A Comparative Study of Barriers to Mentoring Student and New Teachers

Semiyu Adejare Aderibigbe (Ph.D.),[1] Eimear Holland (Ph.D.),[2] Iris Marusic (Ph.D.),[3] Rachel Shanks (Ph.D.),[4]

[1] College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences & Institute of Leadership in Higher Education, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, UAE

[2] School of Health and Human Performance, Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland

[3] The Institute of Social Research in Zagreb, 1000 Zagreb, Croatia

[4] School of Education, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, Scotland

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Semiyu Adejare Aderibigbe, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences & Institute of Leadership in Higher Education, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, UAE. Email: saderibigbe@sharjah.ac.ae

Abstract

Mentoring is widely believed to be beneficial to mentors and mentees in the teacher education context. However, mentoring as a tool for strengthening professional knowledge is not without barriers hindering its effectiveness. This paper explores common barriers in mentoring, drawing on studies conducted in Croatia, Ireland, and Scotland which have been re-analyzed for this paper. The two studies conducted in Scotland used a mixed-methods approach, the Croatian study was conducted using a quantitative approach, while the Irish research employed a qualitative strategy. Data from the four published studies were re-analyzed and integrated using a qualitative thematic approach with three groups of themes emerging as the most common barriers to mentoring in teacher education. These groups of themes are: interests, values and motives; power, status and position; and information and communication. The study explores these themes and concludes with the implications for stakeholders, including school management, universities, and student teachers.

Keywords: Mentoring, new teachers, student teachers, teacher education.

A Comparative Study of Barriers to Mentoring Student and New Teachers

The need to improve the quality of teachers' professional learning experiences are acknowledged worldwide (Holland, 2021; Aderibigbe, Gray & Colucci-Gray, 2018; O'Grady, 2017; Hairon & Tan, 2016). In this context, collaborative partnerships between teacher education institutions and schools are seen as a means of strengthening initial teacher education and teacher professional development in various contexts (Aderibigbe, et al., 2018). A vital element of this partnership is mentoring which is reported to be a tool for fostering the personal and professional development of pre-service, novice and veteran teachers (Attard Tonna, 2019; van Ginkel, Verloop & Denessen, 2016). Practical learning opportunities through practicum and mentoring are considered essential for the development of professional knowledge in teacher education (Tammets, Pata & Eisenschmidt, 2019).

Mentors across the countries help their mentees to develop the professional knowledge and skills required to function effectively as teachers at different stages of their careers (Ellis, Alonzo & Nguyen, 2020). Through the practicum, pre-service/student teachers gain practical teaching knowledge providing them the chance to put theory into practice. In addition, new and experienced teachers learn from each other in professional learning communities. Despite the significance of mentoring in teacher professional learning, research conducted in different contexts indicates that some challenges hinder its effectiveness and implementation (Simsar, & Dogan, 2020; Asuo-Baffour, Daayeng & Agyemang, 2019; Graham, 2019). However, we contend that comparing findings from different settings can strengthen stakeholders' understanding of impediments to mentoring in initial teacher education and teacher professional learning contexts. In their meta-synthesis of qualitative research on teacher mentors' education, Aspfors and Fransson (2015) underline the importance of the educational and cultural context of the country in which mentoring, and mentor education take place. Furthermore, in their study, Salajan, Duffield, Glava and Glava (2016) report the need for educators to look beyond their contexts to develop policies for improving their educational systems. In addition, Salajan, et al. (2016) suggest the need for more research into experience through practicum in teacher education. Thus, we explored common barriers to mentoring in three European teacher education contexts, drawing on four published studies conducted in Croatia, Ireland, and Scotland, as teacher education scholars (Aderibigbe, 2014; Holland, 2021, Marušić, Pavin Ivanec & Doolan, 2011; Shanks & Robson, 2012).

In this study we have brought together research conducted in Croatia, Ireland and Scotland. These three European countries have different education systems and varied systems of mentoring for student and new teachers. Through comparing and contrasting our studies we believe we can highlight common barriers to mentoring student teachers and new teachers in Europe. In Scotland, teachers are supported in mentoring schemes, in their initial teacher education program and their induction year, as professionals on the field working with experienced teachers (Aderibigbe, Colucci-Gray & Gray, 2016; Shanks & Robson, 2012). This is similar to the Irish system, where mentoring is a component of the initial teacher education and induction years, offering new teachers the opportunity to build on the knowledge developed as pre-service teachers (Holland, 2021). Conversely, the Croatian system provides most of its initial teacher education for intending teachers at higher education institutions but offers induction for new teachers to gain professional knowledge in schools (Eurydice, 2018).

There are differences between the three countries, for example mentors in Croatia and Scotland are not required to have specific training in preparation for their mentoring roles (Eurydice, 2018; Marušić, et al., 2011; Shanks, Attard Tonna, Krøjgaard, Paaske, Robson & Bjerkholt, 2020). In Ireland there is mentor education for mentors of new teachers but in initial teacher education mentors are deliberately called 'co-operating teachers' rather than mentors.

Holland (2021) calls for professional learning designers, facilitators and researchers of mentoring to adopt a deeper and broad complexity thinking mindset to better grasp the complex challenges facing the mentoring role and that until this is comprehended, the potential of and for mentoring will continue to be lost. We believe that identifying barriers emerging in different educational settings can enable us to discuss solutions to these common problems. Besides, we envisage that understanding common issues can help reduce friction and challenges in mentoring, thereby enhancing mutually beneficial relationships and professional learning experiences among participants in mentoring processes.

Theoretical Framework and Related Literature

A number of theories are identified in the literature as underpinning the mentoring processes in teacher education. For instance, the apprenticeship approach allows experienced teachers to help novice and student teachers develop relevant professional knowledge and skills (Mackh, 2020; de Bruin, 2019). Cognitive apprenticeship, for instance, guides how student teachers could be inducted into the schools' system to understand the ethos and culture of schools (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989). In line with the apprenticeship theory, Anderson and Shannon (1988) and Furlong and Maynard (1995) proposed models to support the socialization of new teachers and student teachers about school ethos, rituals, and culture.

A socio-cultural theoretical framework to mentoring is grounded in situated cognition theory, which suggests that learning occurs in real activities-based context and culture (Brown, et al., 1989). It could also be argued that socio-cultural theory is influenced by Vygotsky's social development theory. Vygotsky (1978) asserts that an individual's development cannot be fully understood by studying the person without examining the environment where they grew or dwell. Banerjee-Batist, Reio Jr., and Rocco (2019) found that socio-cultural factors are linked with meaningful and individualized workplace professional learning experiences. In addition to these perspectives, active involvement of both mentors and mentees based on egalitarian principles and grounded in the critical constructivist theoretical framework to mentoring process in teacher education is also reported in the literature (Kincheloe, 2005). Aderibigbe, Colucci-Gray and Gray (2014) described such a situation as collaborative mentoring guided by the hybridization of apprenticeship, reflective and socio-cultural theories. The situation could also be likened to the co-planning model of mentoring where mentors and mentees co-planned and co-teach as team members (Fieman-Nemsar and Beasley, 1997).

Our studies align with the collaborative mentoring process where mentors and mentees engage in a mutually beneficial learning journey due to the numerous merits associated with the approach. Even so, mentoring as a process for facilitating professional learning in teacher education contexts is not immune to barriers, as documented in the extant literature (Simsar, & Dogan, 2020; Asuo-Baffour, et al., 2019). The context of the mentoring relationship, the selection and training of mentors, feedback from mentors and their assessment of mentees, time for mentoring, and power relations are all critical areas of teacher mentoring that could potentially impact the mentoring process.

Context of the mentoring relationship

As Aspfors and Fransson (2015) point out, context will influence mentoring relationships on various levels, from the educational context at the national level to the local school context. Mentors are a part of the workplace learning environment and have an essential role in the professional socialization of new teachers into the school professional community (Tammets, et al., 2019, Ewing, 2021). As Lave and Wenger (1991) indicated, what and how new entrants learn grows out of the environment in which they are situated. So, there could be issues when the learning environment is not well organized. Further, mentoring can be counterproductive and unsupportive

when mentors are assigned to their roles in diverse contexts (Graham, 2019). However, as well as depending on the social or environmental context, new teacher learning depends on the specific learning disposition of the individual teacher (Shanks, Robson & Gray, 2012). Both concepts, learning environment and learning disposition, can be considered in terms of a continuum from expansive to restrictive (Shanks, et al., 2012). However, teachers need to be convinced that their involvement in professional learning conversations in their workplace contexts will positively impact the teaching and learning process in the classroom (Hairon & Tan, 2016).

Selection, Matching and Training of Mentors

As Cross, et al. (2019) argued, the availability of mentors with appropriate skills and interests in supporting mentees is required for effective mentoring processes. In addition to mentorship skills, a process of matching mentors and their mentees could significantly affect the outcomes of mentoring (Squires, 2019). Joyce and Showers (2002) explained that inappropriate matching between mentors and mentees may hinder the effectiveness of support systems based on collaborative principles. Aderibigbe (2014) found that personality mismatch between mentors and mentees hinders the success of mentoring programs. This underscores the need for selection and matching to be carefully done by the school administration. More importantly, the school administration needs to consider mentors' motivation for supporting others in the selection and matching process (van Ginkel, et al., 2016). Therefore, failure on the part of principals and management to entice and select teachers that are passionate about mentoring others may pose a challenge in mentoring relationships (Aderibigbe, et al., 2018).

Feedback and Assessment

It is reported that feedback is beneficial to students and experienced teachers acting as mentors, but the process of providing feedback is more effective when structured (Keiler, Diotti, Hudon & Ransom, 2020). In another study, mentors themselves report that providing non-judgemental feedback is an essential quality of a good mentor (Holland, 2021; Parker, Zenkov & Glaser, 2021). This seems to explain why good relationships are reported as necessary for effective and productive mentoring processes (Aderibigbe, et al., 2018; Haron & Tan, 2016). Approachable, non-judgemental, and nurturing mentors are perceived as the ones who can provide both emotional and professional support to novice teachers (Ewing, 2021). However, studies indicate that mentors are expected to evaluate students' performances while being mentored, and this poses challenges in the mentoring process as some mentors are also sharp in their assessment reports (Bjørndal, 2020). As such, assessment is one of the ways that mentors can have power over their mentees (see Power Relations below).

Time for the Mentoring Process

Mentoring can take up a lot of time, and it may be squeezed into the time before and after school and lunchtimes, and teachers with management responsibilities may struggle to meet their mentees (Hairon & Tan, 2016). In Krishna, Toh, Mason, and Kanesvaran (2019), mentees indicated that they could not participate actively in a mentoring initiative as they did not have enough time. Experienced teachers serving as mentors may also find mentoring challenging because they do not want mentoring to affect their workload due to the time required (Hairon & Tan, 2016). Mentors need time to give their mentees helpful and timeous feedback.

Power Relations

Bullock (2017) argues that mentors have a significant influence on mentees during practicum. However, power dynamics may be a considerable challenge to effective mentoring when the mentoring structure is hierarchical. In Hairon and Tan (2016), it is reported that hierarchical structure hinders effective collaboration in professional learning and mentoring processes. Literature indicates that mentoring may be challenging in situations where participants

in mentoring do not feel that their mentors have any more authority in their field than them (Dworski-Riggs & Day Langhout, 2010). Mentees may also be in vulnerable situations concerning future employment (Shanks, 2014). Additionally, the effectiveness of the mentor is highly reliant upon the degree to which the mentee buys into the process (Holland, 2021). Power dynamics and several other challenges will be affected by the context where the mentoring relationship takes place.

Though the potential benefits of mentoring are internationally recognized, the effectiveness and sustainability of mentoring have been questioned (Armour, Quennerstedt, Chambers & Makopoulou, 2015). As has been detailed above, several barriers to effective mentoring in teacher education have been identified previously. However, most of the studies reported on above drew on one specific context. Therefore, we decided to compare the barriers to mentoring by re-analyzing data from three different contexts to provide a set of common issues that stakeholders need to consider in order to improve mentoring practices.

Methodology

A cross-case design (Attard Tonna, Bjerkholt & Holland, 2017) was used to compare barriers to mentoring in three countries. Using the framework of collaborative mentoring we re-analyzed existing data, treating each of our previous studies as a case. As explained by Khan and Van Wynsberghe (2008, p.1) cross-case analysis 'is a research method that facilitates the comparison of commonalities and difference in the events, activities, and processes that are the units of analyses in case studies.' Analysis across the different cases, unveiled which common and different barriers to mentoring existed across three European countries. This study comprises four research studies: one in Croatia; one in Ireland; and two in Scotland. Next, we outline our cross-case methodology, as transparency is necessary to enable the reader to relate to and judge the claims of this paper (Bryman, 2016). Then, we provide a brief overview of the methodologies of the four studies. In each of the studies, ethical approval was provided by the relevant institution, and the anonymity of research participants was maintained in the re-analysis of the data.

Cross-Case Methodology

Mentoring of student or new teachers was the focus for each of the four studies. The researchers realised that further analysis of their data in relation to mentoring using the framework of collaborative mentoring would be useful to explore common barriers across Europe. Each individual researcher identified the themes from their work in relation to barriers to mentoring and then all four researchers discussed the themes which had emerged. A cross-case study design was used, and a qualitative interpretivist approach to multiple methods was adopted (Scott & Usher, 2011).

The authors believe that using multiple case studies (Yin, 2014; Khan & Van Wynsberghe, 2008) can help to uncover common characteristics of a phenomenon regardless of the varied contexts, and therefore, allows for generalisations to be drawn (Fletcher, MacPhee & Dickson, 2015). Thus, the implications from our findings can be transferred to other contexts with similar characteristics, namely other European countries. To ensure the reliability and validity of our case study approach we considered construct validity, internal validity, external validity, concurrent validity, ecological validity, reliability and avoidance of bias (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). In terms of construct and external validity we ensured that through our discussions we were using the same definitions and understanding of concepts and terms, for example what we meant by a new teacher. For internal validity through our joint work, we agreed on the results and explanations after having considered alternative explanations. In relation to concurrent validity and thus convergent validity we were able to triangulate our findings, in each of the individual studies and also between the studies. The four separate studies had ecological validity within their own national

context and this cross-case has ecological validity within the European context in which it is set. We ensured the reliability and avoidance of bias in our analysis through our discussions and probing of each other's work. Using the collaborative mentoring framework through which to view our data enabled us to look at the data afresh. The comparative approach we employed was a type of cross-case analysis (Yin, 2014). While our studies were conducted in different ways the combination of these different cases can provide a useful set of comparative inferences in relation to the barriers to mentoring. This cross-case analysis has limitations as it is based on a comparison of data gathered by different researchers using some different methods and each study's limitations brings limitations to the comparative analysis. Notwithstanding, drawing upon multiple methods across the studies offers a richer methodological cross-case tapestry perspective upon which to view the barriers to mentoring.

Overview of Studies and Contexts

Croatian Overview and Study

To enter the teaching profession, new teachers in Croatia must complete a one-year compulsory induction period followed by a state-regulated exam. Only general guidelines exist related to the role of the mentors during the induction period, with no specific training or support provided to the mentors. There is a considerable lack of empirical data on the quality of the mentorship provided from both mentors' and new teachers' perspectives. The original study aimed to fill this gap by providing data on various aspects of 'mentors' work that could give an insight into the quality of the mentorship supplied in Croatian schools (Marušić, et al., 2011).

The study comprised 47 mentors and 93 new teachers who completed a questionnaire assessing various aspects of the mentoring process. The mentors had between 5- and 20-years' teaching experience. The study sought to examine the following from the perspective of the mentors: the level of support provided by their school; types of mentor support to new teachers; professional development needs; sources of satisfaction and barriers in 'mentors' work; and suggestions for the improvement of mentoring practice. The study also sought to uncover the following from the perspective of the new teachers: the quality of support they received from schools; the quality of relationship they had with their mentor; and suggestions for improvements.

Irish Overview and Study

In Ireland, the first national 'Guidelines on School Placement' for student teachers were introduced in 2013 (Teaching Council of Ireland). These guidelines ask for increased input from the mentor, referred to as 'co-operating teacher', to facilitate student teachers reflecting on their practice, amongst other responsibilities. Until recently, mentoring practices have been informal and unsupported (Conway, Murphy, Rath & Hall, 2009). A culture of competitive individualism (Gleeson, Leitch, Sugrue & O'Flaherty, 2012), professional insulation and isolation have hindered a mentoring culture being fostered (Teaching Council of Ireland, 2010). This has been compounded by a lack of critical inquiry (Gleeson, 2012) as well as a fear of evaluation (Sugrue, 2012). In a context where mentors were not systematically offered formal mentor education opportunities twelve mentors of undergraduate student teachers, from eleven schools, came together to engage in mentor education through a 'participatory action learning action research [PALAR] mentoring community of practice'. The mentors attended four workshops and through engagement in PALAR, they reflected and set targets to develop their mentoring in their respective schools (McNiff, 2013). Together they shared, explored, and solved problems associated with barriers to their engagement as mentors (Sobottka, 2013). Additionally, they collaborated to manage conflicts and change (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013). Participants reflected on the barriers they were facing through learning journals, and they set targets associated with obstacles in their learning journey plan, with the aim of overcoming such complex barriers.

Scottish Overview and New Teachers Study

Since 2002 those who complete initial teacher education and who are eligible to work in Scotland are guaranteed a teaching post for their induction year in a local authority school. During the induction year, they are required to teach 80% of the class contact time of a fully registered teacher, use 20% non-teaching time for continuing professional development, and they have an induction supporter or mentor. Over the year, they should meet the Standard for Full Registration (General Teaching Council for Scotland, 2021) and are meant to be supported through meetings with their mentor and observations by the mentor and headteacher. Mentors are either based in the same school as the new teacher or work from a local-authority base. There is no national training provided for mentors and no pre-requisites to be one. New teachers who had completed their initial teacher education at one Scottish university, and agreed to be contacted about research participation, were asked to complete questionnaires (n=267 in year one and n=170 in year two) and indicate if they would volunteer to be interviewed. The study was repeated with ten interviewees in year one and eight interviewees in year two. In the first year, two questionnaires were completed (n=39 and 102), and with a second cohort of new teachers, two questionnaires were completed in year two (n=54 and 48). A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was followed (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016).

Scottish Teachers and Student Teachers

This study explored the collaborative mentoring relationship between mentors and student teachers in a Scottish initial teacher education program. The undergraduates on the program teach and work collaboratively with experienced teachers (their mentors) while on placement during their course. Mentors do not need a particular number of years of teaching experience, but they do have to attend an orientation workshop where they get to clarify expectations regarding their mentoring roles. The study focused on the mentoring relationships between mentors and student teachers in the third and fourth year when the student teachers are given more responsibilities in the classroom. A concurrent mixed methods research approach was used involving both quantitative and qualitative data. However, qualitative data collected from student teachers (n=7), teachers (n=6), and university tutors (n=6) is drawn on for this study. The qualitative data were collected using semi-structured interviews to explore the participants' views about their mentoring experience (Bryman, 2016).

Data collection and analysis

The next section of this paper provides an overview of our data collection approaches including how we analyzed our data, and then how we conducted our cross-case analysis and developed common themes which we then grouped together. The four studies' research designs, data collection processes and data analysis techniques are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Research design, research methods and of the individual studies

Croatia	Ireland	Scotland (new teachers)	Scotland (student teachers)
Research design			
Mixed methods with questionnaire containing both open-ended and closed questions	Qualitative study incorporating participatory action learning action research	Sequential explanatory mixed methods with questionnaires	Concurrent mixed methods with questionnaires and interviews.

		followed by interviews	
Research methods			
Structured and open-ended mentor questionnaires Structured and open-ended new teacher questionnaires	Questionnaire with stimulus recall. Pre-workshop questions and observations - video recorded and transcribed. Workshop artefacts Reflective journals Extended focus groups.	Sequential collection of data with paper and online questionnaires completed by new teachers. Then semi-structured interviews of new teachers. Documentary analysis of new teachers' induction year records	Concurrent collection of quantitative and qualitative data. Online and paper questionnaires sent to student teachers and teachers serving as mentors. Semi-structured interviews of mentors, student teachers, and university tutors.
Data analysis techniques			
Descriptive analysis of quantitative data. Coding of qualitative data.	Inductive deductive approach. Coding and constant comparison of data Inter-observer reliability of codes Inter-rater reliability Member validation Researcher journal and memos to ensure reflexivity	Sequential analysis of questionnaires to inform semi-structured interview schedule with descriptive analysis and chi square test of quantitative data Inductive and deductive coding of qualitative data	Descriptive analysis of questionnaire data. Thematic inductive analysis of interview transcripts.
Cross case analysis			
The researchers from the separate studies re-analysed their data and used common codes in this re-analysis. This was done as a cross-case analysis with the researchers discussing their data and their re-analysis.			

The Croatian study used mixed methods with questionnaires to mentors and new teachers containing open-ended and closed questions. Descriptive analysis of the quantitative data was complemented with coding of the qualitative data in the open-ended question responses. In the Irish study qualitative data was collected through a participatory action learning action research meta-

design. Data collection methods included: questionnaires with stimulus recall (Meyer, 2002), pre-workshop questions, workshop observation transcripts from audio-visual recordings, workshop artefacts which were photographed, reflective journals and an electronic wall platform e.g. Trello, learning journey plans, and extended focus group discussions. The data were analysed using both inductive and deductive approaches with constant comparison coding of the data. The study of new teachers in Scotland used sequential explanatory mixed methods with questionnaires followed by semi-structured interviews and the collection of the new teachers' induction year records. The data was analysed sequentially so that the analysis of questionnaires informed the semi-structured interview schedule. There was descriptive analysis and chi square tests conducted on the quantitative data and inductive and deductive coding of the qualitative data. In the Scottish study of student teachers, a concurrent mixed methods approach was used with online and paper questionnaires sent to student teachers and mentors and interviews of mentors, student teachers, and university tutors. Descriptive analysis of questionnaire data was undertaken alongside thematic inductive analysis of the interview transcripts. As Bryman (2016) notes, it is prudent to be open about the previous treatment of the data prior to further analysis for this paper.

Across the cases, a variety of methods were employed to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the research findings, including: prolonged engagement (Creswell, 2014); thick description and verbatim reporting (Morse, 2015); critical friends (Stringer, 2007); inter-observer reliability of codes and inter-rater reliability (Darlington & Scott, 2002), combined member checking approaches (Harvey, 2015), researcher journal and memos (Waterworth, Dimmock, Pescud, Braham & Rosenberg, 2016). In relation to the credibility of the findings of this paper, we can point to the 'adoption of appropriate, well recognised research methods', peer scrutiny of our research projects and the examination of previous research in order to structure and understand the research findings (Shenton, 2004, p.73). When analysing the data, triangulation reassured us that the data and subsequent themes were not from just one method of data collection (Cohen, et al., 2018) and we were all using a collaborative mentoring framework to analyse the data for this joint study. Triangulation was conducted through three avenues: a) numerous cross-country data sources; b) multiple methods; and c) multiple researchers. We have also attempted, within the constraints of the length of the paper, to ensure we have provided enough information to show the transferability, dependability and confirmability of our study (ibid).

Individually, each of the researchers re-analyzed their corresponding data, treating each study as a separate case, with the meaning being drawn out inductively with respect to barriers to mentoring (Chambers & Armour, 2011). In our discussions about mentoring, we combined the apprenticeships, reflective and socio-cultural approaches to frame our analysis through a collaborative mentoring model. Through the use of an online shared document, we shared our re-analyzed and anonymized data (Thomas et al., 2005). We provided distilled data accompanied by a code and a memo validating the code. Having completed this process, we shared the codes which were most reflective of our data. We then engaged in the process of cross-case analysis with each study being a case. Finally, we reduced the data further by cross-case coding to uncover the clearest commonalities and differences (Bryman, 2016). We then combined the barrier-related themes into three groups:

(1) Interest, values and motives;
(2) Position, status and power; and
(3) Information and communication.

In order to anonymize the words of participants, pseudonyms have been used (Berg, 2004). Quotations are labelled to identify the country and study they derive from. Additionally, the role

of the participant is provided, for example, student teacher, new teacher mentee, student teacher mentor, new teacher mentor.

Findings and Discussion

We now document and discuss the research findings in the three groups of themes as set out above. These groups of themes should be understood from the collaborative mentoring model which combines theories of mentoring as apprenticeship, a form of reflection and influenced by socio-cultural factors.

Interest, Values and Motives

A lack of interest and motivation on the part of mentors to engage in mentoring was identified as a significant barrier to successful mentoring in all three countries. It is reported that the inability of principals and management to engage passionate teachers as mentors may negatively impact mentoring relationships (Holland, 2021; Aderibigbe, et al., 2018). Irish participants provided a detailed view of the ways which interests, values, and motives can hinder successful mentorship (Holland, 2021). Such mentors often feel discouraged by a lack of support and interest from their colleagues and school management. They express disappointment and frustration with the fact that many colleagues do not perceive any benefits to mentoring student teachers. In their words, many colleagues were "disinterested" in mentoring, which left them feeling a "lack of support" for what they were doing. A recent literature review underlines the importance of intrinsic motivation, positive attitude and enthusiasm for the role as a substantial quality of a good mentor, having significant impact on teacher learning (Ellis, et al., 2020). In addition, mentors often report that school principals and management do not value mentoring as an opportunity to enhance teacher competences in their school. This underscores the need for re-orientation programs for school managements and teachers to see mentoring as an endeavour to be treasured and promoted, given that it fosters professional learning (Holland, 2018). Recognizing the value in mentoring and lending support to teachers serving as mentors can impact the extent to which they can apply their knowledge to help others (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013; Holland, 2021).

Student teachers' insufficient motivation and engagement is also seen as a significant obstacle to successful mentoring in Croatia; one mentor stated: "Superficial students who are only interested in getting a passing grade and the quality of work is not their concern." Mentoring process elicits a variety of affective responses, some of them being negative such as disappointment and criticism (Shwartz & Dori, 2016). It may be assumed that some student teachers may be reluctant to engage because they are afraid of mistakes. Thus, mentors need to give the impression that they are there to provide the necessary support to the student teachers, and the student teachers need to trust them. This is in line with a body of research emphasising that a quality mentor should be able to personally relate to a student teacher and create a setting that would foster a collegial relationship (Ellis, et al., 2020; Holland, 2021; Aderibigbe, 2014). In Scotland, new teachers see lack of motivation for mentoring and lack of mentors' commitment to their role as a major source of difficulties in the mentoring process. Studies on mentoring motives outline the role of mentoring motives in mentoring relationships, where opportunities for learning and professional development are essential for novice teachers and to their mentors as well (Russell & Russell, 2011). Mentors' motives are meaningfully related to their conceptions about mentored learning to teach and are possibly reflected in their mentoring practices (van Ginkel et al., 2016). A lack of motivation to mentor novice teachers could represent a significant obstacle in establishing a learning relationship beneficial for both parties. Personality clashes and differences in values are also issues that can hinder the establishment of good relations between mentors and their mentees as documented in the Scottish student-teacher study. A participant explained thus: "I think it is just down to

personality, I mean sometimes the relationship doesn't work, and it's not going to work brilliantly however hard you try because there's a natural barrier there." From the data, it is apparent that mentor as a collaborative learning process may be challenging for the participants (Aderibigbe, et al., 2018). Mentors' dispositions, their motives for mentoring, mentees' characteristics, and organizational factors are among key determinants of mentoring behaviour and, subsequently, the outcomes of the mentorship. So, it would be beneficial if mentors and mentees are carefully matched as studies show that successful mentoring processes are linked to participants' matching (Joyce & Showers, 2002). As well as the mentor's and mentee's interest, values, and motives being critical, the mentor's and mentee's position, status, and power relationships affect the mentoring relationship.

Position, Status and Power

A lack of power to influence the workload and duties assigned to teachers make it practically challenging for them to have enough time to engage with their mentees effectively. Without enough time, mentors may struggle to actively engage in the mentoring process (Hairon & Tan, 2016). The Scottish and Irish data were in line with the Croatian finding that workload and administrative demands pose challenges for teachers serving as mentors. In the Irish study, mentors identified that there was "little time to fully engage" in mentoring. In Scotland, where some mentors were external and visited many mentees, access to their valuable time was particularly difficult. Such mentees felt at a disadvantage. Indeed, a lack of time with mentees has been identified as a hindering factor in mentoring programs (Krishna, et al., 2019). Mentees previously felt on solid ground seeking support, and now they thought it was "harder 'cos you don't want to annoy them" (Scotland, new teacher mentee). In Ireland, austerity had an overwhelming impact on teacher working conditions and terms (ASTI, 2016, p. 18). Indeed, it has been argued that schools are less and less able to accommodate student teachers given the increased school placement expectations (Mulcahy & McSharry, 2012). In Scotland, it is reported that inadequate time makes it difficult for teachers to attend courses in preparation for students' teaching practice and travel to attend classes for their professional learning. This may lead to a situation where mentors may not have enough knowledge or skills to mentor others effectively. Inadequate understanding of the mentor's role is also identified as a barrier to effective mentoring by Scottish novice teachers. Not surprisingly, Cross, et al. (2019) highlighted the need for mentors with adequate skills in effective mentoring processes.

Power asymmetries and boundaries within the school and the mentoring context are also seen as challenges to mentoring relationships. Chevalier and Buckles (2013) argued that the degree to which learners can apply their learning and cascade it to others within their context is dependent upon the degree to which their management and colleagues support and permit it. In the Irish context, one mentor stated: "…the whole school culture makes it hard for you to keep doing it." Mentors highlighted that this was more problematic again where their position or status within the school was weak or low. In such a situation, the mentor is less confident and inclined to be influential (Anicich, Fast, Halevy & Galinsky, 2016). Mentors indicated that they were at the mercy of school management and organisational structures. In the Irish study, some participants suggested that in the promotion of mentoring, management "don't get involved in the process." They reported that the failure of principals and management to encourage colleagues to want to take part made their attempts to engage more challenging (Hein, 2016). They felt that this placed them on a weak footing (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013). It is, of course, "difficult for [teachers] to tell the principal about the need to assist beginning teachers" (Tang & Choi, 2005, p. 397). The most frequent sources of dissatisfaction reported in the Croatian study are the workload and administrative demands related to their mentoring role as a result of a power imbalance in schools.

In some cases, the assignment of the mentoring role was seen as a top-down imposition, which led to a lack of perceived autonomy and a sense of empowerment (Dworski-Riggs & Day Langhout, 2010). In the Irish study, one mentor complained that telling: "staff [that they] have no choice [and that] it has to be done" would result in it being "brought in very begrudgingly." It was reported in all four studies, at both profession and school management levels that a lack of professional development being provided left mentors feeling uninformed, unskilled, unaware of potential benefits (Simpson et al., 2007) and ultimately not feeling empowered enough to engage in a meaningful or adequate manner. Furthermore, mentees not being willing to engage was identified as a barrier to mentoring. In the Irish context, mentors reported an ongoing "fear [of] the student-teacher not engaging." Mentors stated that some mentees do not engage because they think, "that they know better." This suggests that some mentees undervalued the opportunity to engage in the mentoring process (Aderibigbe, 2014), leading to a lack of collaborative mentoring or learning. Both the Croatian and Irish studies attribute negative power relations to poor dyad mismatches (Jolevski, 2012). While mentors acknowledged o that being the mentee's assessor caused problems in the mentoring relationship, they were frustrated by the reverence that mentees held for their university tutor, with their advice being considered second rate over the tutor who would determine their assessment grade (Anderson et al., 2015). This undermined their position, and thus power to engage with the process. In the Scottish study, new teachers referred to the 'locus of control' being shifted in favour of the mentor by the mentor arranging meetings to take place in their office as opposed to the new teacher's classroom. These findings have implications for the design of mentor education which should provide participants with flexible software processes to enable them to apply their professional learning in environments where power asymmetries exist (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013; Holland, 2021). A lack of information or the withholding of data can be used to exert power and control others.

Information and Communication

In all four studies, lack of information and poor communication are identified barriers to effective mentoring. In the studies in Croatia and Ireland and the student-teacher study in Scotland, participants were concerned about inadequate communication with necessary documentation not being shared or not existing. A participant in the Irish research explains: "[Mentors are] not engaged [in the] policy [of] the teaching council, what all the things that are coming down the line. They might have an idea, but we don't engage". In the student-teacher study in Scotland, it was found that there could be miscommunication. Student teachers could be confused about which rules to follow while on placement in the school, and there could be a miscommunication between teachers serving as mentors and university tutors giving mentees different information when the teachers and tutors did not meet in advance of the students starting their school placements. Their Croatian counterparts identify insufficient collaboration and communication between those involved in the process and inadequate understanding of mentoring for principals and school management.

In the new teacher study in Scotland, research participants said that being close to their mentor was necessary for their professional learning. In one municipality, a new mentoring system for new elementary school teachers had been devised with one central mentor working with 10-12 new teachers rather than each teacher having a mentor in their school. Interviewees raised the lack of proximity to their mentor and the mentor's availability with this arrangement. If a mentor was working in the same school, building or corridor, the new teacher could pop in to see them before or after school or catch them at coffee or lunch breaks. In contrast, new teachers with a centralised mentor (someone who mentored new teachers across several schools) had to make an appointment to see their mentor. While they would have weekly meetings, there were no serendipitous encounters or informal support during the working week. This ties in with earlier studies that found

school building (Parker, Ndoye & Imig, 2009), stage or grade level, and subject or content area (Lee & Feng 2007) as effective criteria for achieving a good match between mentors and new teachers.

Further, participants in the study said that having a centralised mentor rather than one based in their school was a barrier to their learning and development. Thus, efforts should be made to pair mentees with mentors close to them as that could aid their level of engagement and provide opportunities for sharing information and best practices more efficiently. In the new teacher study in Scotland, other communication and information barriers related to the quality of the feedback that new teachers received from their mentors and the length of time they had to wait for this feedback. Previous studies acknowledged the relevance of feedback in mentoring relationships and the need for it to be structured (Keiler, et al., 2020) and non-judgemental (Parker, et al., 2021) for its effectiveness.

Findings from three diverse educational contexts identify common themes emerging as perceived barriers to the mentoring process. Most of the barriers identified refer to some contextual factors that can hinder the quality of the mentoring process as it is harder to collaborate through their mentoring relationship. Literature indicates that mentors do not exist in isolation but as a part of their workplaces and play essential roles in professional learning (Tammets, et al., 2019, Ewing, 2021). School and mentoring context emerged as one of the critical factors shaping the mentoring role in the literature. Aligned to the findings from qualitative meta-synthesis by Aspfors and Fransson (2015), this study found the allocation of time and resources and support from principals and colleagues to be important. Indeed, schools with a collaborative culture and egalitarian ethos (Kincheloe, 2005; Aderibigbe, et al 2014) can positively impact mentoring processes as against school environments predominantly focusing on the induction of mentees into established ethos (Mackh, 2020; de Bruin, 2019; Brown, et al., 1989). Aspfors and Fransson (2015) also underline the importance of a country's educational context as shaping the policies and practices reflected at the school level, such as the allocation of time and resources for mentoring. The success of the mentoring process largely depends on adequate support for teachers to be intrinsically motivated and show enthusiasm for the mentoring role, which is an essential characteristic of a good mentor (Ellis et al., 2020). Issues related to negative feelings emerging from the mentorship process and the lack of adequate communication between the mentor and student-teacher were also identified in all three contexts of our study and point to the importance of a relational dimension in mentorship (Aspfors & Fransson, 2015). Quality mentors are the ones who can establish a good relationship with student teachers and provide emotional and psychological support during the process of facilitating student-teacher learning (Ellis, et al., 2020).

There are limitations in relation to this study as there has been a comparison of four studies with different data collection methods. However, in all four studies questionnaires were used and for the cross-case analysis the qualitative data in each study has been compared. As noted above and similar to Attard Tonna, et al. (2017), we have attempted to provide sufficient detail in relation to each of the individual studies as well as the cross-case study so that credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are demonstrated (Shenton, 2004).

Conclusion

By exploring the common barriers to mentoring in teacher education from four studies conducted in Croatia, Ireland, and Scotland, through a collaborative mentoring framework, we are able to contribute to the literature on mentoring in teacher education. Our findings suggest that the common barriers to mentoring are mostly brought about by school management, teachers, university tutors, and student teachers. Each of the barriers can be understood as a way that collaboration is made more difficult. If mentors or mentees are not interested, then they will not

collaborate in a productive mentoring relationship. If there is a problem in relation to the position, status or power dynamic between the mentor and the mentee then it is hard from them to collaborate. If the mentee or mentor do not have necessary information or there is a lack of communication, then it is harder to produce a collaborative mentoring process between them.

The results have implications for stakeholders in mentoring within the teacher education context. Essentially, stakeholders need to consider some issues when planning to implement a mentoring program for the professional learning of teachers and student teachers. For instance, teachers who are motivated to support others should be consulted and involved in mentoring others. School management should meticulously select such teachers and provide them with the necessary support, including the appropriate information and enough time for engaging with mentees. Both mentors and mentees need to be orientated to see the value in a mentoring process rather than as an imposition by school management or the university. Clarifications of expectations and clear communication between schools and universities and among the mentoring participants must be considered when implementing mentoring programs. Future research may consider primary data collection in multiple mentoring contexts to complement the international literature on mentoring practices in teacher education.

Declaration of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

References

Aderibigbe, S.A. (2014), "Collaborative Mentoring Pedagogy in Initial Teacher Education: Lessons from a Scottish Context", *International Teacher Education: Promising Pedagogies (Part A)* (*Advances in Research on Teaching, Vol. 22*), Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 383-401. https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-368720140000022001

Aderibigbe, S.A., Colucci-Gray, L. and Gray, D. (2016). Conceptions and expectations of mentoring relationships in a teacher education reform context. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, *24*(1), 8-29. https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2016.1163636

Aderibigbe, S.A., Colucci-Gray, L. and Gray, D. (2014). Mentoring as a collaborative learning journey for teachers and student teachers: a critical constructivist perspective, *Teacher Education Advancement Network (TEAN) Journal (Special Issue 2)*, *6*(3), 17- 27. http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/1590/1/192-640-1-PB.pdf

Aderibigbe, S.A., Gray, D. & Colucci-Gray, L. (2018). Understanding the nature of mentoring experience between teachers and student teachers: Insights from an initial teacher education reform context. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, *7*(1), 54 – 71. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-04-2017-0028

Anderson, V., McKenzie, M., Allan, S., Hill, T., McLean, S., Kayira, J., Knorr, M., Stone, J., Murphy, J., & Butcher, K. (2015). Participatory action research as pedagogy: investigating social and ecological justice learning within a teacher education program. *Teaching Education*, *26*(2), 79-195.

Anderson, E.M. & and Shannon, A.L (1988). Toward a conceptualizing of mentoring. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *39*(1), 38-42.

Anicich, E. M., Fast, N. J., Halevy, N., & Galinsky, A. D. (2016). When the Bases of Social Hierarchy Collide: Power Without Status Drives Interpersonal Conflict. *Organization Science*, *27*(1), 123-140.

Armour, K.M., Quennerstedt, M., Chambers, F., & Makopoulou, K. (2015). What is 'effective CPD for contemporary physical education teachers? A Deweyan Framework. *Sport, Education and Society*, *22*(7), 799-811.

Aspfors, J. & Fransson, G. (2015). Research on mentor education for mentors of newly qualified teachers: A qualitative meta-synthesis. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 48,* 75-86.

Asuo-Baffour, H., Daayeng, A. & Agyemang, O. (2019). Mentorship in Teacher Education: Challenges and Support Provided. *European Journal of Education Studies*, *6*(1), 257-280. Available on-line at: www.oapub.org/edu

ASTI (Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland) (2016). Under Pressure IN: *ASTIR*. *4*(5), November/December, 18-19.

Attard Tonna, M. (2019). The benefits of mentoring newly qualified teachers in Malta, *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, *8*(4), 268-284. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-02-2019-0034

Attard Tonna, M., Bjerkholt, E. and Holland, E. (2017) 'Teacher mentoring and the reflective practitioner approach', *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, *6*(3), 210-227.

Banerjee-Batist, R., Reio Jr., T.G., & Rocco, T.S. (2019). Mentoring Functions and Outcomes: An Integrative Literature Review of Sociocultural Factors and Individual Differences. *Human Resource Development Review*, *18*(1) 114–162, DOI: 10.1177/1534484318810267

Berg, B. (2004). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Bjørndal, C.R.P. (2020). Student teachers' responses to critical mentor feedback: A study of face-saving strategies in teaching placements, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *91*, 103047, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103047.

Brown, J.S., Collins, A. & Duguid, P. (1989). Situated cognition and culture of learning. *Educational Researcher*, *18*(1), 32-41.

Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods (5th ed.).* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bullough Jr., R.V. (2005). Being and becoming a mentor: school-based teacher educators and teacher educator identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 21,* 143–155.

Bullock, S.M. (2017). Understanding Candidates' Learning Relationships with their Cooperating Teachers: A call to Reframe my Pedagogy, *Studying Teacher Education*, *13*(2), 179-192, DOI: 10.1080/17425964.2017.1342355

Chambers, F.C., & Armour, K.M. (2011). Do as we do and not as we say: teacher educators supporting student teachers to learn on teaching practice. *Sport, Education and Society, 16*(4), 527-544.

Chevalier, J.M., & Buckles, D.J. (2013). *Participatory Action Research: Theory and Methods for Engaged Inquiry.* UK: Routledge.

Cohen, L., Manion, L, & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research Methods in Education* (8th ed.), UK: Routledge.

Conway, P.F., Murphy, R., Rath, A., & Hall, K. (2009). Learning to teach and its implications for the continuum of teacher education: a nine country cross national study, Maynooth: *The Teaching Council*.

Cosnefroy, L., & Buhot, E. (2013). Workplace learning impact: An analysis of French-secondary-trainee teachers' perception of their professional development. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, *19*(6), 679–694.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Cross, M., Lee, S., Bridgman, H., Thapa, D.K., Cleary, M., & Kornhaber, R. (2019). Benefits, barriers and enablers of mentoring female health academics: An integrative review. *PLoS ONE 14*(4): e0215319. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal. pone.0215319

Darlington, Y. & Scott, D. (2002). *Qualitative Research in Practice Stories from the Field*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

de Bruin L. R. (2019). The use of cognitive apprenticeship in the learning and teaching of improvisation: Teacher and student perspectives. *Research Studies in Music Education.41*(3), 261-279. doi:10.1177/1321103X18773110

Dworski-Riggs, D., & Day Langhout, R. (2010). Elucidating the power in empowerment and the participation in participatory action research: A story about research team and elementary school change. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 45*, 215–230.

Ellis, N.J., Alonzo, D. and Nguyen, H.T.M. (2020). Elements of a quality pre-service teacher mentor: A literature review. Teaching and Teacher Education, *92*, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103072

Eurydice (2018). Initial Education for Teachers Working in Early Childhood and School Education. Available at: Eurydice (https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice)

Ewing, L. A. (2021). Mentoring novice teachers, *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, *29*(1), 50-69, DOI: 10.1080/13611267.2021.1899585

Fieman-Nemsar, S. & Beasley, K. (1997). Mentoring assisted performance: A case of co-planning. In V. Richardson (Ed.) *Constructivist teacher education: building new understanding.* Washington DC: Falmer Press.

Fletcher, A.J., MacPhee, M., & Dickson, G. (2015). Doing participatory action research in multicase study: a methodological example. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* 1-9.

Furlong, J. and Maynard, T. (1995). *Mentoring student teacher: the growth of professional knowledge.* London: Routledge.

General Teaching Council for Scotland. (2021). *Standard for Professional Registration*, Edinburgh: GTCS.

Gleeson, J., Leitch, R., Sugrue, C., & O'Flaherty, J. (2012). Understanding the Role and Potential for Research Capacity Building in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Programmes North-South Ireland: A Baseline and Comparative Study, Armagh: Centre for Cross Border Studies.

Graham, C. (2019). Literature review: the gap between mentoring theory and practice for diverse women faculty, Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, *27*(2), 131- 43, DOI: 10.1080/13611267.2019.1611273

Hairon, S. & Tan, C. (2016): Professional learning communities in Singapore and Shanghai: implications for teacher collaboration, Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education, *47*(1), 91 – 104, DOI: 10.1080/03057925.2016.1153408

Hale, R. (2000). To match or mis-match? The dynamics of mentoring as a route to personal and organisational learning. *Career Development International, 5*(4/5), 223-234.

Harvey, L. (2015). Beyond member-checking: A dialogic approach to the research interview. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, *38*, 23-38.

Hein, V., (2016). Perceived Autonomy Support and Behavioral Engagement in Physical Education: Comment on Yoo (2015). *Perceptual Motor Skills, 123*(1), 295–299.

Holland, E. (2021) *Physical Education Cooperating Teachers in a Community of Practice in Ireland: Participatory Action Learning Action Research*, (Thesis), University of Birmingham: https://etheses.bham.ac.uk//id/eprint/11331/13/Holland2021PhD_Redacted.pdf

Holland, E. (2018), Mentoring communities of practice: what's in it for the mentor?, *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, *7*(2), 110-126. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-04-2017-0034

Jolevski, T. (2012). *Mentor-Mentee Personality Matching: The personality matching of mentors and mentees in a youth mentoring program*. Graduate Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the School Psychology Program College of Liberal Arts, Rochester Institute of Technology.

Joyce, B. & Showers, B. (2002). Students Achievement through Staff Development. In B. Joyce and B. Showers, eds. *Designing Training and Peer Coaching: Our Needs for Learning.* VA, USA: ASCD.

Keiler, L. S., Diotti, R., Hudon, K., & Ransom, J. C. (2020) The role of feedback in teacher mentoring: how coaches, peers, and students affect teacher change, *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, *28*(2), 126-155, DOI: 10.1080/13611267.2020.1749345

Khan, S. & VanWynsberghe, R. (2008). Cultivating the Under-Mined: Cross-Case Analysis as Knowledge Mobilization *FQS* *9*(1), Art. 34. https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/334/730

Kincheloe, J.L. (2005). *Critical constructivism.* New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Krishna L, Toh YP, Mason S, Kanesvaran R. (2019) Mentoring stages: A study of undergraduate mentoring in palliative medicine in Singapore. *PLoS ONE 14*(4): e0214643. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0214643

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Le Maistre, C., (2010). Whatever it takes: How beginning teachers learn to survive. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *26*(3), 559-564.

Lee, J.C. & Feng, S. (2007). Mentoring support and the professional development of beginning teachers: A Chinese perspective. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 15*(3), 243-262.

Mackh, B.M. (2020) "Mentorship: The New Master-Apprentice Model in Higher Education," *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*, *20*(12), 56-94.

Margolis, J., (2007). Improving relationships between mentor teachers and student teachers: Engaging in a pedagogy of explicitness. *The New Educator*, *3*(1), 75-94.

Marušić, I. Pavin Ivanec, T. & Doolan, K. (2011) Mentoriranje u Hrvatskoj – višestruke perspective (Mentoring in Croatia – multiple perspectives) in Vizek, Vidović,V. (ed.) Učitelji i njihovi mentori (Teachers and their mentors), Institute for social research in Zagreb, Croatia,153-194. ISBN 978-953-6218-45-5

Meyer, T. (2002). Novice Teacher Learning Communities. An Alternative to One-on-one Mentoring, *American Secondary Education*, *3*(1), 27-42.

McNiff, J. (2013). Action Research: Principles and Practice (3rd ed.). London: Routledge Falmer.

Morse, J. M. (2015). Critical analysis of strategies for determining rigor in qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Health Research*, *25*(9), 1212-1222.

Mulcahy, C. & McSharry, M., (2012). The Changing Face of Teacher Education in Ireland: A major overhaul or a cosmetic review? *Educational Research, 1*(2), 91-103.

O'Grady, S. (2017). P*olicy, Practice and Partnership: An Exploration of the Perspectives of Post-Primary School-based Teacher Educators in Relation to School Placement* (Thesis), Dublin City University, Dublin.

Parker, M.A., Ndoye, A. & Imig, S.R., (2009). Keeping our teachers! Investigating mentoring practices to support and retain novice educators. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, *17*(4), 329-341.

Parker, A. K., Zenkov, K. & Glaser, H. (2021) Preparing School-Based Teacher Educators: Mentor Teachers' Perceptions of Mentoring and Mentor Training, *Peabody Journal of Education*, *96*(1), 65-75, DOI: 10.1080/0161956X.2021.1877027

Plano Clark, V.L. & Ivankova, N.V. (2016) *Mixed Methods Research. A Guide to the Field*. London: Sage.

Russell, M.L. & Russell, J.A. (2011). Mentoring Relationships: Cooperating Teachers' Perspectives on Mentoring Student Interns. *Professional Educator, 35*(2), 1-21.

Salajan, F.D. Duffield, S.K., Glava, A. E. & Glava C. C. (2016): A comparative study of two pre-service teacher preparation programmes in the USA and Romania, Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education, *47*(4), 483–498, DOI: 10.1080/03057925.2016.1246955

Scott, D., & Usher, R. (2011). *Researching education: data, methods and theory in educational enquiry*. (2nd ed.). London: Continuum.

Shanks, R., Attard Tonna, M., Krøjgaard, F., Paaske, K.A., Robson, D. & Bjerkholt, E. (2020). A comparative study of mentoring for new teachers, *Professional Development in Education.* DOI: 10.1080/19415257.2020.1744684

Shanks, R., (2014). A study of vulnerable learners in the workplace: new teachers in Scotland, *Education in the North, 21*(Special Issue), 2-20.

Shanks, R., Robson, D. & Gray, D. (2012). New teachers' individual learning dispositions: a Scottish case study, *International Journal of Training and Development*, Special Issue on Continuing Professional Development, *16*(3), 183–199. DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-2419.2012.00403.x

Shanks, R. & Robson, D. (2012). Apprenticeship of new teachers during their induction year, *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning, 2*(3), 256–270. DOI: 10.1108/20423891211271782

Shenton, A. K. (2004) Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects, *Education for Information*, *22*, 63–75.

Shwartz, G. & Dori, Y.D. (2016). Looking through the eyes of mentors and novice teachers: Perceptions regarding mentoring experiences. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences, 228*, 149-153.

Simpson, T., Hastings, W., & Hill, B. (2007). I knew that she was watching me': the professional benefits of mentoring. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, *13*(5), 481-498.

Simsar, A. & Dogan, Y. (2020). Mentor Teachers' Mentoring Practices in Science Teaching: Views of Pre-service Early Childhood Teachers. Educational Policy Analysis and Strategic Research, *15*(1), 94-113. doi: 10.29329/epasr.2020.236.6

Sobottka, E.A. (2013). Participation and Recognition in Social Research", *International Journal of Action Research*, *9*(1), 124-146.

Squires, V. (2019), "The well-being of the early career teacher: a review of the literature on the pivotal role of mentoring", *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, *8*(4), 255-267. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-02-2019-0025

Stringer, E. T. (2007). *Action Research* (3rd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sugrue, C. (2012). A history of Ireland's school inspectorate, 1831-2008. *Irish Educational Studies, 31*(1), 99-102.

Tammets, K., Pata, K. & Eisenschmidt, E. (2019) Novice teachers' learning and knowledge building during the induction programme, *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *42*(1), 36-51, DOI: 10.1080/02619768.2018.1523389

Tang, S. Y. F., & Choi, P. L. (2005). Connecting Theory and Practice in Mentor Preparation: Mentoring for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, *13*(3), 383-401.

Teaching Council of Ireland (2010), "*Background report: teacher education in Ireland and internationally*", available at: www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/Publications/Teacher-Education/Documents/Draft-Policy-on-the-Continuum-of-Teacher-Education.pdf (accessed 29 April 2011).

Teaching Council of Ireland (2013), "*Guidelines on school placement*", Maynooth: Teaching Council of Ireland.

Thomas, J.R., Nelson, J.K. and Silverman, S.J. (Eds) (2005), *Research Methods in Physical Activity* (5th ed.), Leeds: Human Kinetics

van Ginkel, G., Verloop., N. & Denessen, E. (2016). Why mentor? Linking mentor teachers' motivations to their mentoring conceptions. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 22*(1), 101-116.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in Society: The development of higher mental processes,* Cambridge. MA: Harvard University Press.

Waterworth, P., Dimmock, J., Pescud, M., Braham, R., & Rosenberg, M. (2016) Factors affecting Indigenous West Australians' health behavior: Indigenous perspectives. *Qualitative Health Research, 26*(1), 55-68.

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case Study Research. Design and Methods* (5th ed.), London: Sage.