

The Self-Made Supervisor: Learning Experiences of M.Ed Supervisors in A Teacher Education College.

Kendini Yetiştirmiş Akademik Danışman: Öğretmen Eğitimi Veren Bir Üniversitede Yüksek Lisans Danışmanlarının Deneyimleri

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Abstract

There is an abundance of policy documents, research studies and commentaries on what supervisors should do, but there is insufficient research on the learning that supervisors acquire through the practice of supervision. While most international studies are directed at doctoral supervision, there seems to be paucity in studies on the Masters level supervision. This study seeks to understand how five novice supervisors on a Master of Education (M.Ed) programme in a teacher education college 'learn on the job'. The study draws on in depth interviews where supervisors reflect upon their supervisory experiences. The evidence suggests that supervision was a site for learning reflected in three modes: learning from dilemmas, learning from feedback and learning from exposure to different topics and people. The study endorses the view that supervision is a perpetual process of identity formation of 'becoming a supervisor' through learning on the job.

Keywords: Novice supervisors, supervision, learning experience, role definition

Öz

Akademik danışmanların ne yapması gerektiği ile ilgili pek çok politik doküman, araştırma ve yorumlama olmasına rağmen, akademik danışmanların danışma uygulama becerilerini nasıl edindiklerini öğrenmeye yönelik araştırmalar yetersizdir. Pek çok uluslararası çalışma doktora düzeyindeki akademik danışmanlığa yönelirken, yüksek lisans düzeyinde akademik danışmanlık üzerinde çalışmalar yetersiz görülmektedir. Bu çalışma, beş acemi akademik danışmanın öğretmen eğitimi yüksek lisans programında "iş işte nasıl öğrendiklerini" anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada akademik danışmanların danışmanlık deneyimlerini yansıtmak amacıyla derinlemesine görüşmeler kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular, danışmanlığı öğrenme alanının üç biçimden etkilendiğini göstermektedir: İkilemlerden öğrenme, dönütlerden öğrenme, farklı konu ve insanlarla iletişime maruz kalarak öğrenme. Bu çalışma, "akademik danışma, akademik danışmanın bu yoldaki kimlik oluşumunda iş işte öğrendiği daimi bir süreçtir" görüşünü desteklemektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Acemi akademik danışman, akademik danışmanlık, öğrenme deneyimi, rol tanımı

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Introduction

Supervisor A

When I agreed to supervise my first student, I did not sleep the whole night. I was terrified...what do I know about how to supervise? Who am I to take such a responsibility...?

Supervisor B

I think I am a supervisor, but I wish I could be a mentor...

These cameos depict the sentiments of two novice supervisors on a Master's programme (M.Ed) in a teachers' education college. The first account appreciates the responsibility of the supervisor but then recognizes the lack of clear criteria for how supervision should be processed and doubts her identity as a supervisor. The second supervisor acknowledges different roles of the supervisor and implies difficulties in the process of supervision. These sentiments might capture the position for many supervisors at their initial stages of supervision.

Defining the issue

In the last decade academic colleges of education in Israel have been accredited to award M.Ed degrees. Since then more and more programmes have been initiated and there is a great need for supervisors. The M.Ed degree is usually a two year taught degree. As part of the final assessment the students are required to undertake a research project/dissertation. Each student is guided by one supervisor. The dissertation is evaluated by both the supervisor and an external reader. It is accepted that all supervisors must possess a Ph.D degree. Supervisors are usually chosen either by the institution or by the student. The supervisor chosen by the student must be approved by the head of the programme. There are briefing sessions for new supervisors at the beginning of each academic year where guidelines for first-time supervisors are provided. There are no formal professional development enhancement courses along the supervision process either for veteran or new supervisors.

The gap in knowledge

During the 90's and since 2000 there have been numerous international and national research-based publications on the doctoral process and the role of supervisors (for example, Douglas, 2003; Watts, 2008; Halse, 2011). There is also much work written about how to supervise (Cryer&Okarocho,1997; Taylor&Beasley, 2005; Wisker, 2005).

Yet, there is no agreed ‘right way’ to supervise a dissertation (Exley&O’Malley,1999). There is also an abundance of policy documents, research studies and commentaries on what supervisors should do, but there is insufficient research on the learning that supervisors acquire through the practice of supervision (Halse, 2011). Much of what happens between tutors and students is a ‘secret garden’ or a ‘private space’ where student and supervisor engage with little external scrutiny or accountability (Park, 2006; Manathunga, 2005). While most international studies are directed at doctoral supervision, there seems to be paucity in studies on the Masters level supervision.

This lacuna in research is quite surprising taking into consideration that by definition, doing a Masters dissertation is a high-level educational intellectual experience which helps one to grow as a person and a professional (Hart, 2005). Moreover, supervision has been identified as an important factor in the successful research process (Phillips&Pugh, 1994; Dysthe et al., 2006). Thus the work of the supervisor should be significant in guiding the student to achieving these goals. Another consideration is that market forces have, in the past two or three decades, demanded increasing numbers of employees with post-bachelors level qualifications. Hence, if more staff are required to supervise dissertations, then why has it not attracted the attention of developers and researchers to address the question of developmental need?

This study seeks to understand how five beginning supervisors on a Master of Education (M.Ed) programme ‘learn on the job’ (Brew&Peseta, 2004). The study focuses on how they view their role as supervisors, its complexities and the insights they gain along the supervision process to enhance their professional development. It is argued that supervisors’ learning experiences shape their subjectivities and identities, and that supervision is an ongoing ontological process of ‘becoming a supervisor’ (Halse, 2011). Thus, this study reinforces the concept of ‘becoming a supervisor’ in the context of M.Ed level supervision and adds to existing knowledge on the professional and personal development of supervisors.

Theoretical perspectives

Role of the supervisor

Research into thesis supervision and the supervisory dialogue has accelerated worldwide (Bengtson, 2011). Traditionally, supervision has been a ‘private space’ where supervisors resented public scrutiny of what takes place at individual supervision sessions (Watts, 2008). Supervisors learned from their own experiences of being Ph.D students and received very little provided or recognized educational development. In the 1990’s greater emphasis has been put on facilitative and mentoring approaches to supervision (Bartlett&Mercer, 2001; Wisker, 2005). This gave room for various role definitions. There are claims, for example, that it is a pedagogy which is poorly understood and the process likened to ‘walking on a rickety bridge (Grant,

1999). This metaphor sees supervision requiring a dynamic awareness of the state of the relationship and flexibility in responding to inevitable changes.

In the same fashion, Wisker emphasises the importance of supervisory dialogue and states that the supervisory dialogues are ‘...the main way in which we work with our students to encourage, direct, support and empower them to get on with and complete their research and writing’ (Wisker, 2005, p.120). She also notes that the supervisory dialogue is a complex, unpredictable pedagogical event full of surprises and unforeseen challenges. It therefore should not become an automatic and standardised procedure, but a personal meeting where the supervisor is able to cater for professional and individual needs of candidates in different contexts (Lauvas&Handal, 2006). Waghid (2006) looks at the supervisor-supervisee relationship from a marketing view and states that despite the gradual reposition of students as customers within an increasingly market-dominated higher education sector, supervision is a relationship and process and not a service (Waghid, 2006).

Supervision is traditionally viewed as a set of implicit and unexamined processes where pedagogy has been absent in the supervision relationship. The role of supervisor as researcher has been taken over (Evans&Green, 1995) and pedagogy is even omitted from professional development programs for supervisors (Manathunga, 2005). Another claim is that ‘supervisors are always expected to “tuck” supervision in, lacking focus on the very systems and practices of teaching and guidance it requires’ Thus the role needs to be clarified and supported by explicit development, recognition and reward(Wisker, 2005, p. 22).

As a reaction to the traditional role, the teaching role of the supervisor has been emphasised. Wisker suggests that supervising students carrying out research for post-graduate and undergraduate dissertations or thesis is probably the most rewarding teaching we can do (Wisker, 2005, p.21). Teaching however is a complex, dynamic role which changes constantly; it can include roles of a mentor, a ‘master’ and sometime the role of a ‘critical friend’ (Connell, 1985). In this sense, focusing on roles may not provide sufficient grounds for discriminating among responsibilities and it is suggested that more emphasis should be put on what supervisors are doing and why (Cullen et al., 1994). A focus on the purpose of supervisory practice frames the process by seeing the supervisory relationship as dynamic and dependent on the negotiation between the supervisor and the individual. This approach draws on adult learning (Ryan, 1996) and emphasises the responsibility of the supervisor as a facilitator to the student becoming an independent professional researcher and scholar (Brew&Peseta, 2002). In the same vein, supervision should be devoted to the fostering of students’ creativity (Kiely, 1982; Barger&Duncan, 1982). The supervisors’ task becomes one of facilitating rather than directing (Martinsuo&Turkulainen, 2011). Blanton (1983) terms this ‘midwifing the dissertation’.

There is evidence to suggest that supervisors frequently base their approach on

their own, often unexamined, experiences as a research student (Cullen et al., 1994; Lee, 2008). They claim that research supervisors, like managers, are leading others and what is important is that supervisors expand their repertoire of skills as educators and leaders. Supervisor development for research training has to focus on enabling supervisors to become adaptable. Of particular relevance is the emphasis on learning through self-awareness and self-critique by supervisors surfacing their mental models of research practice and mental models of supervision. Likewise, the role of the supervisor as a reflective practitioner has been suggested (Styles&Radloff, 2001), where both the student and the supervisor are involved in self-regulatory processes. The relationship which grows out of successful supervision has been described as mentoring (Lyons et al., 1990; McMichael,1993)where both guidance and learning is involved.

Modes of supervision

Much of the literature reflects the technical rationality model of supervision (Acker et al., 1994). Supervisors who are pressed for completion move towards the technical directive models (Wisker, 2005). Technical rationality is defined as ‘a mode of reasoning, investigation, or planning that gives priority to considerations of procedures or technique’ (Cornbleth, 1990, p.19). The emphasis is on the ‘how’ rather than the ‘why’, The supervisor is more like a manager keeping the student motivated and providing timetables and guidelines.

A contrasting perspective to the directive model is the negotiated order model which is open to negotiation and change. It is based on negotiation of mutual expectations between supervisors and students (Acker et al., 1994) and draws on the interpretive or interactionist approach to organizational cultures (Woods, 1990). The student, like the supervisor, participates in negotiating and interpreting meanings of situations (Acker et al., 1994). However, situations are unique and dynamic, and mutual expectation between supervisor and student are prone to change in the course of supervision (Acker et al., 1994). Thus, the role of the supervisor might also change from project manager at the initial stages to critical friend at more advanced stages of the research (Burgess et al., 1992).

Delamont et al., (1997) note that all supervisory skills can be learned and developed, as they are self-conscious rather than intuitive activities. Similarly, Wisker (2005) claims that supervisors develop a range of interpersonal skills and that they must align their practices and learning behaviours with those of their students, nurture, prod, push, support, encourage, insist and guide them, and then encourage independence. Thus, it is not surprising that universities expect supervisors to engage with support and development programmes and to become more reflective and professional in their roles (Wisker, 2005).

The research

The context

The study was conducted as an exploratory study in the Graduate School in a teacher education college in Israel. The college offers M.Ed degrees in seven areas: Inter-Disciplinary Studies, Educational Counseling, Youth at Risk, Teaching of Foreign Languages (English and Arabic), Educational Leadership, Science Education and Teaching (M.Teach).

The M.Ed programmes in the Israeli colleges have gained their formal accreditation only in the last decade. Submission of a research dissertation is part of the students' assessment criteria. The aim of the dissertation, as defined in the formal guidelines in the college of the present study is to 'professionally empower and promote the student as an individual and enrich their educational contexts'. All participants on the programme are in education, either as teachers, school heads, educational counsellors, or community workers. They study one day a week for two years. In their third year they are expected to submit their dissertation.

The research

The research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach. This means that the researcher attempts to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin&Lincoln, 1994). Semi-structured in-depth interviews with five novice supervisors were conducted in order to learn about their experiences in the supervisory process. The interviews lasted between 50-60 minutes. The recursive model of interviewing enhanced the flow of conversation and elicited anecdotes, feelings and dilemmas. It provided space for the supervisors to reflect on their practices and attribute meanings to their experiences.

The questions in the interview relate specifically to: issues of role perception, modes of supervision, dilemmas and tensions in the process of supervision, supervisor and student relationship and self-development. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed by a research assistant. The transcriptions of each interview were qualitatively analysed by the researcher and the research assistant, identifying emergent themes related to role perception, styles of supervision, self-development and dilemmas in the process of supervision. The emergent categories of each interview were organized in five tables (each table related to one of the respondents), according to the four main themes mentioned above. Excerpts that related to each theme were identified and inserted in the tables. The next stage entailed further reading for refinement of the categories identified to arrive at a synthesis of common grounded categories from all the five interviews by both readers (researcher and research assistant). Excerpts which did not fit into the main themes were categorized as 'outliers' and were analyzed separately by both readers to form additional categories.

The analysis of the interviews was based on a small scale sample at a particu-

lar college and cannot claim generalisability, however, it provides insights on supervisors' experiences and draws propositions that can be adapted and explored inductively or deductively in other contexts.

Participants

In order to preserve anonymity, the supervisors are referred to as S, T, D, K, N.

The participants are five supervisors from different disciplines (Educational Psychology, Young Learners, Curriculum Development, Special Education, Elementary Education). The supervisors were chosen on the basis of their years of experience in supervising on the Master's level. The five supervisors were chosen out of a list of ten supervisors that were randomly chosen (by a randomized test) from the bank of supervisors at the college. The five supervisors consider themselves as novice supervisors and have been supervising between three to five years. They all teach on the programmes at the Graduate School. Two supervisors S and N teach at a University and they supervise there as well. The five participants hold a Ph.D degree. None has received any formal supervision training. The interviewees considered the research initiative important to their professional development and gave their consent to the interview. Anonymity was promised.

Findings: The Supervisors' Stories

This section provides excerpts of the supervisors' stories pertaining to four categories that were the focus of the interviews: role perception, style of supervision, dilemmas, self-development-learning.

S' story

Although S considers herself as inexperienced she is quite confident in defining her role. S is also supervising at the university and supervision for her is more of a collaborative role, as she has a group of colleagues who constantly meet and discuss issues. She also co-supervises as second supervisor with a more experienced colleague. Thus, she does not feel alone on the job.

She sees her role as someone who guides the students to be 'orientated consumers of research'. She does not aim to turn them into researchers, but she would like to see them being able to use the research skills for their own professional development and for the benefit of their work environments. She also believes that graduates with a Masters degree should be familiar with scholarly writing and be competent readers of academic articles. She explains: 'Many students do not really understand why they need all the research methods and why I am so strict with protocols and procedures. I have to explain to them that part of writing the thesis is learning how to read research

papers. They used to skip all the finding section and just read the conclusions. I expose them to the skill of writing and its demanding academic rules. As teachers, they need these skills. This is part of global communication nowadays.'

Her style of supervision is rigorous, believing the students need very close guidance: 'They sometimes get lost and I can see that a word here and there can put them on track again. I am obliged and feel quite dedicated to what I am doing. They also need a lot of attention and encouragement. I usually do it by highlighting their progress rather than their difficulties.'

She describes supervision as a journey of learning and part of her own professional development: 'Supervision opens up a wide arena of research topics for me. I enrich my knowledge in areas which are not necessarily my field of interest and it is always a challenge. It also improves my own academic writing. Helping others to write makes me be aware of subtleties which are often unconsciously overlooked, or taken for granted by the writer who is so immersed in their own text.'

Although supervising theses can be enjoyable, it is a tough task. She believes that interpersonal competencies are quite crucial for effective supervision. She doubts whether merely possessing a Ph.D degree is sufficient for supervision eligibility (due to shortage of supervisors, this is the principal criterion for supervision): 'I am involved in research for many years and I only recently started supervising, feeling uncertain about many issues that arise. I still need a lot of experience and guidance myself.'

She was very grateful for the long conversation we had on supervision: 'Supervision is after all a lonely job and we do not really have many opportunities in our work to stop and think about our own supervisory models. It is quite helpful to be able to share and discuss things.'

T's story

T is not really sure how she defines her role. She never thought about it as she had never been asked these questions. She differentiates between a supervisor and a mentor. She thinks she is more of a 'supervisor' and wishes to become more of a 'mentor'.

She explains: 'I wish I could lead the students towards high level thinking. I am not sure I succeed in that. I feel I am more of a supervisor looking at things from above and telling them what to do and how to do things. I think I should ask more questions and be less directive.'

T does not see research as a major issue in her supervision. She thinks that universities are more oriented to research than education colleges. Ideally, she would have liked to see the students implement what they study in their context of work and undertake some small scale research in their own classes, but she does not see it happen. 'Regretfully, teachers are too busy with all sorts of things and they do not have time to look into their work in a more profound way', she says. This has an impact on the quality of their work. They are anxious to see the final product. 'This affects me

as well', says T. 'We both have to meet deadlines hence, we are hardly involved in any significant processes'.

For T, supervision is a new aspect of her work and she describes it as a lonely role. She is quite unsure of herself. She feels she needs support, but is intimidated to approach any colleague. She would approach only people she knows very well and trusts their opinion: 'I learn so much from the comments that come back from the second reader. I need the reinforcement and alternatively the critique.'

She does not think that a training supervision development course would help her, although she still has a lot to learn: 'The questions and dilemmas emerge as we go along. I would rather have somebody that I would feel comfortable to approach every time I come across something I am not sure about.'

She is not pleased with her style of supervision and feels it is too technical. However, it caters for the students' needs as they lack the basic technical skills of academic writing. She explains: 'I wish I could see some sort of independent thinking. I would like to bring about a change, a learning process, something small...'

She remarked that the interview made her aware of issues concerning the supervision process that she never thought about: 'Come to think of it, the training supervision development course you mentioned previously and I sort of dismissed, might be helpful after all. I am certain now that I need more substantial support. Maybe sharing dilemmas and experiences with other supervisors in a support group might be a good idea.' T does not feel that her supervisory experience is part of her professional development yet. She needs to be exposed to more supervisory cases.

D's story

D finds it difficult to define her role. She thinks it is intuitive and flexible. She feels quite confident in what she is doing. When asked whether she sees it as a lonely role, her immediate response is that she does not need anybody. For her, the interaction with the students and the feedback she receives from them is sufficient.

The purpose of supervision, as she sees it, is to lead the students 'to complete a small scale exercise in research and alerting them to different phenomena in their work'. She is also frustrated at the low level of students' academic writing. She feels that this situation dictates the style of supervision: 'There is an ambiguous message in the fact that students are obliged to take so many "research methods" courses and yet they still need so much guidance, both in research procedures and writing.'

D cannot really offer a professional definition to her style of supervision, but can provide examples of salient characteristics in her supervision: 'There are obviously no guidelines. We choose our own style and it is changing all the time. I think that I am following in my Ph.D supervisor's steps. I am very meticulous about details, I am involved and I sometimes feel that I am taking the students by the hand. The feedback that I get is that they like it. In a sense, this is what counts for me and this is how I learn

to supervise. I think I would define myself more as a guide.’

She admits to learn a lot from supervision: ‘I am not a big researcher myself but it is just like teaching, when you teach something and you have to transmit knowledge to others, you process the material much better. I also find it challenging. I usually work not with the brilliant ones and to see the product at the end is a big reward for me as well. I enjoy the encounter with life histories from different cultures. In many cases I get emotionally involved and it fascinates me. One of my students was determined to do things his way. I trusted him. He was sort of a poet and my rigid rules did not fit his vision. He produced a beautiful piece of work and I learned that you can do things differently and they can be good.’

The part that she does not like in her style of supervision is her ‘obsession about accuracy’. She wishes she could let go more easily. ‘I feel responsible as a supervisor. This thesis is going to be sitting on the shelf in the library. My name is signed and I would feel just awful if I knew that there are mistakes in the text. I sometimes have doubts about my decisions. I once had a student who got a very low grade and was offended. I showed him that most of the work is mine not his. I am not sure if I really did the right thing after all...’

K’s story

When I asked K to define her role, she too hesitated for a second and then said that she entered the role by coincidence. ‘I used to teach on one of the programmes. It was the first year of the programme and some of my students approached me and asked whether I would be willing to supervise their dissertation. This is how I became ‘a supervisor’. At that time, nobody really knew much about what is expected from the supervisor or the student. We learned on the job.’

K defines the role of the supervisor as a guide. She thinks that supervision entails interpersonal skills which not everybody possesses.’ Not every lecturer who holds a Ph.D can be a supervisor. So much energy is invested in the personal and interpersonal skills that one needs to acquire it and be able to adapt to all sorts of situations.’

She believes in very close guidance – taking by the hand, instructing, challenging the students’ thinking by asking lots of questions. She admits that she likes to be in control of their progress, although she takes the risk of students developing overreliance and high expectations for support.

K sees supervision as part of her professional development. Every dissertation is a new experience and it enhances her confidence, although she does consult colleagues when needed. ‘It is a lonely task, after all, it is the supervisor and the student. Sometimes you have to cope with dilemmas and I do not hesitate to consult a colleague, but I usually try to solve it myself.’ She also appreciates the interview and says that it gave her food for thought. ‘We usually do things, we do not have time to stop and think.’

N's story

N also supervises Master students at the university. She feels that the supervisor's work is very much dependent on intuition. 'I find my own way. Each student is different and I have to adapt to their needs. However, I do not compromise. I am very pedantic about all the ground rules concerning the process of research.'

She finds supervision as a self-made role as she too is on her own. She is very much research oriented and her view is that every research project, no matter how broad or narrow it is, should be rigorous. Thus, she sees her role as guiding the students to produce research which is appropriate, publishable and thorough. She demands high level work.

Learning comes from experience as one goes along. N tries to supervise students who are more or less in her area of interest. This 'enriches both of us', she says. 'I usually have students conduct research that excites me. Their findings contribute to my work so that we both gain and enrich our knowledge. This is rewarding. Sometimes, I have students who cannot elevate themselves above a certain level and then it is disappointing.'

N also complains about the low level of students' writing competence and the massive amount of supervision they need in order to produce work which meets her requirements. She does not live in peace with her supervisory approach, but then she has to preserve her reputation. This is quite a dilemma she struggles with. 'I wish I could let my students be more independent. After all, it is their work not mine, but I cannot afford it. So, in many cases I am involved more than I should. I am not sure how to resolve this. I also do not know how other supervisors cope with this. N would be very happy to belong to some group of supervisors where she could share experiences.'

Discussion: Putting It All Together

The Interviews with the supervisors allowed them to take a glance at their 'private space' and to expose their experiences through which 'learning in practice' (Wenger, 1998, p. 95) was demonstrated. According to Wenger 'Learning in practice is usually not acknowledged openly as an extraneous goal or as a special category of activity or membership... 'engagement in practice – in its unfolding, multidimensional complexity – is both the stage and the object, the road and the destination'. Thus, what they learn is their practice (Wenger, 1998, p. 95)). This notion reflects the dynamics that emerged from the supervisors' accounts of their experiences. The supervisors did not really stop to think how they learn to supervise. The emerging issues in the course of supervision created the 'site for learning' and their coping with these issues as part of a routine or intuition became their 'learning in practice'. These issues were never really challenged and it seemed that the interviews and the probing questions performed as a trigger to make the implicit explicit.

Making the implicit explicit

Supervisors seemed to appreciate the conversation and acknowledged that it sent them home with some ‘food for thought’. The question of how they define their role, took them by surprise. They realized the lack of clarity in role expectations. A sense of uncertainty was predominant in the supervisors’ accounts demonstrating the implicitness and unexamined processes that Brew and Peseta (2002), Wisker (2005) and Lee (2008) refer to in their research. The only supervisor who was slightly more confident in defining her role was S who had some experience with group supervision at another academic institution. The collaboration with other supervisors that she experienced aligns with Wenger’s theory of an apprentice joining a community of practice as a ‘legitimate peripheral participant’ (Wenger, 1991, p. 93). S was a co-supervisor for a number of years learning from an expert supervisor in a community of practice of other novice and veteran supervisors, where ‘members interact, do things together, negotiate new meanings and learn from each other’ (Wenger, 1991, p.102). She used this experience with students in the college and might have felt more confident in conceptualizing her role.

The vagueness in role definition was also apparent when supervisors tried to define their style of supervision. None were really definite about their style of supervision, however, they used expressions like ‘guide’, ‘direct’, ‘take by hand’, ‘support’, ‘manage’, to describe the process. Their description reflects the technical directive model (Acker et al., 1994). They all claimed that this style emerged out of students’ needs. Students lacked basic academic writing skills which prevented supervisors from moving to higher levels of thinking.

Going back to the statement at the outset of the article: ‘I think I am a supervisor, but I wish I could be a mentor’ depicts the tension between what supervisors believed their professional obligation was and the reality they had to cope with. Supervisors were quite frustrated at not being able to transcend the level of technical thinking and engage in a relationship of a critical friend (Burgess et al., 1992; Acker et al., 1994). Although they all admitted that they did not intend to turn the students into researchers, they did wish to elevate their thinking about their practice. N described it as ‘being more independent’ and D described it as being critical. ‘Let’s not exaggerate’ she said, ‘I do not see them do any revolutions in their schools. I just wish that by doing this research project they would gain some critical skills to be used in their workplace’.

In spite of the fact that the top down ‘manager model’ was the overriding style of supervision, there seemed to be emotional involvement in the supervision trajectories. D articulated quite openly that she became emotionally involved and quite fascinated by students’ life histories. Similarly, K learned from her experience that interpersonal competence and sensitivity to students’ needs were cardinal to the supervisor’s role.

What the interviews also revealed was that none of the supervisors really made their relationship style explicit and no ground rules were set from their initial contact

with the students. Thus in communicating with the students there were implicit assumptions which might have constituted a fertile ground for misconceptions about responsibilities and emotional involvement by both the supervisor and the students (Hockey, 1994).

Supervision seemed to be a ‘private space’ shared by the supervisor and the supervisee. The supervisors’ feeling of ‘loneliness’ was evidenced in their wish for opportunities to share their implicit and sometimes intuitive pedagogical understanding of their own supervision strategies (Manathunga, 2005). Yet, a feeling of reluctance to open up the ‘private space’ was implied in the supervisors’ words. T said that in case of doubts, she would approach only somebody she could trust and D was determined not to consult anybody. The tendency to preserve ‘privacy’ might be a strategy to guard against the loss of status and reputation. After all, they were all veteran academics but novices at supervising.

The evidence also suggests that supervision was a site for learning. Amundsen and McAlpine claim that the experience of supervision can be seen as an individual activity, where supervisors make sense of the supervisory role and there is ‘an ongoing clarification or repositioning of one’s scholarly values and identity’ (Amundsen&McAlpine, 2009, p.331). This is consonant with the supervisors’ experiences and was strongly reflected in three areas of learning: learning from dilemmas, learning from feedback and learning from exposure to different topics and people.

Learning from dilemmas

The supervisors were faced with numerous dilemmas and contradictions to cope with; for example, what is the role they have to embody: mentor, supervisor, guide or critical friend? Should they take upon themselves the role of the pedagogue or the researcher? Whose responsibility is it to maintain the supervisory relationship? What should take precedence, the final product of the thesis or the process the student is undergoing? Is the thesis a means to an end, namely, ‘a research exercise’ or a contribution to knowledge? How should they navigate between institutional policies of completion rates and their accountability to quality assurance? D for example, was in a constant struggle between the non-interventionist and tight control style of supervision. She ended up with over-assistance and eventually felt that the final product was more her work than the student’s. This affected her final grading of the thesis. Was she misleading the student by her tight supervision? Similarly, K, had two students who she felt should not be allowed to continue due to ethical issues. She had to choose between her role as a mentor whose aim is to support and guide, and her integrity as a member of an academic community. She finally had to tell the students that she declines her supervisory relationship with them.

Although it is suggested that supervisors frequently base their approach-

es to supervision on their own unexamined experiences as research students (Brew&Peseta, 2004), their need to cope with emerging contradictions and dissonances between beliefs and actions surfaced their mental models (Senge, 1990) and raised their awareness to their own ‘theories in use’. This was quite evident in the interviews when supervisors described how they coped with different issues. K, stated that she did not wish to see her own supervisor as a model; what she learned from her supervisory experience as a research student was ‘what not to do’. She preferred to lean on her own mentoring and teaching experience and learn from ‘trial and error’. Thus, as supervisors were developing strategies for dealing with dilemmas and weigh alternatives for action that best meets specific needs, they were involved in formative learning which shaped their attitudes and orientations.

Learning from students’ feedback

Students’ feedback was one of the sources of learning for the supervisors. Supervisors seemed to be sensitive to students’ implicit and explicit reactions. Some students showed discontent at the supervisor’s conduct and some approved and complimented the supervisor’s support and guidance. These performed as benchmarks for the supervisor and a trigger for reflection and reinforcement.

Learning from colleagues’ feedback

Although there was no formal interaction between supervisors, some admitted they needed to consult colleagues, not necessarily from the same institution. Others considered the feedback from the external readers of the proposals and the dissertations as an invaluable resource for improving their own writing skills. It prompted thinking and provided tools for being more critical about their own writing.

Learning from exposure to different topics and people

Supervisors did not always supervise within their own boundaries of expertise. Although they were all in education, the encounter with a range of topics opened up opportunities for enriching their reservoir of knowledge. The exposure to different personal life histories and cultures was also intriguing and interesting to them.

Conclusions: Emerging Insights

Knowledge of the impact of supervision on supervisors is quite scarce (Halse, 2011) and the prevailing literature on supervisors’ professional development focuses mainly on the doctoral level supervision (for example, Brew & Peseta, 2002; Manathunga, 2005; Halse, 2011). Research studies on the novice supervisors, who usually commence their first steps of supervision with Master students, is quite neglected. The common explanation is that supervision is conducted ‘behind closed

doors, away from the public gaze, and with little explicit accountability to others (Park, 2006). However, making explicit what has often been implicit is a key ingredient in the growing formalisation and professionalisation of academic practice (Park, 2006). This exploratory study unveiled some of the experiences of novice research supervisors in a teacher education college through interviews which seemed to provide an opportunity to explore their own practice as supervisors. What emerged was a sense of implicit learning trajectories, uncertainties and lack of awareness.

Eraut suggests that understanding of the world is unquestioned ‘unless a special problem arises and even then, we are unlikely to probe very deeply’ (Eraut, 1994). He further maintains that repetitive experiences may be activities through which learning is implicit (Eraut, 2004). The ‘special problems’ in the supervisors’ journeys were the complexities, dilemmas and discrepancies’ that they encountered in the course of their supervision. Thus from the evidence it can be proposed that supervision is a ‘teaching and learning process’ for supervisors whereby they learn ‘on their job’ from their own experiences with different students.

However, gaining self-awareness on one’s understanding requires special effort in order to form a basis for further learning (Moon, 2002). A common feature in the supervisors’ accounts was the fact that they had never thought of their professional identity as supervisors and what it entailed. Thus, subconsciously, the interviews engaged the supervisors in an act of reflection which enabled them to ‘sit back from a situation to review it’ (Evans, 2002) and to surface assumptions and beliefs embodied in their experiences (Bell, 2002). This raised their awareness to questions that have to be asked or resolved, supporting the view that ‘more learning is derived from reflecting on an experience than is derived from the experience itself (Posner, 1996).

It is claimed (Eraut, 1994) that professionals continually learn on the job, because their work entails engagement in a succession of cases. However, only when the cases are regarded as special rather than routine and time is set aside to deliberate upon their significance, will they contribute to their professional knowledge base. Hence it can be concluded that reflective analysis might be informative and hold the basis for supervisory development (Dauglas, 2003), especially for novice supervisors who have not yet built a repertoire of case studies to learn from. This is supported by the belief that to improve supervisory practice, professional development for supervisors must be more than information sharing, more than skills development and more than a confessional. The focus should move from training of supervisors to the supervisor as reflective practitioner (McCormack&Pamphilon, 2004), and to transforming knowing-in action into knowledge –in-action (Eraut, 1994).

Practical implications

The practical implications of this approach could be that academic institutions can advance supervisors' development by establishing support groups or communities of learners which will enable participants to explore their experiences in a 'purposeful reflection' mode in a non-threatening atmosphere. Supervision is inherently a social activity extending beyond the primary relationship with student and supervisor (Amundsen&McAlpine, 2009, p. 332). Supervisors work within social and political contexts and their professional development is shaped by their own initiative and the possibilities and impossibilities of their contexts (Swennen, Jones&Volman, 2010). Having this in mind can increase the capacity for learning by the gradual growth into communities of practice (Lave&Wenger, 1991) where supervisors will be able to explore other dimensions that inform individual experiences and develop a shared sense of purpose.

The evidence shows that supervisors learned on the job and it endorses Halse's contention that supervision is a perpetual process of identity formation of 'becoming a supervisor' (Halse, 2011). However, it is important to challenge supervisors' views on the nature of supervision, their underlying conceptions of the task (Brew&Peseta, 2004), their predilections and insights, in order to further enhance their identity development from 'becoming a supervisor' to being a supervisor.

Özet

Giriş

Son on yılda İsrail'deki eğitim fakülteleri yüksek lisans derecesi vermek üzere akredite olmuştur. O zamandan beri üniversitelerde daha fazla yüksek lisans programı açılmaya başlamış ve akademik danışmanlara olan ihtiyaç giderek artmıştır. Yüksek lisans derecesi genellikle iki yıllık bir çalışma sonucu elde edilmektedir. Final değerlendirmesinin bir parçası olarak öğrencilerden bir proje/araştırma tezi sunmaları beklenmektedir. Her öğrenciye bir akademik danışman rehberlik etmektedir. Deneyimli ya da acemi akademik danışmanların profesyonel gelişimlerini sağlamak için formal bir donanım bulunmamaktadır.

90'larda ve 2000'lerden bu yana, yurt içinde ve yurt dışında doktora süreci ve bu süreçte akademik danışmanların rolü ile ilgili çeşitli araştırmalar yayımlanmıştır (örneğin, Douglas, 2003; Watts, 2008; Halse, 2011). Ayrıca akademik danışmanlığın nasıl yapıldığına ilişkin de oldukça fazla çalışma bulunmaktadır (Cryer&Okarocha,1997; Taylor&Beasley, 2005; Wisker, 2005). Fakat bir tez üretmek için akademik danışmanlığın "doğru biçimi" konusunda bir fikir birliği yoktur (Exley&O'Malley,1999). Ayrıca akademik danışmanların ne yapması gerektiği ile ilgili pek çok politik döküman, araştırma ve yorumlamalar olmasına rağmen, akademik danışmanların danışma uygulama becerilerini nasıl edindiklerini öğrenmeye yönelik araştırmalar yetersizdir (Halse, 2011). Hoca ve öğrenci arasında so-

rumluluğa ve dışsal denetime dayanan ilişki çoğu zaman “gizli bir alan” olma özelliğini korumaktadır (Park, 2006; Manathunga, 2005). Pek çok uluslararası çalışma doktora düzeyindeki akademik danışmanlığa yönelirken, yüksek lisans düzeyinde akademik danışmanlık üzerinde çalışmaların yetersiz olduğua görülmektedir.

Yüksek lisans dönemi, bir bireyin kişisel ve profesyonel gelişimine yardımcı olunan, yükseköğretim seviyesinde ve entelektüel düzeydeki bir süreçten, ilgili literatürde böyle bir boşluk olması oldukça şaşırtıcıdır (Hart, 2005). Üstelik akademik danışma süreci, başarılı bir araştırma süreci için önemli bir faktör olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Phillips&Pugh, 1994; Dysthe et al., 2006). Sonuç olarak akademik danışmanın çalışması, öğrenci bu amaçları gerçekleştirirken öğrenciyi yönlendirmesi açısından oldukça anlamlıdır.

Bu çalışma, beş acemi akademik danışmanın öğretmen eğitimi yüksek lisans programında “iş işte nasıl öğrendiklerini” anlamayı amaçlamaktadır (Brew&Peseta, 2004). Bu çalışma yüksek lisans düzeyinde “akademik danışman olma” kavramını güçlendirmekte ve akademik danışmanların kişisel ve profesyonel gelişimleriyle ilgili var olan bilgi birikimine katkı sağlamak amacıyla yapılmıştır.

Kuramsal yaklaşımlar

Tez danışmanlığı ve akademik danışma ile ilgili araştırmalar dünya çapında artış göstermiştir (Bengtson, 2011). Geleneksel olarak akademik danışma, akademik danışmanların bireysel danışma süreçlerinde olanların kamuya açık olmasından rahatsızlık duydukları “özel bir alan” olmuştur (Watts, 2008). Danışmanlar akademik danışmayı, kendi eğitim süreçlerinde yaşadıkları deneyimlerden öğrenmişlerdir ve eğitimsel gelişimlerine katkı sağlayan akademik danışmanlık adına aldıkları destek oldukça kısıtlıdır. 1990’larda akademik danışmanlığı kolaylaştırıcı ve rehberlik edici yaklaşımlar giderek daha fazla vurgulanmaya başlamıştır (Bartlett&Mercer, 2001; Wisker, 2005). Bu da konuyla ilgili çeşitli tanımlamaları doğurmuştur. Akademik danışmanlığın yeterince anlaşılmayan bir eğitim bilimi olduğu iddiaları bulunmaktadır ve bu süreç “sağlam olmayan bir köprüde yürümeye” benzetilmektedir (Grant, 1999).

Benzer ekolden Wisker, akademik danışmada diyalogların ve durumların önemini altını çizer ve akademik danışma diyaloglarını “birlikte çalıştığımız öğrencileri araştırmalarını ve raporlarını tamamladıkları süreçte onları cesaretlendirmek, yönlendirmek, desteklemek ve güçlendirmek için en temel yol” olarak tanımlamaktadır (Wisker, 2005, p.120). Ayrıca Wisker, akademik danışma diyalogunun karmaşık bir yapısı olduğunu, beklenmedik eğitimsel olaylarla dolu sürprizler içerdiğini ve öngörülmeleyen ikilemler doğurabildiğini ifade etmektedir. Bu nedenle bu süreç otomatikleşmiş ve standardize edilmiş bir süreç halini almamalı fakat öğrencilerin farklı bağlamlarda kişisel ve profesyonel gelişimleri açısından ihtiyaçlarını karşılayacak bir süreç olmalıdır (Lauvas&Handal, 2006). Waghid (2006)

akademik danışman-öğrenci ilişkisine pazarlamacı gözüyle bakarak akademik danışmanlığın bir ilişki ve süreç olduğunu, bir hizmet olmadığını belirtmektedir.

Akademik danışma geleneksel olarak, eğitim bilimlerinden yoksun olan, ör-tük ve sorgulanmamış süreçlerden oluşan bir bütün olarak görülmektedir. Akademik danışmanın araştırmacı kimliği devralınır (Evans&Green, 1995) ve akademik danışmanların profesyonel gelişim programlarında eğitimsel değerler ihmal edilir (Manathunga, 2005). Geleneksel role bir tepki olarak, akademik danışmanın öğ-retici rolünün altı çizilmiştir. Wisker'e göre, lisans ve lisansüstü tez veya bitirme ödevi için araştırma yapan öğrencilere danışmanlık yapmak, muhtemelen bizle-rin yapabileceği en faydalı öğretmenlik etkinliğidir (Wisker, 2005, s. 21). Öğret-menlik ise sürekli olarak değişim gösteren karmaşık ve dinamik bir roldür; bazen rehberlik rolünü içerirken, bazen bir "uzman" veya "kritik bir arkadaş" olmayı içerir (Connell, 1985). Bu fikirden hareketle, sorumluluklar için bir ayrım yapar-ken rollere odaklanmak tatmin edici bir temel sunmayabilir ve bu fikir, akademik danışmanların neyi ne için yaptıklarına daha fazla odaklanmak gerektiğini önerir (Cullen et al., 1994). Bu yaklaşım yetişkin eğitiminin altını çizer (Ryan, 1996) ve öğrencinin bağımsız bir araştırmacı olması için akademik danışmanın sorumluluk-larına vurgu yapar (Brew&Peseta, 2002). Ayrıca, akademik danışmada, öğrencinin yaratıcılığını geliştirmek gerekir (Kiely, 1982; Barger&Duncan, 1982). Akademik danışmanların görevi öğrenciyi yönlendirmek yerine, öğrencinin işini kolaylaştır-mak biçimini almaya başlamıştır (Martinsuo&Turkulainen, 2011). Blanton (1983) bunu, "tezde aracı rol oynamak" olarak ifade eder.

Akademik danışma konusunda hocaların, genellikle kendi yaklaşımlarını ken-di kendilerine ve sınanmamış yöntemlerle yapılandırdıklarına, ayrıca bu konuda öğrencilik yıllarındaki deneyimlerinden beslendiklerine ilişkin kanıtlar vardır (Cullen et al., 1994; Lee, 2008). Akademik danışmanlar, yöneticilerin yaptığı gibi, öğrencilere liderlik etmek gerektiğini ve önemli olan şeyin kendilerinin liderlik ve eğitimci becerilerini geliştirmek olduğunu iddia ederler. Özellikle önem taşıyan, danışmanların zihinsel araştırma modellerini ve zihinsel danışma modellerini or-taya çıkaran öz değerlendirme ve öz farkındalık süreciyle öğrenmeye vurgu yapılmaktadır. Benzer şekilde, benlik düzenleme süreçlerinin akademik danışmanı da, öğrenciyi de içeren ve akademik danışmanın bir uygulamacı olma rolünü içermesi gerekliliği önerilmiştir (Styles&Radloff, 2001). Başarılı bir akademik danışma ile ortaya çıkan ilişki gerçek danışmanlık olarak tanımlanmıştır (Lyons et al., 1990; McMichael, 1993).

Literatürde daha çok akademik danışma modellerinin teknik gerçekliğinin yansımaları görülmektedir (Acker et al., 1994). Teknik gerçeklik "tekniği veya süreci değerlendirmeye öncelik veren; nedenselliğe, sorgulamaya ya da planlama-ya dayalı bir durum" olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Cornbleth, 1990, p.19). Tanımda "niçin"den ziyade "nasıl"a vurgu yapılmaktadır. Akademik danışman daha çok,

çalışma konusunda zaman çizelgeleri ve yönergeler sağlayan, öğrencinin motivasyonunu koruyan bir yönetmen gibidir.

Yönlendirici modelin karşıtı olan bir model tartışmalara ve deęişime açık olan müzakere modelidir. Bu model, akademik danışman ve öğrencinin karşılıklı beklentilerine yönelik bir anlaşmaya dayanır (Acker ve dię., 1994) ve örgütsel kültürlerde yorumlayıcı ve etkileşimci bir yapı ortaya koyar (Woods, 1990). Akademik danışmanın tez çalışmasının başlangıç aşamalarındaki yöneticilik rolü, çalışmanın ilerleyen aşamalarında son derece önemli bir arkadaş rolü olarak deęişebilir (Burgess et al., 1992).

Delamont ve dięerleri (1997), akademik danışmanlar içgüdüsel olarak devam etmek yerine, bilinçli olarak adım atarlarsa akademik danışmayla ilgili tüm becerilerin geliştirilebileceğini ve öğrenileceğini ifade ederler. Benzer şekilde Wisker (2005), akademik danışmanların bir dizi kişilerarası ilişki becerileri geliştirdiğini ve öğrencilerinin öğrenme davranışları ve uygulamalarını belirlemesi, teşvik etmesi, beslemesi, desteklemesi, cesaretlendirmesi ve rehberlik etmesi gerektiğini iddia etmektedir. Böylece öğrencilerin bağımsızlığı desteklenmiş olur.

Araştırma/Yöntem

Araştırma, İsrail’de öğretmen eğitimi veren bir üniversitenin yüksek lisans eğitimi veren biriminde keşif çalışması olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada yorumlayıcı ve doğal bir yaklaşım uygulanmıştır (Denzin&Lincoln, 1994). Danışmanlık süreci boyunca deneyimlerini öğrenebilmek için beş acemi akademik danışman ile yarı yapılandırılmış ve derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmıştır.

Tartışma

Görüşmeler, danışmanların ‘özel alanlarına’ bir göz atmalarına ve ‘uygularken öğrenmelerinin’ (Wenger, 1998, s. 95) gerçekleştiği deneyimlerini ortaya çıkarmalarına olanak tanımıştır. Danışmanların görüşmeyi takdir ettikleri ve görüşme sonrasında ‘düşünmek için malzeme’ ile ayrıldıklarını kabul ettikleri gözlemlenmiştir. Rollerini nasıl tanımladıklarına ilişkin soru, danışmanları zora sokmuştur. Rol beklentilerinde belirginlikten yoksun olduklarını fark etmişlerdir. Danışmanlarda belirsizliğin baskın olduğu görülmüştür. Bu durum, Brew ve Peseta (2002), Wisker (2005) ve Lee’nin (2008) araştırmalarında belirttikleri gibi örtük ve incelenmemiş süreçlerin belirtisi olarak görülmektedir. Rol tanımlamasındaki belirsizlik, danışmanlar danışmanlık stillerini tanımlamaya çalıştığında da ortaya çıkmıştır. Tanımlamaları teknik direk modelin bir yansıması olarak görülmektedir (Acker ve dię., 1994).

Danışmanlar teknik düşünmenin ötesine geçemediklerinden ve ciddi bir arkadaşlık ilişkisi kuramadıklarından kendilerini oldukça engellenmiş hissetmişlerdir (Burgess ve dię., 1992; Acker ve dię., 1994). Yukarıdan aşağıya ‘yönetici mo-

delinin' ağır basan danışma stili olması gerçeğine rağmen, danışmanlık süresince duygusal bağlılık olduğu da görülmüştür.

Görüşmelerin ortaya çıkardığı bir diğer şey ise danışmanların ilişki stillerini belirgin hale getirmedikleri ve öğrencilerle ilk bağlantılarında temel kurallar koymadıkları olmuştur. Bu nedenle, öğrencilerle iletişime geçildiğinde örtük tahminlerin yer aldığı bir ortam oluşmaktadır. Bu durum, sorumluluklara ilişkin yanlış anlaşılmaların olduğu ve hem danışman hem de öğrenciler tarafından duyguların karıştırıldığı bir ortamın doğmasına neden olmaktadır (Hockey, 1994).

Akademik danışmanlık, danışan ve danışmanın paylaştığı 'özel bir alan' olarak görülmüştür. Kendi danışmanlık stratejilerinin örtük ve sezgisel pedagojik anlayışlarını paylaşmak için fırsat arayışları ile danışmanların 'yalnızlık' hisleri kanıtlanmıştır (Manathunga, 2005). Bu kanıt aynı zamanda danışmanın öğrenme için bir alan oluşturduğunu göstermektedir (Amundsen&McAlpine, 2009).

Dört öğrenme alanı tanımlanmıştır. Bunlar: İkilemlerden öğrenme, öğrencilerin dönütlerinden öğrenme, iş arkadaşlarının dönütlerinden öğrenme, farklı başlık ve farklı insanlarla iletişime maruz kalmaktan dolayı öğrenmedir.

Sonuç

Akademik danışmanlığın danışmanlara olan etkisine ilişkin bilgiye oldukça az rastlanmaktadır (Halse, 2011) ve danışmanların profesyonel gelişimlerine yönelik yaygın araştırmalar ise doktora düzeyinde yoğunlaşmaktadır (Brew&Peseta, 2002; Manathunga, 2005; Halse, 2011). Bu keşif araştırması görüşmeler aracılığıyla, kendi danışmanlık deneyimlerini inceleme fırsatı yaratarak, öğretmen eğitiminde rol oynayan acemi danışmanların deneyimlerinden bazılarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Örtük öğrenme gidişatı, belirsizlikler ve farkındalıktan yoksunluk öne çıkan durumlar olmuştur.

Görüşmeler, danışmanların 'arkalarına yaslanıp kendilerini değerlendirmelerini' (Evans, 2002) ve deneyimleriyle somutlaşan varsayım ve inançlarını gün yüzüne çıkarmayı sağlayan bir işlev görmüştür (Bell, 2002). Bu işlev, sorulması ya da açıklanması gereken sorulara karşı farkındalıklarını arttırmıştır (Moon, 2002). Aynı zamanda 'deneyimin kendisinden çok deneyimin sonradan gözden geçirilmesiyle daha çok öğrenme gerçekleşir' görüşü desteklenmiştir (Posner, 1996). Nitekim yansıtıcı analizin, özellikle sonrasında incelemek üzere belli bir örnek olay dağarcığı oluşturmamış acemi danışmanların akademik danışmanlık gelişimleri için bilgilendirici olduğunu ve bir temel oluşturduğunu söylemek mümkündür (Dauglas, 2003). Danışmanların eğitiminden çok danışmanların yansıtıcı uygulayıcılar olarak görülmesine (McCormack&Pamphilon, 2004) ve yaparken bilme (knowing-in action) yerine yaparken bilgiye (knowledge-in action) dönüştürmeye odaklanmak gerekmektedir (Eraut, 1994).

Uygulamalı sonuçlar

Akademik danışma doğası gereği öğrenci ve danışman arasındaki temel ilişkinin ötesinde gerçekleşen sosyal bir etkinliktir (Amundsen&McAlpine, 2009, s. 332). Danışmanlar sosyal ve politik bir bağlamda çalışmaktadır ve profesyonel gelişimleri kendi girişimleri ve bağlamlarındaki imkânlar ve imkânsızlıklar ile şekillenmektedir (Swennen, Jones&Volman, 2010). Bunu akılda tutan akademik danışmanlar danışmanlığın bireysel deneyimleri zenginleştirecek farklı boyutlarını keşfederek ve amaca yönelik eşgüdümlü bir çalışma ortamı sağlayarak uygulama yapılan topluluklardaki öğrenme kapasitesini yavaş yavaş geliştirerek arttırabileceklerdir (Lave&Wnger, 1991).

Bulgular danışmanların işi süreç içinde öğrendiğini ve akademik danışmanın bu yoldaki kimlik oluşumunda işin işte öğrenilmesinin daimi bir süreç olduğu yönündeki Halse'nin savını desteklemektedir (Halse, 2011). Öte yandan, akademik danışman olma yolunda kimliklerini geliştirmeleri için danışmanların görev anlayışlarının temelinde yatan kavramları ve danışmaların danışmanlığın doğasına ilişkin görüşlerini sorgulamak önemlidir (Brew&Peseta, 2004).

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