provide the administration support teachers need. Multi-level support of this kind would likely positively impact principal and teacher retention, which would then positively impact student achievement. Unfortunately, current research has found that professional development (PD) offered through university coursework is, on average, not positively correlated to teacher rated principal performance in a substantive manner (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). Top performing principals focus on instructional leadership and developing their teachers (Wallin & Newton, 2013), yet teacher development is precisely the area most principals report struggling with (Barber et al., 2010). School leadership development deserves more attention given that it can serve as a viable avenue to improve not only educator supply, but student performance as well due to the established links between district support and principal turnover, principal turnover with teacher turnover, and both turnovers on student achievement outcomes (Jacob et al., 2015; Miller, 2012).

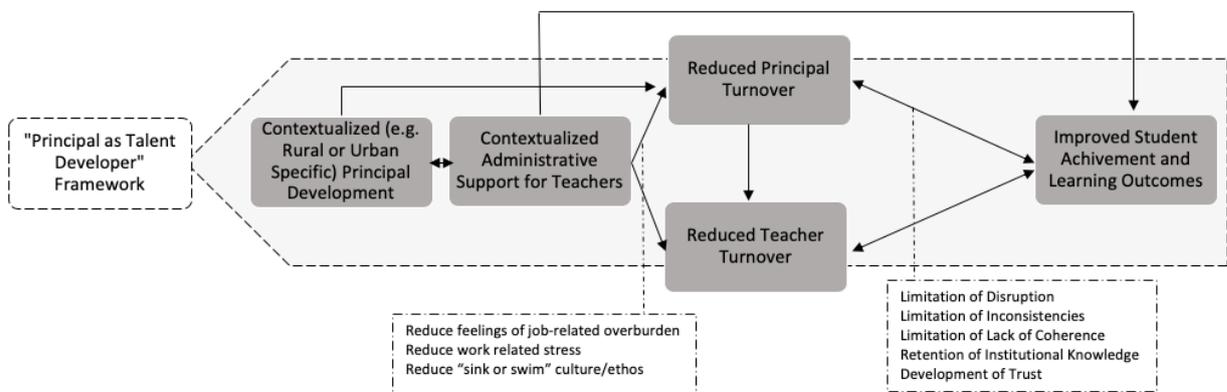
### **The Thrive Beyond Survival Model**

The *Thrive Beyond Survival* model is so named because it theorizes that administrative support for principals and teachers in high-needs contexts will not only help them “survive” in their positions, but eventually “thrive” in success as their retention and growing performance improves student outcomes. A visual representation of the model can be seen in figure 1 below; the single-headed arrows represent the direction of effect, while the double-

headed arrows represent reciprocal relationships as documented in the literature.

Figure 1.

*The Thrive Beyond Survival model: Principal administrative support development as a leverage point to reduce educator turnover and increase student achievement*



The foundation of the model is predicated on the organization applying a framework that positions school principals as talent developers (Donaldson, 2013) who, when provided mentorship on how to strategically scaffold their teacher talent (e.g., by the district, by principal preparation programs), will improve their own self-efficacy and competencies, thereby reducing their own likelihood of turnover (Farley-Ripple, Raffel, & Welch’s, 2012). Talent development can be thought of as being comprised of the development of both human and social capital (Crane & Hartwell, 2019).

Human capital can be defined as the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) associated with an employee’s experience and training that represent the value of an employee to an organization and “[a]t a very basic level, an organization’s stock of human capital



dictates the nature and extent of employees' potential contributions to the organization" (Takeuchi, Lepak, Wang, & Takeuchi, 2007, p. 1070). To the extent that those human capital KSAs can be developed, the corresponding potential contribution to the organization will increase. Within the school environment, one such contribution is the improvement of school academic achievement resulting from teachers gaining context-specific administrative support to improve student outcomes (Grissom & Loeb, 2011; Hornig, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010).

Beyond directly addressing teachers' human capital, our model also addresses social capital, given the increasing recognition of the importance of the provision of social support to teachers, leveraged from the social connectivity of the principal. Traditional perspectives on talent management primarily focus on human capital, often ignoring the social capital that captures the "relational dimensions of talent" (Crane, Hartwell, 2019, p. 82). These dimensions include networks, collaboration, interpersonal trust and leveraging relationships. HR scholars have been recently suggesting that the relational component of talent management is integral to its performance (Al Ariss, Cascio, & Paauwe, 2014) and that social capital can enhance human capital if facilitated both individually and collectively among peers and mentors. Given the labor-intensive occupation of educators, the relational dimensions of talent management are even more critical in schools. By providing social support for teachers, teachers can gain the human capital for their job, building their confidence to do the work and incentivizing their retention as a result.

Based on findings from prior empirical studies across the globe (Jacob et al., 2015), the model theorizes that teacher turnover will be

reduced not only by increased (e.g., frequency, duration) context specific (e.g., rural or urban) administrative support provided to teachers (Boyd et al., 2011; Horng, 2009; Rhodes et al., 2004), but also by reduction in principal turnover (Beteille et al., 2012; Jacob et al., 2015; Miller, 2012). These reductions are theorized to occur because the provision of administrative support reduces the feelings of job-related overburden, stress, and reducing the “sink or swim” culture or ethos of the school (Mascall & Leithwood, 2010). Given the negative relationship between educator turnover and student achievement (Miller, 2009; Ronfeldt et al., 2013), reducing principal and teacher turnover will result in greater student academic success through the reduction of organizational disruptions, inconsistencies of direction, lack of coherence, and loss of institutional knowledge and trust that is associated with personnel instability (Allensworth, Ponisciak, & Mazzeo, 2009; Beteille et al., 2012). Furthermore, the improvement of academic success also reduces educator turnover as the school becomes a more attractive workplace when its students achieve at a higher level (Clotfelter et al., 2010; Goldhaber et al., 2015; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010; Miller, 2009).

Beyond empirical support, our proposed model is theoretically informed by a blend of organizational, social cognitive, and contextualized leadership theories, leveraging each theory's advantages while minimizing their limitations by balancing them with one another. Within the teacher retention context, organizational theory suggests that school characteristics, cultures, and structures, including administrative support, influence teacher mobility and retention rates (Sullivan, 2009). It, however, emphasizes institutional characteristics, while seemingly ignoring the individual (Vagi & Pivovarova, 2017). In response, we account for individual characteristics by incorporating the self-efficacy component of



Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, which would suggest that educators—teachers and principals alike—are less likely to resign and more likely to improve performance when they feel they have the requisite skills and training to successfully meet the demands of their position (a positive internal sense of efficacy) due to receiving the necessary support (a workplace condition). Neither theory considers the context in which the principal would implement said support, which is why the model incorporates the principle of contextual leadership (Noman, Awang Hashim, & Shaik Abdullah, 2018), a theory that recognizes the myriad of needs across differing school contexts. Further, the framework advances the literature by strategically linking school leadership development to educator retention (direct influence) and student performance (indirect influence). As discussed in the next section, evidence from empirical literature supports the efficacy of the model in addition to being informed by these theoretical underpinnings.

### **Principal as the Talent Developer**

At the heart of the *Thrive Beyond Survival* model is the convergence of administrative support and differing school contexts (urban, rural), a fact that necessitates an exploration of both facets. The model's emphasis on administrative support is not arbitrary, as scholars across the world have argued school capacity building is essential for improving teacher working conditions and student outcomes, with principals being best suited to build faculty capacity (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010; Yakavets, Frost, & Khoroshash, 2017). For example, Arar and Arar (2016) emphasize the mentorship role of principals in Arab schools to help teachers grow and develop teaching and pedagogic skills. However, capacity building requires highly contextualized knowledge and

“varied contexts and capacity necessitate differentiated capacity building” (Stoll, 2009, p. 117). While there are similarities between urban and rural educational contexts, administrators must also be cognizant to differentiate the support needed, as teachers in rural high-needs schools face different challenges (e.g., differences in community politics, resources, human capacity) than those of urban high-needs schools (Matsumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009). Indeed, research supports the argument that the impact of strategic talent management processes utilized by principals will vary across settings (Donaldson, 2013). External factors—such as school location—can affect stakeholders, like teachers, in specific ways and can moderate the type of actions needed by a principal (Hutton, 2017). Principals can help build teachers’ self-confidence in different contexts to stay and grow via administrative support that allows teachers to feel safe and supported, as well as develop trust and mentorship (Hammonds, 2017). This is particularly crucial in urban and rural areas, as they experience the most severe teacher shortages, which disproportionately impacts economically disadvantaged students of color (Balu et al., 2009). Differentiating teaching context, Preston describes the nature of teaching experiences in Canadian rural schools as nurturing “close teacher-student-community relationships, while urban schools serve a larger, culturally-diverse student populace” (2012, p. 41). Although both have concentrations of poverty, high frequencies of student mobility, and native language learners, rural and urban districts also have challenges distinct to their setting. Thus, it is necessary to explore the needs of each context amongst broader efforts to address social justice through social inclusion.



## **Principal Professional Development for Urban School Contexts**

Urban school contexts tend to have larger school districts that are often associated with complicated bureaucratic systems and have stronger private school competition for their public schools. In addition, high-need urban institutions experience more severe student discipline issues—ranging from insubordination, use/sale of illegal narcotics, and verbal/physical assault of teachers and students—than do their non-urban counterparts (Smith & Smith, 2006), an actuality that directly impacts teacher turnover (Allensworth et al., 2009) and instruction (Luiselli, Putnam, Handler, & Feinberg, 2005). Relatedly, teachers have reported needing administrative support to handle disciplinary issues so that they can focus on providing instruction (Marinell & Coca, 2013).

Urban schools face stiffer political, social, and economic challenges than non-urban schools (Cuban, 2004); thus, their PD needs are different. The political complexities of urban schools (e.g., local and state issues, media relations, collective bargaining, political advocacy) provide for unique challenges that urban principals must address and that formal PD activities for principals often overlook (Davis, Leon, & Fultz, 2013). Urban principals often must navigate complex bureaucratic channels in order to obtain resources for the students in their schools. Likewise, principal preparation programs often lack substantive training in multicultural leadership, yet urban schools face context specific cultural challenges that include low expectations associated with perceptions of race and class as predictors of low school achievement and intellectual deficiencies, and the lack of cultural responsiveness in current policies and practices (Ahram, Stembridge, Fergus, & Noguera, 2011). Properly structured, on-going professional development affords greater

opportunities to instill in urban principals the capacity to be multicultural leaders (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006).

Grissom, Loeb, and Master's (2013) work established the importance of administrative support, teacher coaching, meaningful teacher evaluation, and teacher education programming to student success in a large urban district. Others (Grissom & Loeb, 2011; Horng et al., 2010) have identified the importance of organizational management skills (i.e., managing the "school business" including budgeting, maintenance, hiring, safety, professional development, etc.) that similarly predict not only student achievement gains, but also teacher and parent assessment of school climate, and ultimately teacher retention. Brown and Wynn (2009), for instance, found that the principals of schools who experienced the lowest beginning teacher turnover and transfer rates (0-10%) within a high-turnover small urban district emphasized supporting teachers, citing that "spending more time, providing more resources, and building capacity are critical components in retaining good teachers" (p. 51).

Houle (2006) studied an urban principals' academy for school leaders and found that principals' most significant developmental needs were in the areas of facing complex urban environments, leading the improvement of student achievement in these contexts, capacity building, and instructional leadership. Additionally, Peter-Hawkins, Reed, and Kingsberry (2018) reported that urban principals identified succession planning as a significant leadership challenge facing current leaders, which points to the turbulence that changes in principal leadership often cause for urban schools. To address these challenges, principal leadership preparation programs alone are unlikely to prepare practice-ready principals to be turnaround and change experts in high-need urban contexts. Rather, on-the-job



experiences, mentorship and on-going professional development opportunities for principals are needed to supplement initial preparation and to advance principals to lead in their urban specific contexts (Davis et al., 2013).

### **Principal Professional Development for Rural School Contexts**

Rural education requires a different focus than does urban education, and “it cannot be assumed that the way school principals in the urban context build capacity of their staff can be ‘translated’ to the rural context” (Hardwick-Franco, 2018, p.2). The role of a principal in a rural high-needs setting differs from that of their urban counterparts. One major distinction is the fact that rural districts often operate with smaller organizational systems, which means administrators often have to wear “many hats,” sometimes occupying the role of both a principal and superintendent (Canales, Tejeda-Delgado, & Slate, 2008) or taking on additional responsibilities in their position (Stewart & Matthews, 2015). Björk and Browne-Ferrigno (2018) note that “[a]lthough superintendents of small districts may handle several areas of responsibility, CEOs of large county or urban districts delegate responsibilities to their middle management staffs” (p. 183).

According to Townsell (2007), rural principals often have to become involved in all aspects of school decision making in a manner that differs from non-rural principals given the lack of administrative support they receive (e.g., fewer or non-existent assistant principals) and must have an acute awareness of the culture of the community for reasons including how to better acclimate new teachers to the context. They also have to be able to help mitigate their teachers’ feelings of social, cultural, and professional isolation that is promoted by the geographic isolation that is common to many rural locales

(Townsell, 2007). This may involve connecting teachers to the community. In fact, in rural environments, there is often a social expectation that rural principals are not just school leaders, but community leaders as well (Pendola & Fuller, 2018). For example, Kawana studied the role of principal leadership in rural Namibia and found “the principal is heavily dependent on factors that lie outside his immediate personal influence” (2007, p. 65) in order to be effective.

In addition, rural districts experience tremendous staffing issues (UCEA, 2018). Rural districts are disadvantaged with lower number of educator applications, eroding tax bases, lower salaries, remoteness, geographic isolation and cultural differences (Pendola & Fuller, 2018). Despite the fact that rural schools face more teacher staffing issues than urban schools (Starr & White, 2008), rural schools receive comparatively less scholarly and governmental attention (Howley, Rhodes, & Beall, 2009).

Because rural principals often have less access to professional networks (Pendola & Fuller, 2018), their development needs differ. Hardwick-Franco (2018) reviewed the literature on professional development support needed by rural school principals in Australia and concluded that rural school leaders require differentiated PD specific to their rural context, preferably developed through a collaborative co-creation between the training providers and rural principals. This collaboration would ensure that urban school leadership models that are not compatible with rural environments would not be imposed upon participating rural principals.

Masumoto and Brown-Welty (2009) conducted a case study analysis of three high-poverty under resourced, yet high-performing, rural schools and found the schools compensated for the lack of



resources by partnering extensively with external partners such as parents, business professionals, professional organizations, universities, etc. in formal and informal capacities. Two-way communication between the entities allowed parties to be responsive to each other's needs, increasing the active engagement of parents and communities with the school. This suggests the importance of developing the partnership skills of rural principals as rural leaders.

Given that rural schools are often severely resource constrained and that, in order to best serve students, rural principals across the world must collaborate across a variety of networks outside the school, therefore developing their partnership skills is critical (Hardwick-Franco, 2018). Bauch (2001) identifies six rural-specific community attributes that school leaders can depend on for support. They include: social capital, sense of place, parent involvement, strong church ties, school-community-business partnership, and community as curriculum. Districts and other community stakeholders should call for and provide increased opportunities for rural principals to develop collaborative skills.

### **Administrative Support in Rural and Urban Contexts**

The disparate concerns of urban and rural educational contexts necessitate differentiated administrative solutions, particularly with regards to teacher retention. Table 1 compiles and compares the administrative support activities that scholars and researchers have linked to either retention or satisfaction in urban and rural high-need schools. These administrative support activities are an expansion of the categories of administrative thematic components originally suggested by Cancio, Albrecht, and Johns (2013) and House (1981) including: guidance and feedback (e.g. on performance, improvement, responsibilities), opportunity for growth (e.g.,

workshops, peer-learning, planning time), appreciation (e.g., acknowledgment, sense of value), and trust (e.g., confidence, support, presence). It is worth noting the traits found to be more important in one context (urban, rural) rather than another may reflect not its potential value, but rather its prevalence of use in the locale. For example, while the provision of strong instructional leadership is clearly important in urban schools (Grissom, 2011), the lack of consistent finding for its importance in rural schools may be a reflection of the lower frequency of its use (Parson, Hunter, & Kallio, 2016). Rural principals have cited the importance of instructional leadership, yet they often report spending less time on instructional leadership activities than their non-rural counterparts due to time constraints associated with having to fulfill multiple roles (Lynch, 2012; Renihan, & Noonan, 2012).



Table 1.  
*Urban and Rural Principal Administrative Support*

	Guidance and Feedback/Appraisal	Opportunities for Growth/Informational Support	Trust/Emotional Support	Appreciation	Instrumental Support
<b>Urban Administrative Support</b>	<p>Providing ongoing feedback and coaching services (Hammonds, 2017)</p> <p>Providing strong instructional leadership (Grissom, 2011)</p>	<p>Providing transformational leadership (Finnigan, 2012)</p> <p>Providing school-based professional development (Hammonds, 2017)</p> <p>Building strong staff relations (Abel &amp; Sewell, 2010; Hammonds, 2017)</p>	<p>“Backing up” teachers (Kokka, 2016);</p> <p>Planning with teachers (Hammonds, 2017);</p> <p>Recognizing and appreciating teachers’ contributions (Jacob, Vidyarthi, &amp; Carroll, 2012; Margolis, 2008)</p>	<p>Supporting teachers with disciplinary issues and strong disciplinary policies;</p> <p>Maintaining a safe school environment (Kokka, 2016; Gregory, et al., 2010; Hammonds, 2017)</p>	<p>Emphasizing organizational management (e.g., hiring, budget) (Grissom, 2011; Horng, et al., 2010)</p>
<b>Rural Administrative Support</b>	<p>Providing detailed feedback (Seashore Louis, Dretzke, &amp; Wahlstrom, 2010)</p>	<p>Building capacity (helping teachers balance multiple grades, maximize instruction without assistants and with minimal material resources; address time pressures) (Anderson et al., 2010; Ashton &amp; Duncan, 2012; Kawana, 2007; Wallin &amp; Newton, 2013)</p>	<p>Empowering teachers (Bartling, 2013; Melia, 2012)</p>	<p>Developing strong individual interpersonal relationships with faculty (Preston &amp; Barnes, 2017; Barley &amp; Beesley, 2007; Cortez-Jiminez, 2012; Preston, 2012; Goodpaster, Adedokun, &amp; Weaver, 2012)</p>	<p>Providing flexible scheduling and personal days (Ulferts, 2015)</p> <p>Developing external partnerships; connecting teachers with the community (Pendola &amp; Fuller, 2018; Adams &amp; Woods, 2015; Masumoto &amp; Brown-Welty, 2009)</p>

### **Reducing Educator Turnover: Principals**

Burkhauser, Gates, Hamilton, and Ikemoto (2012) studied 519 first-year principals from 2007 to 2011 in six large urban U.S. school districts (Washington, DC; New York City; Chicago; Memphis; Baltimore; Oakland) and found that 11.8% left within the first year, with that percentage increasing to 22.5% by the second year. Retention rates were higher in New York (92.3%) and Chicago (92.5%) and lower in Baltimore (69.2%) and Washington (66.7%). Moreover, they found principals that were placed in schools that did not achieve the U.S. federal government's performance expectations (i.e., expected adequately yearly progress gains) the year before their placement were more likely to leave after just one year. The majority (78%) of the principals that left after only one year led schools that experienced further achievement decline under their leadership. This trend of performance decline continued after they left for most of the schools that experienced the principal turnover. Focusing on understanding principal burnout, Yildirim and Dinc (2019) found role conflict, role ambiguity, and workload to be significant influences on burnout in the Flemish schools of Belgium.

Similarly, results from a nationally representative sample of U.S. schools show that principals leave rural and urban schools at a rate higher than from any other context (11.8% and 10.0% respectively as compared to 8.6% in Suburban areas or 8.1% in Towns) (Goldring & Taie, 2018). Longitudinal research has shown that rural principals leave their schools earlier and have less school level employment stability than non-rural principals (Pendola & Fuller, 2018). Like teachers, rural principals are often replaced with less qualified personnel, who upon gaining some experience, transfer to lower-need schools to reproduce the vicious cycle of quality



educator shortage for rural schools (Branch, Hanushek, & Rivkin, 2012; Harrison & Tran, 2020). Strategic professional development for school leaders could address some of these issues.

To demonstrate, Farley-Ripple et al.'s (2012) interviewed 48 principals from both urban and rural schools and found that district support is one of two main factors that influenced administrators to stay in their position. This was likely related to developing the administrators' "sense of efficacy or ability to rise to the challenge" of the job (p. 804). Conversely, principals with less-self efficacy will more likely turnover, and this has ramifications for teacher turnover. In fact, Beteille et al. (2012) reported that teachers in a large urban district with higher value-added student gain scores were more likely to leave the school following a principal change and that every 1 standard deviation increase in the teachers' value added score above the average of 19% is associated with a 32% increase in the likelihood of a teacher leaving at the end of a new principal's initial year at a school.

One reason for teacher turnover is a lack of context-specific teacher preparation. Evidence suggests, however, that increased principal retention ameliorates teacher turnover problems, even when teachers feel under prepared. Jacob et al. (2015) evaluated the McRel Balanced Leadership Principal professional development program in rural Michigan schools. The program was developed based on 21 leadership responsibilities identified by meta-analysis on the relationship between school leadership and student achievement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2004). The authors posit that because teachers did not report perceiving substantive changes from their principals, the positive effect on teacher retention may be a result of the positive effect the program had on principal retention. This

suggests that a key lever to retaining teachers is retaining principals. The program was found to be effective for improving principal and teacher retention, supporting the value of principal development for multiple outcomes.

Though research on the topics of necessary principal knowledge, skills, and abilities—and the best format of appropriate training—are thin (Jacob et al., 2015; Grissom & Harrington, 2010), the literature has suggested several areas worth further emphasis. For example, improving time management skills is a potentially worthy area of development, given that scholars find that better time management skills allow principals to focus their time on priority tasks and reduce their stress, which has been found to be related to their retention (Grissom, Loeb, & Mitani, 2015). Burkhauser's (2017) study evinces this by finding principals significantly impact teachers' perception of school environmental factors like how much time teachers have to focus on teaching (time use), physical environment, teacher empowerment, and professional development. Based on this finding, she recommended that principals engage in professional development to improve their leadership skills. Suggested areas of development include "addressing teacher concerns, providing useful feedback, or establishing a feeling of mutual respect and trust at the school" (p. 139).

There exists empirical support that school leadership development can positively impact educator retention. For instance, Jacob et al. (2015) used a randomized controlled design to determine the causal effect of the Balanced Leadership principal development program on a variety of outcomes. Over the 3 years of the program, principals who participated were more likely (than control principals) to stay in their school, and this was also true for their teachers.



Similarly, principals with more in-depth professional development on how to support teachers reported lower barriers in developing their schools' human capital (Donaldson, 2013).

Handford and Leithwood (2012) argue for the centrality of school leadership development for student achievement, given empirical support for its influence. Due to the importance of principal development for educator supply and student achievement outcomes, adequate support should be provided to school principals so that they can support their teachers. This development can take many forms. For instance, to better address differences in the knowledge, skill, and ability needs of principals in different locales, input of multiple stakeholders—the community and district/school personnel, etc.—could be used to define a contextualized standard for principal quality (Tran & Bon, 2015; Tran & Bon, 2016). Additionally, districts can encourage collaboration between their schools and other districts to create a network of principals who can support each other. This not only helps to counter the isolation of the position, especially in rural areas, but also can be “a source of both coping and learning on the job” (Farley-Ripple, et al., 2012, p. 805).

### **Reducing Educator Turnover: Teachers**

Given that trust is critical for teacher retention (Allensworth et al., 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000) and student achievement (Handford & Leithwood, 2012), principal development efforts could train school leaders on how to engender trust through consistency and transparency, particularly with regards to school funds (Tran, 2017). Allensworth et al. (2009) cite the presence of “positive, trusting, working relationships” as the chief predictor of teacher retention. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) came to a similar conclusion. They interviewed 50 new teachers over 4 years and those that stayed

overwhelmingly identified supportive workplace environment and administrative support as critical for their retention. Other areas that school leaders can affect to create a supportive school culture are facilitating peer mentoring, providing common planning periods, offering political support for teachers from external forces, exhibiting inclusive decision-making, addressing school discipline issues, developing opportunities for teacher collaboration and role differentiation, and building relationships with the community for additional teacher and student support (Simon & Johnson, 2015). Studying teachers in Belgium, Hulpia, Devos, & Van Keer (2009) found “Teachers feel committed to the school if it is led by a leadership team working in a cooperative way and where all leaders support teachers sufficiently” (p. 47). Additionally, in a study of teacher induction in Belgium, Finland, and Portugal, Costa, Almeida, Pinho, and Pipa (2019) stressed the importance of school leaders supporting the differentiated pedagogy, critical reflection, and collaborative practices of new teachers.

Ultimately, principals want to retain “effective teachers,” not necessarily every teacher. This makes sense, given that schools with principals who retain higher value-added teachers and remove lower value-added ones achieve higher value-added student gains (Loeb, Kalogrides, & Beteille, 2012). More effective principals have been found to be associated with lower teacher turnover overall, but higher turnover with lower performing teachers (Grissom & Bartanen, 2018). In fact, principals who lead schools with greater student learning gains employ different strategies to strategically support and retain effective teachers as opposed to ineffective ones (Donaldson, 2013; Loeb, et al., 2012).



For instance, principals in Masumoto and Brown-Welty's (2009) study of high-performing, high-poverty rural schools had a strong focus on standards and high expectations. According to the educators at the schools, this led to the turnover of teachers who "did not embrace the culture of high expectations and whose impact on learning did not meet defined standards" (p. 11). Other studies similarly document that teachers who are less effective at improving student test score gains are more likely to turnover than those that are more so (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2007; Goldhaber, Gross, & Player, 2007).

Adnot, Dee, Katz, and Wyckoff (2017) examined the District of Columbia's Public Schools' IMPACT teacher evaluation program, a program designed to remove teachers with low test score gains and provided financial incentive for those with high test score gains (such as a one-time bonus and increase in base pay). In this setting, teacher turnover actually resulted in improvement in math test score gains (by .08 standard deviation) because "lower performing" teachers were replaced with "higher performing" ones. The IMPACT strategy was based on improvement through changing the composition of the teacher workforce. However, given that some impoverished rural districts can be hard pressed to even generate one candidate's interest for a position, one must wonder if this strategy will work in a rural high-needs context.

Other activities associated with strategic retention of effective teachers can include principal-sponsored mobility of teacher to formal and informal leadership roles (e.g., department chair), strategic professional development aimed at enhancing the skillset of high performers while providing coaching or district-facilitated peer assistance to poor performers, and differentiated degrees of

monitoring for employees of varying levels of effectiveness (Hornig & Loeb, 2010).

The provision of support for strategic retention has promise but can be difficult to implement in school cultures that often prioritize “sameness” and identical treatment over individualization (Tran, 2015). This is evident in both the near-universal reliance on the single salary schedule teacher compensation model and the lack of variation in teacher performance evaluation outcomes. Given this, how does a leader strategically manage the school talent within district policies, labor laws, collective bargaining agreements, and education codes that are often perceived as oppositional to differential treatment of employees? Avoiding the buildup of resentment in the school and creation of factions as a result of that differential treatment can be difficult (Balu et al., 2009). According to Leader-Member Exchange Theory, leaders cultivate and maintain different interpersonal relationships with each employee (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). This creates “out-groups” and “in-groups,” where individuals who are in the “in-group” receive preferential treatment, support, and authority over those in the “out-group,” who maintain minimum contractual exchange with the principal beyond what is required for the job. Because those in the “in-group” receive more support and attention, success breeds success, and they outperform their “out-group” peers. Efforts to expand those in the “in-group” should focus on social inclusion to improve the ability and opportunities for teachers from historically disadvantaged groups. However, if employees perceive that those in the “in-group” receive such status because of favoritism shown by the principal, this can create a toxic and unhealthy school culture. Consequently, it is important that any provision of differential treatment is perceived as fair and justified.



## Improved Student Achievement

Constant change in principals (especially effective ones) often results in constant changes in classroom and school culture, which researchers have found detrimental to student achievement (Beteille et al., 2012; Mascall & Leithwood, 2010). Repeated principal turnover can lead to inconsistency in the strategic direction of the school (Beteille et al., 2012) and prevents the school from building the capacity needed to improve (Allensworth et al., 2009). Everything from the school's vision to the way teachers are evaluated by their school leader could change when a new principal arrives. This lack of coherence can embolden teachers to resist change efforts by a new leader, opting to "wait out" a new principal if they expect that he/she will be replaced soon anyway (Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009).

Another mechanism by which principal turnover can negatively affect learning is through teacher turnover. Miller (2012) found that the years before and after a principal departure are typically associated with teacher turnover increases at 1.3% and 1.6% respectively. Others (Beteille et al., 2012; Jacob et al., 2015) have likewise found a relationship between principal turnover and teacher turnover, which indirectly links principal attrition to student learning outcomes (Beteille et al., 2012; Mascall & Leithwood, 2010; Ronfeldt et al., 2013). Of course, teachers matter for student learning in school and long-term life outcomes (Chetty et al., 2014), and frequent teacher turnover is a detriment for these outcomes. First, teacher replacement can result in inconsistencies that are detrimental for student learning (Beteille et al., 2012). Constant teacher turnover can result in a demoralizing effect on students, rendering it hard for them to trust and respect the new teachers coming through the "revolving door" of their schools (Marinell & Coca, 2013; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2015).

This lack of trust weakens all aspects of school culture, such as the sustenance of wavering parental engagement.

Ronfeldt et al. (2013), in their analysis of 850,000 observations of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in all New York City elementary schools across eight academic years, found empirical evidence to support the negative impact of teacher turnover on student English and math test scores, especially among high-needs schools. In addition, turnover negatively impacted the performance of teachers (e.g. student outcomes) who stayed in the schools, perhaps due to the disruption of the school culture, institutional knowledge, and consistency. There are always exceptions, however. Hanushek and Rivkin (2010) found that teacher turnover could yield positive results for student achievement, provided that leaving teachers are replaced with more effective teachers. As previously noted, though, urban and rural districts/schools often struggle to find qualified teaching candidates, a fact that potentially moots the possible benefits of teacher turnover for some in these contexts.

Given the anticipated and present shortages, stabilizing the rural and urban teacher workforce is of utmost urgency (UCEA, 2018). Even interventions and educational programs with high potential will not yield the fruits of the labor if the educator force is constantly replaced (Tran, McCormick, & Nguyen, 2018). Consequently, a better understanding of the educator supply problem is critical to addressing student achievement issues. However, with the increased emphasis on student learning gains promulgated by state and federal accountability systems, the focus and attention of education leaders may be occupied elsewhere. Our model mitigates some of this issue by suggesting that leadership



development may yield potential with not only educator retention but performance as well.

### **Conclusion**

High-need schools are often “hard-to-staff” because teachers with more experience and credentials typically leave for other lower-need schools (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Constant teacher turnover is problematic because replacements are usually less experienced than those they replaced, and students of new teachers often experience less achievement test score gains than those of experienced teachers (Ladd & Sorenson, 2017). This occurs especially in high-need schools with more low-income students, whose academic growths are more dependent on teachers than that of students from wealthier backgrounds (Downey, Von Hippel, & Hughes, 2008). Teacher turnover can also cause disruption for teachers that stay in schools because experienced teachers may have to pick up additional instructional workload and mentor new teachers when replacements are hired (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). Contrary to the perception that large proportions of students of color and from low-income backgrounds cause teacher attrition, recent literature suggests that school leadership and administrative support matter much more (Simon & Johnson, 2015).

While improvement of student learning is the primary desired outcome of schools and the ultimate objective of principals, their impact on student learning is largely indirect and mediated through their teachers (Waters et al., 2004). This suggests that teacher retention, specifically, is critical to student learning. Despite this, the relationship among principal development, teacher development, and student achievement is often overlooked (Grissom, 2011). A

school is only as effective as its staff, and school leaders must be able to provide the necessary support structure to the staff to maximize learning opportunities for students. The provision of appropriate administrative support to teachers is a human relations skill that is essential for school leaders. Those who effectively demonstrate this skill will not only increase the chances of teacher attraction (Tran & Smith, 2018) and retention (Hornig, 2009) but also “have a better chance to motivate the worker to go ‘the extra mile’” (Hutton, 2017, p. 571). Administrative support allows teachers, especially those new to the profession, to explore their pedagogical style and take chances to find what works for their students. This administrative support creates communication, which is linked with trust enhancement (Hutton, 2017). Trust is a necessary component of any leader and employee relationship and is directly related to decreases in teacher turnover (Tran, 2017; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

According to findings from a nationally representative sample of schools, when teachers perceive their leaders to be more effective, teachers are generally more satisfied with their work environment and less likely to leave their schools, and this relationship is more pronounced in high-need schools (Grissom, 2011). Effective principals must be able to manage interpersonal relationships within their specific context and to differentiate their administrative roles according to the context, accounting for differing external factors like culture and location (Hutton, 2017). In short, the role of a principal in a rural environment differs from that of a principal in an urban school, and appropriate development is needed in each setting (Hardwick-Franco, 2018).

The link between administrative support and teacher retention may be more complicated than a simplistic positive relationship. For



example, there is international evidence to support that employees who receive general development may actually be more likely to leave their organization (Ambrosius, 2018; Kraimer, Seibert, Wayne, Liden & Bravo, 2011). This is because better-developed employees become more attractive in the labor market and therefore may be more likely to leave their employer for more attractive employment opportunities. For high-needs schools, it has been documented that teachers who gain human capital (such as experience) often leave for lower need environments (Feng & Sass, 2017; Tran & Dou, 2019).

Still it has been argued that the relational bond between employers with their employees is strengthened when employers provide the type of support that shows employees they are cared about and valued (Ambrosius, 2018). Moreover, school leadership has been found to predict teacher retention, without moderation by teacher and school characteristics (Player, Youngs, Perrone & Grogan, 2017), and that school climate (which the principal has influence in shaping) is critical for teacher mobility (Djonko-Moore, 2016). Consequently, it is important that any model of support account for both the human and social capital components of development in a comprehensive Talent Centered Education Leadership framework (Tran, 2020). While employer needs are often prioritized with employees utilized as human *resources* to respond to those needs, Talent Centered Education Leadership emphasizes the importance of responding to employee needs in order to better support them in their work.

Given the emphasis of multi-level and contextual support in our model, it is logical to extend that thinking to local and federal governments, who could encourage context-specific leadership development by providing funding and technical assistance to school

districts and leadership preparation programs. Governments could also direct professional development funding towards principals, financially incentivizing them to update their skillsets. In fact, existing mechanisms and structures can be taken advantage of for this. For instance, in the U.S., states could utilize Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Title II-A funding to support high-quality principal preparation or utilize the ESSA Leader Recruitment and Support Program, which provides grant funding for the recruitment and development of principals of high-needs schools (Learning Policy Institute, 2017).

There have been calls to better understand the management styles that predict lower teacher turnover and improve student outcomes (Grissom, 2011) because of the dearth of research on connecting principals to teacher talent management. This research would have policy implications for pre-service and in-service professional development. Although the bulk of this paper addressed the need for administrative support, Louis et al. (2010) argued that "...leaders must have the time, the knowledge, and the consultative skills needed to provide teachers support" (p.11). Therefore, the next logical question becomes how do we provide school leaders with the support so that they are able to carry out their duties and effectively to address teacher needs? The questionable effectiveness of principal preparation programs has raised concerns for many despite the evidence supporting the importance of strong leadership for teacher performance and retention (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). This suggests a need to better understand the specific professional development areas that are necessary for school leaders to strategically leverage their talent to improve student outcomes, especially in high-need schools.



In this conceptual paper, we posited a theoretically informed model based on the body of empirical evidence that suggests improving school administrative support will positively impact principal retention, teacher retention, and student achievement. We consulted empirical evidence to develop a model to address the following questions: Are the administrative supports needed in rural contexts different from those needed in urban contexts? What is the relationship between administrative support provided to teachers and teacher retention? What is the relationship between administrative support provided to teachers and student outcomes? The next step is to empirically validate the model.

In future work, the model can be extended in numerous ways. For instance, while we highlight the need to contextualize administrative support based on location, research suggests that teachers may need differentiated support to connect with students from different ethnic and socio-economic background (Simon & Johnson, 2015). For example, given that public teachers are mostly non-Hispanic White (80%) and female (77%) (Taie & Goldring, 2017), what kind of support do they need to succeed in schools with students that may be majority persons of color? Research has suggested that teachers with vastly different lived experiences than those of their students may make faulty assumptions and fail to understand the academic barriers their students face (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). Given this understanding, future research should address how and what districts, schools, and their personnel need to support these teachers in forging better, more meaningful connections with their students.

Finally, it is important to note that rural and urban communities are not monolithic, and the complexity of their respective localities

often require development more attuned to their specific context. Future work should further distinguish between the support needs associated with different types of rural and urban high-need schools. Exploration of these areas should lead to a greater understanding of how school leaders can demolish the barriers that prevent teachers from performing their jobs and serve their students to their full potential.

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## Mentoring and Role Modelling Through the Perspective of Academic Intellectual Leadership: Voluntarily and Institutionally

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**Abstract**

*With their traditional roles as being knowledge producers and public intellectuals, the intellectual leadership of academics is formed jointly of responsibilities regarding emerging expectations such as income generation, international networking, external collaboration, interdisciplinary research, disciplinary/institutional representation, and guidance/supervision of younger colleagues' studies. While academic intellectual leadership basically includes six dimensions, Mentor and Role Model are the two core dimensions that intertwine around the others; namely, Acquisitor, Steward, Ambassador, and Advocate. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to compare the rationales and outcomes of voluntary mentoring-role modelling behaviours and institutional mentoring-role modelling programs through the perspective of academic intellectual leadership. In the research, a systematic review of the literature was employed to examine mentoring-role modelling components in the peer-reviewed articles on academic intellectual leadership, following the five essential steps of systematic review methodology: i) formulating research question(s), ii) setting inclusion-exclusion criteria, iii) establishing a systematic search protocol, iv) apprising the quality of individual studies, and v) integrating prominent findings. Results of the analysis*

**Article Info**

**Article History:**

*Received*

October 20, 2019

*Accepted*

August 07, 2020

**Keywords:**

*Academic intellectual leadership, Faculty research leadership, Mentoring programs, Role modelling behaviours, Systematic literature review.*

*revealed that the personal and economic rationales behind the voluntary mentoring-role modelling behaviours of senior academics are largely consistent with the organisational goals of institutional mentoring-role modelling practices. Further, the symbiotic nature of the mentor-mentee relationship generates a huge potential to enrich the scientific productivity of both senior and junior academics. However, cultural and political reasons largely shape the international practices of mentoring-role modelling in higher education, both at individual and institutional level.*

**Cite as:**

Uslu, B. (2020). Mentoring and role modelling through the perspective of academic intellectual leadership: Voluntarily and institutionally. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 5(3), 921-952. DOI: 10.30828/real/2020.3.9

### **Introduction**

Mentoring and role modelling practices are valuable instruments in higher education settings to develop the intellectual capacity and scholarly qualifications of early career researchers (ECRs). Their effectiveness is related to the academics' intellectual leadership behaviours as well as institutional approaches (Macfarlane, 2012a). Therefore, the theoretical perspective of academic intellectual leadership (AIL) could provide a comprehensive framework to understand the dynamics of influential, voluntary and institutional mentoring-role modelling initiatives in higher education institutions.

While mentoring is about supporting younger colleagues to realise their own potential "by guiding and facilitating their scholarly activities... through collaborative studies" (Evans, Homer, & Rayner, 2013; Macfarlane, 2011; as cited in Uslu, 2015, p. 1608), role modelling involves setting a good example by academics via their scientific



achievements, scholarly attributes, and personal characteristics, both in the professional community and society (Uslu & Welch, 2018). As can be seen in these definitions, mentoring-role modelling behaviours are strongly associated with the professional roles expected from academics, especially those occupying senior positions. Whereas the scholarly role of academics is already known variously as academic (disciplinary) leadership (Kekäle, 1999), faculty leadership (Kezar, Lester, Carducci, Gallant, & Contreras-McGavin, 2007), professorial leadership (Poulson, Smith, Hood, Arthur, & Bazemore, 2011), or research leadership (Evans, 2014), there is a limited number of studies comprehensively evaluating aspects of academic roles and duties together.

One example is Boyer's (1990) book on the priorities of the professoriate. In this work, Boyer (1990) pictured the faculty's role behaviours as having four dimensions; namely, scholarships of Teaching (e.g. developing pedagogical practices and knowledge), of Discovery (e.g. exploring new knowledge, theories, principles, etc.), of Integration (e.g. producing interdisciplinary knowledge), and of Application (using disciplinary knowledge to solve individual, institutional, and societal problems). In another study, Tight (2002) discussed the scholarly leadership of professors and identified nine roles: being a role model, helping the development of colleagues, generating income, participating in public debate, influencing institutional direction, research leadership, innovativeness in teaching, departmental representation in the institution, and maintaining the standards of scholarship. Further, Evans (2014) proposed the componential structure of researcher development by behavioural, attitudinal, and intellectual development, and clearly outlined the role of senior academics in leading epistemological,

rationalistic, comprehensive, and analytical change among their younger colleagues' intellectual perspectives (p. 56).

Additionally, focusing on the nine roles outlined by Tight (2002), Macfarlane (2011) developed the term 'Intellectual Leadership' to define the scholarly leadership roles of professors and categorised these roles as having six dimensions: Role Model, Mentor, Guardian, Acquisitor, Ambassador, and Advocate (p. 70). While explaining mentoring-role modelling as two closely related dimensions, Macfarlane (2011) also revealed how the importance of these role behaviours differ for professors (mentoring as the first and role modelling as the third) and their institutions (mentoring as the fourth and role modelling as the fifth). Similarly, taking Macfarlane's frame as a basis, Uslu and Welch (2018) questioned professorial intellectual leadership and concluded that "to be a good example in every aspect for young people around them, senior academics have to display all sorts of professorial intellectual leadership behaviours within Guardian, Mentor, Acquisitor, Ambassador and Advocate dimensions" (p. 577). Uslu and Arslan (2018) then statistically proved the associations existing between faculty's AIL behaviours and universities' organisational components in terms of organisational climate, communication, and managerial practice flexibility.

Although studies on faculty development initiatives have largely argued the contribution of mentoring-role modelling to the enrichment of collegial climate and scholarly interaction in higher education institutions (Baldwin, DeZure, Shaw, & Moretto, 2008; Fitzgerald, 2014; Macfarlane, 2012b; Osiemo, 2012), these studies rarely take the individual factors of (senior and junior) academics into consideration when assessing the effectiveness of mentoring-role modelling programs. However, it is important to take voluntary and



institutional motives together in order to apprehend a complete picture of how influential mentoring-role modelling practices are in higher education. While investigating the reflection of senior-junior academics' collaboration on their scholarly productivity, such an approach can also guide university managers in designing well-rounded mentoring-role modelling practices in their own institutions. AIL presents a wide perspective to trace both the voluntary and institutional basis of mentoring-role modelling in higher education.

### Theoretical Structure of AIL

As viewed through the eyes of professors while comparing the priority of scholarly roles according to the professors themselves and also their institutions, Macfarlane (2011) introduced the term 'Intellectual Leadership' and defined six qualities for professorial leadership (see Table 1).

Table 1.

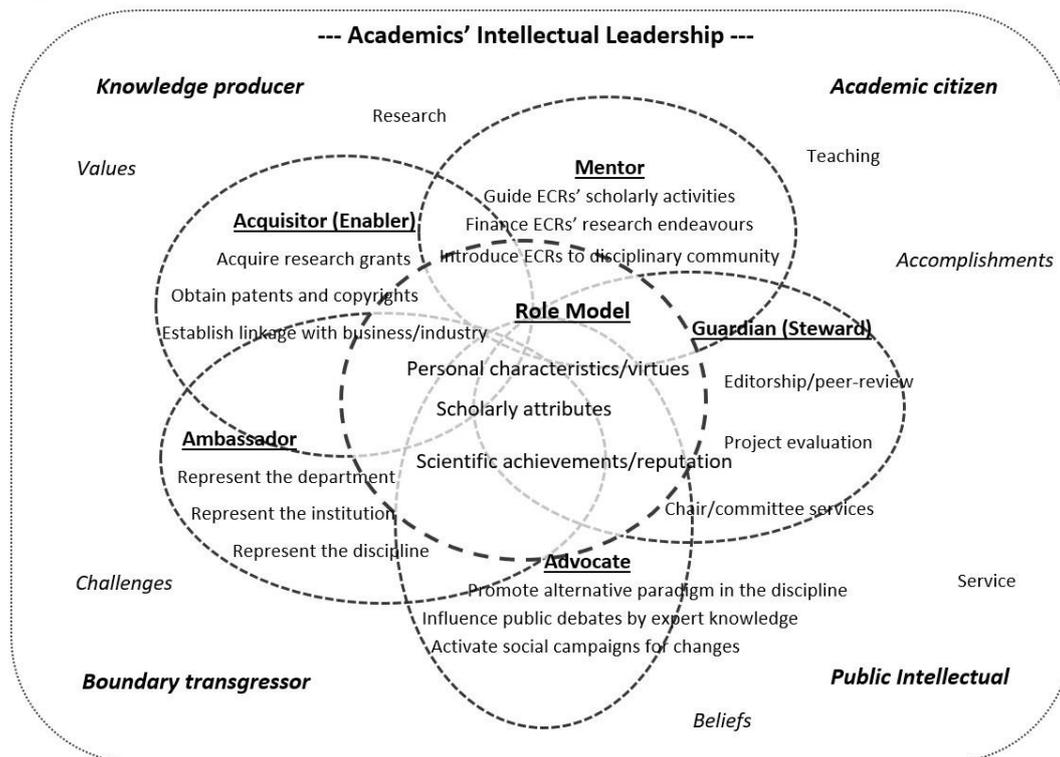
*The qualities of the professor as a leader (Macfarlane, 2011, p. 70)*

<i>Role Model</i>	through personal scholarship, teaching, leadership and management, influence within the discipline or profession, publication, grants, awards and other research achievements
<i>Mentor</i>	to less experienced colleagues within and without the institution
<i>Advocate</i>	for the discipline or profession; explaining, arguing, promoting, debating, lobbying, campaigning
<i>Guardian</i>	of standards of scholarship and academic values within the discipline or profession
<i>Acquisitor</i>	of grants, resources, research students, contracts and other commercial opportunities
<i>Ambassador</i>	on behalf of the university in external relations both nationally and internationally

Macfarlane (2012a) then expanded on the framework of AIL with four major characteristics (Academic citizen, Boundary transgressor, Knowledge producer, Public intellectual) to describe influential intellectual leaders in academia. Macfarlane and Chan (2014) also identified research, teaching, service duties of academics and their scholarly values, personal beliefs, scientific achievements, and career challenges as the basis of AIL behaviours. When gathering these components together based on the results of previous studies (Uslu, 2015; Uslu & Welch, 2018), the researcher placed the 'Role Model' dimension at the centre to highlight its strong connection with the other dimensions of AIL (see Figure 1).

Figure 1.

Structure of AIL (based on Macfarlane, 2011; 2012a; Macfarlane & Chan, 2014)



The 'Role model' dimension includes academics' personal characteristics (helping, patient, responsible, etc.), virtues (creative, honest, cooperative, etc.), and scholarly attributes (expert, global, respected, etc.) (Macfarlane & Chan, 2014, p. 299-302). In addition, this dimension "covers challenging others to create a transformation in the[ir] understanding...; influencing... and leading [others] to success; performing services that contribute to the development of students, colleagues, research fields,... and society; and coping with

difficulties... such as economical,... or ideological obstacles” (Uslu, 2015, p. 1608). Role modelling is also associated with scholarly reputation, disciplinary expertise, skilful management, international collaboration, income generation, and mentoring behaviours (Macfarlane, 2011; 2012a).

The ‘Mentor’ dimension basically means assisting the career advancement of less experienced colleagues by advising them on their research efforts and collaboratively participating in their studies (Uslu, 2016, p. 196). Mentoring behaviours of academics cover various practices such as forming research teams with ECRs, financing scholarships/fellowships with grants, co-authorship with younger colleagues, reviewing less-experienced academics’ manuscripts and fund applications, giving feedback about the teaching-learning practices of younger scholars, generating co-advisory opportunities for early career colleagues, establishing connections between junior and senior academics in their discipline, and guiding the long-term career plans of ECRs (Macfarlane, 2011; Macfarlane & Chan, 2014). All in all, mentorship would achieve its main goal of contributing to the development of the next generation in academia, “when... the mentee is no longer intellectually dependent on the mentor and finds their own voice... The professor as mentor has succeeded when mentee no longer needs their support and guidance” (Macfarlane, 2012a, p. 94).

With the dimensional definitions given above, studies on AIL generate a good source to seek the rationales of both voluntary and institutional aspects of academics’ mentoring-role modelling in higher education. Further, AIL studies clearly outline the prominent perspectives with which to discuss individual and institutional rationales and their potential outcomes. These perspectives are



basically personal, cultural (scholarly/institutional/national), economic, and political motivators for the voluntary mentoring-role modelling behaviours of academics (Macfarlane, 2011; Macfarlane & Chan, 2014; Uslu, 2015; 2016) and, in a similar vein, the organisational, cultural (academic/institutional/national), economic, and political reasons behind institutional mentoring-role modelling practices (Macfarlane, 2012a; 2019; Uslu & Arslan, 2018; Uslu & Welch, 2018). Therefore, following the voluntary and institutional versions of these four frames outlined here, this research will focus on AIL studies to explore mentoring-role modelling initiatives in higher education.

### **Methodology**

This research was designed as a systematic literature review (SLR) on mentoring-role modelling in higher education. Systematic review methodology aims to aggregate the results of individual studies in order to answer specific research questions based on larger evidence (Bearman et al., 2012). In line with this definition, in order to examine the voluntary and institutional approaches of mentoring-role modelling through the perspective of AIL, the researcher systematically reviewed the literature of AIL following the five steps suggested by Petticrew and Roberts (2006). These steps are:

1. Formulating the research question(s),
2. Defining inclusion/exclusion criteria,
3. Recording eligible studies systematically,
4. Assessing the quality of the selected studies,
5. Integrating prominent findings.

### Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to explore the rationales behind mentoring-role modelling approaches as part of AIL as well as discussing the potential outcomes both for academics (senior-junior) and institutions. Therefore, the research questions are:

- Through the perspective of AIL, what are the rationales of academics to display voluntary mentoring-role modelling behaviours?
- Through the perspective of AIL, what are the rationales behind the mentoring-role modelling initiatives of higher education institutions?

### Inclusion-Exclusion Criteria

To select the related studies of AIL, the researcher defined selected criteria before embarking on the systematic search protocol. These criteria are:

<u>Inclusion</u>	<u>Exclusion</u>
+ listed in certain indexes (Web of Knowledge, SCOPUS, and ERIC-Educ. Resource Inf. Center)	- country-specific indexes (e.g. Australian Education Index, British Education Index, etc.)
+ relevance to AIL (or research leadership/faculty leadership/academic leadership)	- non-relevance to mentoring-role modelling (approaches/behaviours)
+ published after 2010 (introduction of intellectual leadership frame by Macfarlane in	- published before 2011 (introduction of intellectual leadership frame by Macfarlane in 2011)



2011)	- not written in English
+ written in English	- not a peer-reviewed article
+ a peer-reviewed article	- not empirical research
+ empirical research	

### Systematic Search Protocol

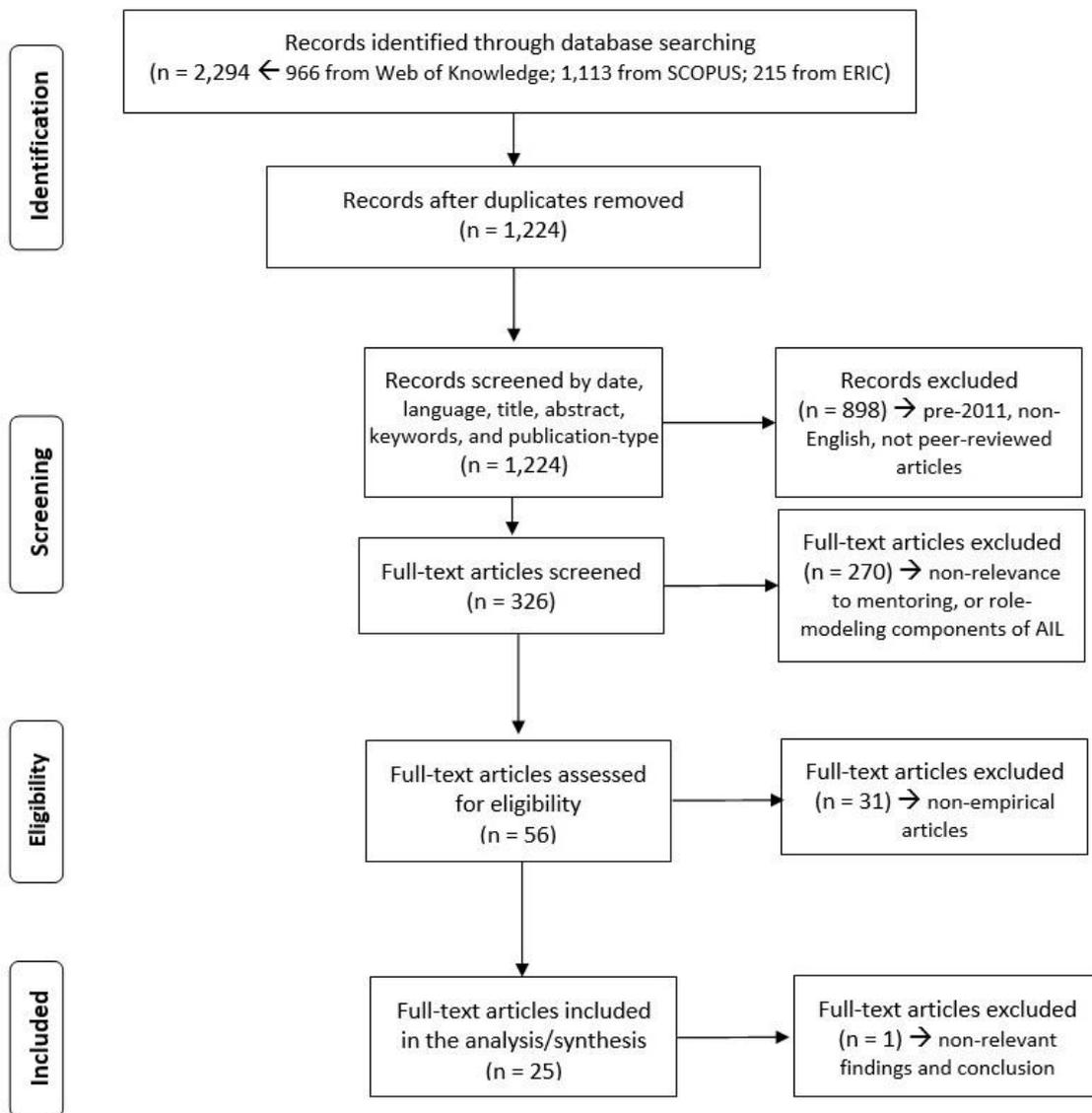
First, the researcher identified the keywords for the systematic search with assistance from a colleague who had studied higher education policy and finance in the same department. These search terms are:

- academic AND intellectual AND leader(ship)
- intellectual AND leader(ship) AND mentor(ing) OR role model(ling)
- faculty AND leader(ship) AND intellectual OR mentor(ing) OR role model(ling)
- research AND leader(ship) AND intellectual OR mentor(ing) OR role model(ling)
- academic AND leadership AND intellectual OR mentor(ing) OR role model(ling)

Second, the researcher searched for these keywords in the previously-defined scientific publication indexes. The results of the systematic search and elimination of articles were then summarised in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2.

PRISMA Flowchart of systematic search on AIL, focusing on mentoring-role modelling





## Quality Appraisal

In this review study, all selected articles are empirical research. Therefore, each selected article was assessed based on the methodological approach to its empirical evidence. While quantitative articles were examined focusing on their population-sample, selected analysis, and findings presentation; the qualitative articles focused on the study group, analysis credibility, and direct evidence from the data-source. Mixed methods research articles were evaluated using the same approach to quantitative and qualitative studies. The basic aspects of the article appraisal are tabularised in the Appendix.

## Integration of Analysis Results

Parallel to the main logic of SLR in aggregating the results of individual studies, the researcher first analysed each selected article separately. During the analysis, benefiting from the advantage of having an expanded evidence-set from the selected articles, the researcher largely focused on findings/results and the discussion/conclusion sections. As outlined in the theoretical framework above, the researcher previously assigned the analysis themes in consideration of his own studies on AIL (Uslu, 2015; 2016; Uslu & Arslan, 2018; Uslu & Welch, 2018). The themes were the personal, cultural, economic, and political rationales for voluntary mentoring-role modelling, and also the organisational, cultural, economic, and political rationales for institutional initiatives of mentoring-role modelling.

In the first step of the analysis, the researcher read all articles and marked the parts related to mentoring-role modelling. The researcher then formulated the initial list of codes (with the name of

themes and sub-themes). Using this list, the researcher coded each article and noted the related section(s) from the article on Excel, which included 'voluntary' and 'institutional' themes and their sub-themes. In the next step, another researcher with a PhD in the field of Educational Administration and Supervision coded the notes on the Excel sheet using the same codes and same themes and sub-themes. Based on face-to-face discussion, the researcher and second-coder decided to add one more code to the list. After the secondary coding process, the researcher calculated the inter-coder agreement as 82% (with the basic formula: [ # of same codes / # of all (same & non-same) codes] x 100). Ensuring the inter-rater reliability (having a coefficient greater than .70 (Miles & Huberman, 1994)), the researcher then integrated the dominant findings of the thematic descriptive analysis. Annotations from the selected articles are also presented in the next section.

## Results

AIL consists of a wide spectrum of the characteristics and qualifications of academics, from disciplinary expertise to personality, from societal service to professional network, and from scholarly productivity to gatekeeping duties. Reviewing the systematically-selected articles on AIL, this research extracted the general approach to mentoring-role modelling within the complex structure of AIL. The rationales behind mentoring-role modelling in higher education institutions, voluntarily or institutionally, were then summarised in Table 2 below and the potential outcomes discussed.



Table 2.

*Rationales for mentoring and role modelling in higher education*

	<b>Voluntary Mentoring-Role Modelling</b>		<b>Institutional Mentoring-Role Modelling</b>
<i>Personal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- feeling moral obligation</li> <li>- willing to share his/her experiences</li> <li>- diffusing his/her teaching/research style</li> <li>- relishing co-authorship with ECRs</li> <li>- prioritising/valuing (the composition of) research team with ECRs</li> <li>- developing his/her own research abilities with intelligent ECRs</li> <li>- requests from (international) ECRs for advice</li> <li>- <i>having visiting positions in overseas universities</i></li> <li>- <i>receiving collegial support from international community</i></li> <li>- being an internationally well-known researcher</li> <li>- being a prominent/productive researcher in his/her field</li> <li>- having a scholarly reputation with scientific achievements</li> <li>- having an international network/collaboration</li> <li>- being a multidisciplinary researcher</li> <li>- being an inspirational teacher and/or manager</li> <li>- having communication skills to motivate ECRs</li> <li>- personality match; having a similar personality with mentee(s)</li> <li>- <u>focusing only on his/her own career</u></li> </ul>	<i>Organisational</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>training the next generation of academics</i></li> <li>- adapting to academic support/faculty development service(s)</li> <li>- adapting to research chair and PhD scholarship schemes</li> <li>- <i>co-supervision with ECRs</i></li> <li>- leadership/skill development for newly appointed professors</li> <li>- <i>introducing institutional standards</i></li> <li>- <i>familiarising mentees to institutional practice(s)</i></li> <li>- <i>increasing collaboration (disciplinary and interdisciplinary)</i></li> <li>- benefiting senior academics' experience and network</li> <li>- capacity development of ECRs</li> <li>- establishing communication for work-related exchange</li> <li>- promoting international disciplinary engagement</li> <li>- enriching faculty socialisation</li> <li>- <u>pay lip mentoring in his/her department</u></li> <li>- <u>leave off mentoring duties for fund/grant acquisition</u></li> </ul>

<p><i>Cultural</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- tendency for collegiality/collaboration</li> <li>- receiving collegial support from international community</li> <li>- training the next generation in his/her field</li> <li>- setting excellence/quality expectations for ECRs' studies</li> <li>- co-supervision with ECRs</li> <li>- mentoring others following his/her mentor(s); ex-mentee experience(s)</li> <li>- mentee's high productivity (influenced by his/her mentor's reputation)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Cultural</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- co-supervision with ECRs</li> <li>- promoting excellence/quality culture in the institution</li> <li>- empowering collegiality and shared governance culture</li> <li>- national approach to mentoring (e.g. informal in Africa)</li> <li>- competitive culture in the nation (e.g. for grants in Australia)</li> <li>- introducing institutional standards</li> <li>- familiarising mentees to institutional practice(s)</li> </ul>
<p><i>Economic</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- advising ECRs for suitable publication/fund options</li> <li>- financing ECRs' research by his/her grant(s)/fund(s)</li> <li>quick appointment for mentee (after working with a well-known researcher)</li> <li>- supporting ECRs' studies both for his/her and mentees' promotion</li> <li>- <u>imbalanced teaching and administrative load</u></li> </ul>	<p><i>Economic</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- internal (writing/review) support for fund/grant applications</li> <li>- potential gain/profit from visiting, overseas appointment(s)</li> <li>- preparing "future research leaders (or their own star)"</li> <li>- searching opportunities actively for departmental colleague(s)</li> <li>- <u>not fairly committed to formal mentoring description</u></li> </ul>
<p><i>Political</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mentoring ECRs from similar (research) interest group</li> <li>- potential alliance with like-minded ECRs</li> <li>- supporting female ECRs against gender bias</li> <li>- connecting ECRs with senior members of the discipline (purposefully)</li> <li>- having advantageous profile in post-colonial period (e.g. in Africa)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Political</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- preparing "future research leaders (or their own star)"</li> <li>- cross-generation mentoring experience(s)</li> <li>- encouragement for mentoring members of other gender(s)</li> <li>- continuously monitoring the impact of mentoring program(s)</li> <li>- prioritising intellectual gain(s) from ex-colonialist countries</li> </ul>



As one of the researcher's ex-interviewees, a professor of human sciences explained that, "you (senior academics) provide examples in almost everything you want to notice is that everything we do as professors is observed, and we become models for researchers who are perhaps less experienced" (Uslu & Welch, 2018, p. 577). Therefore, role modelling includes more than visible mentoring relations with ECRs. However, the favourable characteristics of influential role models tend to make them target mentors by students and junior academics. In this respect, Table 2 clearly shows that personal factors promoting voluntary mentoring include two groups of rationales; why they want to be a mentor, and why others ask them for mentor support. For the first group, the main reason is the moral intention of senior academics to train the next generation of researchers in their discipline (Damonse & Nkomo, 2012; Macfarlane, 2011; Uslu & Welch, 2018). Other rationales are bidirectional, as in the willingness of senior academics to collaborate with a dynamic team of ECRs and their "influenc[e on] the intellectual development of the next generation" (Damonse & Nkomo, 2012, p. 441). Considering the potential of co-productivity, ECRs tend to ask for mentoring support or work together with highly productive academics. These higher-performer academics have a good reputation gained by means of their scholarly achievements and have developed a strong relationship with the international community in their discipline. For example, Browning, Thompson, and Dawson (2017, p. 372) highlighted that "the 30 research leaders in this study come from active and supportive research cultures and were mentored. They supervise and publish with their research students, participate in collaborative research, and have good international connections and networks."

Accordingly, having good mentoring support in their early career years from senior academics clearly influences the ECRs' understanding of academic culture. Here, accessing collegial support from the international research community could be critical for ECRs in a developing field in their home countries, as in the following example: "she embarked upon a Ph.D. and struggled to identify local discipline specific experts who could supervise doctoral studies in her field. [She said:] But I think I found my intellectual home in the international community" (Damonse & Nkomo, 2012, p. 448). It can be said that senior academics naturally develop their own mentoring approach based on previous experience with their ex-mentor(s) (Evans, Homer, & Rayner, 2013; Rohwer, 2015; van Driel et al., 2017). While forming an (invisible) excellence and quality line for ECRs by means of their high-impact studies and publications, senior academics largely contribute to younger academics' productivity with co-authored papers, collaborative projects, co-supervised graduate studies, and their influential advice on potential options for publication and grants.

In addition to their own projects, senior academics can generate financial support for junior researcher positions, largely in the form of a scholarship/fellowship. Young researchers generally assume that such a "fellowship [is a chance] to work with her (professor)... because she is well known and has a good reputation in her field and a chance to work with her is an honour" (Damonse & Nkomo, 2012, p. 451). On this point, senior academics effectuate personal policies which influence their choice of mentees and approach; for example, by prioritising candidate(s) having a similar research interest in their discipline (Kezar & Lester, 2014), considering the potential of future collaboration (Kezar, Gallant, & Lester, 2011), or protecting young researchers from an imbalanced gender group against gender bias in



the scientific world (Macfarlane & Burg, 2019; van den Brink, 2015). Regarding another personal policy, when senior academics are “searching examiners for [their] doctoral students, [they mostly consider] who is going to be a useful contact for the future, someone might do joint research with or at least someone who can be used as a referee” (Uslu & Welch, 2018, p. 577). Further, Damonse and Nkomo (2012) explained how it is a great advantage for ECRs to access intellectual development support from international experts through their mentor’s network.

Damonse and Nkomo (2012) also exemplified the context of Africa, including many post-colonial countries, highlighting the generous responsiveness of disciplinary leaders, especially from their ex-colonialist states of Europe (p. 448). However, having a certain profile as researcher might become part of institutional policies in the post-colonial period, as follows: “During the ‘80s and early ‘90s, it was also politically advantageous to [be] a bright, young, white male (English-speaking) who was taken up into research posts at the major resource-intensive Afrikaner universities in [South Africa]” (Damonse & Nkomo, 2012, p. 447). There are many other political strategies which are shaping the institutional approach to mentoring programs in different parts of the world. Examples include: forming cross-generational mentoring to benefit from the experience of senior academics while keeping them up-to-date by means of younger academics’ new research endeavours (from the USA – Kezar & Lester, 2014), encouraging male academics to mentor female ECRs, even establishing connections with their husband (in African countries – Owusu, Kalipeni, Awortwi, & Kiiru, 2017), and preparing ‘future research leaders (or their own star)’ (in Australia – Uslu & Welch, 2018).

Whether or not it is their main rationale, it appears that the institutional strategy of mentoring is also related to the academic culture of the country as well as the institution itself. While the humanitarian approach or competitiveness of national academies influences the content of the mentoring program in an institution, mentoring programs generally contribute to the empowerment of collegiality, scientific collaboration, and a culture of excellence in the institution (Browning et al., 2017; Evans, 2014; Kezar et al., 2011; Uslu & Arslan, 2018). Higher education institutions also benefit from senior academics' mentoring behaviours in introducing their bureaucratic structure (i.e. institutional standards and practices) to less-experienced mentees, which is largely related to tenure and the promotion process (Evans, 2014; Kezar & Lester, 2014; Macfarlane & Burg, 2019). Further, mentoring programs may also be associated with institutional services for financial gain by "visiting fellows[hips of their own staff] at universities across the globe" (Damonse & Nkomo, 2012, p. 450), "advising on source of funding [particularly for departmental colleagues]" (Macfarlane, 2011, p. 67), and a "systematic network for internal review [of grant proposals]" (Evans, 2014, p. 53).

While institutional mentoring initiatives include many conjoint facilitators of the cultural, economic, and political aspects of academia, the main purpose of higher education institutions is the development of ECRs, as explained by the following: "If they (junior researchers/academics) do not get mentoring, professional development, and support early from their institutions, their talents might be wasted" (Browning et al., 2017, p. 373). Higher education institutions can also adapt mentoring-role modelling schemes to more comprehensive, academic leadership training or a faculty development program in order to enrich faculty socialisation



(Rohwer, 2015), establish collegial communication channels (Evans, 2017), increase disciplinary and interdisciplinary cooperation (Uslu, 2016), and promote engagement with the international research community (Damonse & Nkomo, 2012), particularly benefitting from senior academics' professional networks (Macfarlane, 2011).

However, senior academics may choose to focus only on their own studies; even mentoring-role modelling "is considered a formal job specification" (Macfarlane & Burg, 2019, p. 269) for professorship in their institution. In such circumstances, many ECRs then have to seek "support, encouragement, and advice from professorial colleagues outside [their] institution... [rather than] simply pay lip service to the principle of mentoring [in their department/institution]" (Evans et al., 2013, p. 681). Furthermore, higher education institutions can prefer to purposively leave out the mentoring-role modelling responsibilities of senior academics, as Macfarlane (2011) stated: "while many professors are still committed to often time-consuming mentoring and support activities, modern institutions are increasingly developing systems to release them from such duties in order to focus their efforts in a more economically efficient manner" (p. 71).

### **Conclusion**

This research focused on the Mentor and Role Model dimensions of AIL. Systematically selected articles on AIL were analysed to discover the rationales of academics to do voluntary mentoring-role modelling as well as the institutional dynamics of the mentoring-role modelling components of faculty development initiatives. The results displayed an interwinding structure of personal, organisational, cultural, economic, and political factors that

together influence mentoring-role modelling practice in higher education.

While higher education institutions clearly prioritise training the next generation of academics, it seems that the feeling of obligation by senior academics to contribute to the development of junior academics/researchers serves this institutional priority well. The institutions largely prefer to adapt mentoring-role modelling practices into their faculty development programs, but such organisational practice may conclude with perfunctory collegial support from senior to junior colleagues (Evans et al., 2013). Here, the quality of the mentoring-role modelling of senior academics is heavily dependent on their personal willingness to collaborate with younger academics. Beyond having a similar research interest, the voluntary aspects of their mentoring-role modelling behaviours should also include a good match of the mentor's and mentee's personalities (Rohwer, 2015).

As expected, ECRs (i.e. mentees) tend to seek collegial support from high-achiever, research leader(s) in their disciplinary area. If a mentor accepts potential mentees as fresh intellectual power for the teamwork, "over time, when successful, this awe-inspired relationship [between mentor and mentee(s)] seems to mature into one of mutual respect between mentee and mentor" (Damonse & Nkomo, 2012, p. 451). Considering the high potential of their like-minded personalities, this symbiotic relationship will most likely result in a productive collaboration for both mentor and mentee(s). In addition to their co-authored papers, a mentor might provide financial support for their successful mentee(s) through grants or funding.



Contrary to Macfarlane's (2011) warning on removing the mentoring-role modelling duties of senior academics for financial reasons, many higher education institutions, especially ones aiming to raise their own stars, can prioritise the inclusion of internal reviews of their institutional mentoring-role modelling initiatives (Uslu, 2017). Here, in addition to their peer feedback, the active role modelling (or personal contribution) of senior academics on grant-writing can greatly increase the chance of junior academics' fund acquisition; this is clearly another goal of institutional mentoring-role modelling programs. In the end, with their scientific productivity and grant achievements, young scholars can quickly become research leaders in their field (Browning et al., 2017; Li, Aste, Caccioli, & Livan, 2019). Similar to Evans' (2017) suggestion, when they reach this senior step, institutions should introduce professorial roles and duties (in keeping with collegial expectations) through a special training program for newly-appointed/promoted senior academics.

Their fruitful experience of mentoring-role modelling obviously assists the collegial formation of a mentoring-role modelling culture among new research leaders. On the other hand, when a mentor-role model fully focuses on their own career, the mentor-mentee relationship can create unfair authorship and financial reward (largely in favour of the senior party) in their joint research projects (Horne et al., 2016; Macfarlane, 2017; Meng et al. 2017). As the researcher personally experienced, in such circumstances, early career academics generally seek out collegial support from the international community in their discipline. As an emerging political reason in this research, if ECRs are working in post-colonial countries, they mostly receive disciplinary support from international academics who have research background in ex-colonial states (Damonse & Nkomo, 2012; Owusu et al., 2017).

As in many cases around the world, it follows that higher education institutions prefer to appoint visiting professors to meet the mentoring-role modelling need of their junior academic staff (Spring, Kunkel, Gilman, Henderson, & White, 2016). With the advantage of globalised transportation (Stein, de Oliveira-Andreotti, & Susa, 2019), these flying-faculty generally come from ex-colonial states to newly-developing higher education systems (Poultney, 2017). Using the example of the United Arab Emirates, Samier (2019) warned of the eroding effect of re-colonisation in national academies through the global practice of mentoring-role modelling in higher education. Therefore, to consolidate their academic culture consistently with national perspectives, university leaders should pay keen regard to cultural codes and social values as well as scholarly norms when designing institutional mentoring-role modelling.

In sum, the current research systematically reviewed AIL studies focusing on mentoring-role modelling practices. Further studies may analyse mentoring-role modelling initiatives using different theoretical perspectives such as the glonacal agency heuristic (including Local-National-Glonacal spheres) of Marginson and Rhoades (2002) or CUDOS (Communism-Universalism-Disinterestedness-Organized skepticism) of Merton (1942). Researchers can also employ other types of systematic review in the form of meta-synthesis or meta-analysis to focus on faculty development training through the perspective of mentoring-role modelling.



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## Appendix

**Table 3.**

*Evaluation of empirical articles on AIL including mentoring-role modelling*

Quantitative					Qualitative				
Article	Sample	Analysis	Reporting	Rating	Article	Study Group	Analysis Credibility	Evidence	Rating
Evans et al. (2013)	1,223 ECRs	Descriptive (No separate analysis section)	Tabulation	√	Kezar et al. (2011)	81 acad. staff 84 admin. staff	Interviews/content analysis (trustworthiness)	Direct quotations (summary of findings)	√√
Uslu (2015)	863 faculty	Exp. Fact. Anly. & Conf. Fact. Anly.	Tabulation	√√	Damonse & Nkomo (2012)	10 res. leaders	Interviews (participant selection)	Direct quotations (forming sub-sections)	√
Horne et al. (2016)	301 academics	Path analysis	Tabulation and figure	√√	Evans (2014)	50 acad. (junior)	Interviews (analysis steps)	Direct quotations (forming sub-sections)	√
Uslu (2016)	1,3098 faculty	Co-variance (ANCOVA)	Tabulation	√√	Kezar & Lester (2014)	no number (STEM researchers)	Interviews (campus-based)	Assessment (from campuses)	√
Meng et al. (2017)	857 postgrads.	Struc. Equa. Modelling	Tabulation and figure	√√	Macfarlane & Chan (2014)	63 academic obituaries	Word frequency (themes)	Direct quotations (Tables of word frequencies)	√
Uslu & Arslan (2018)	937 faculty	Struc. Equa. Modelling	Tabulation and figure	√√	Rohwer (2015)	13 emerging res. leaders	Interviews (frequency counts)	Direct quotations (frequency)	√
Mohnot (2019)	372 acad. leaders	Descriptive & inferential	Tabulation and graph	√√	Robins et al. (2016)	8 participants	(Open-ended) survey	Direct quotations (frequency)	√
					van Driel et al. (2017)	18 practitioners	Interviews (no clues for themes)	Direct quotations (tabulation)	√

				McConnell (2018)	52 military students	Questionnaire & interviews (no clear analysis tech.)	Direct quotations (tabulation)	√
				Uslu & Welch (2018)	13 senior academics	Interview (inter-coder reliability)	Direct quotations (forming sub-sections)	√√
				Macfarlane & Burg (2019)	30 professors	Interviews/content analysis (theme assignment)	Direct quotations (following themes)	√√
<b>Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative together)</b>								
<i>Article</i>	<i>Sample – Study Group</i>	<i>Analysis - Credibility</i>		<i>Reporting - Evidence</i>		<i>Rating</i>		
Macfarlane (2011)	233 professors 15 professors	Questionnaire (descriptive) Interviews (no analysis section)		Tabulation Direct quotations (summary table)		√		
van den Brink (2015)	971 reports 64 professors	Report analysis (descriptive) Interviews (no analysis section)		Percentages Direct quotations		√		
Browning et al. (2017)	30 research leaders	Questionnaire + CV Interviews (time calculation)		Percentages-Means Direct quotations-Graphs		√		
Evans (2017)	No number for survey respondents 20 professors	Questionnaire (descriptive) Interviews (following res.ques.)		Percentage graphs Direct quotations		√		
Macfarlane (2017)	108 survey respondents	Questionnaire (descriptive) Comments (grounded theory)		Graphs Direct quotations		√√		
Qwusu et al. (2017)	No number of interviewees 119 res. leaders+37 res.team Mmbrs	Focus groups (no analysis tech) Survey (descriptive+inferential)		Direct quotations Statistical outputs+Tables+Graphs		√		