

MENTORING PRACTICES: THE PERSPECTIVES OF
PRINCIPALS, MENTORS AND NOVICE TEACHERS

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MENTORING PRACTICES: THE PERSPECTIVES OF PRINCIPALS, MENTORS AND NOVICE TEACHERS

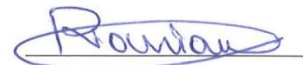
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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The purpose of this research study was to explore the perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers at nine private schools in Beirut on how they conceived mentoring, the forms of mentoring support available at their schools, the mentoring practices implemented at their schools and their recommendations on improvement of current practices. A theoretical framework was developed based on well-established mentoring practices evident in the literature. A qualitative research design, with grounded theory as its methodology, was adopted in this study. Data was analyzed using the constant comparative approach. The conceptual categories emerging formed the basis to develop a proposed model of mentoring practices that is grounded in the context of private schools in Beirut. The proposed model was compared to the theoretical framework. In addition to the proposed model, the findings of the study revealed that the schools lacked institutionalized and documented mentoring programs. Novice teachers were under-prepared, lacked adequate pre- and in-service teacher training and received support (if found) by their superiors and peers. The study also revealed that the participants used the terms supervising, coordinating and mentoring interchangeably. They did not realize the difference between mentoring as a function and the formalized supervisory roles held by the school superiors and accordingly regarded their superiors as their mentors. In addition, the mentors (mainly head of departments) followed the directive approach to supervision, which hindered opportunities for novice teachers' professional development and encouraged dependency. Finally, principals and mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) seemed to underestimate the collegial support novice teachers received from their peers. Although mentors relied highly on peer mentoring support they did not admit of its importance and of its being one form of mentoring support. Recommendations for practice and research were then suggested.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The 21st century's complex educational challenges that schools face place new and complicated demands on both teachers and leaders who commit themselves to educating children and youth (Black, 2008; Waite, 2010). The challenges of meeting with the current teacher accountability climate (Apple, 2010; Kegan & Lahey, 2009) and issues of educational equity, student achievement and diversity of all kinds (City, Elmore, Fiarman, & Teitel, 2009; Shoho, Barnett & Tooms, 2010) intensify the work of educators within schools around the world (Apple, 2010; Kegan & Lahey, 2009).

To meet up with the above mentioned challenges and maintain high teacher performance standards, schools' administrations set high expectations of good knowledge of subject-matter, successful classroom management skills and implementation of curricular objectives for teachers. Some studies have shown that the teaching profession entails novice teachers to do the same work as experienced teachers (McIntyre & Hagger, 1994). The tasks and responsibilities required of novice teachers are: adjustment to school environment, routines, policies and regulations; familiarity with curriculum, teaching strategies and classroom management procedures. Similarly, Scherer (1999) states that teaching is an unusual profession because a novice teacher in most cases is assigned to the same tasks in and out of the classroom as a longtime veteran teacher but with insufficient preparation. According to Viadero (2003), novice teachers live an enormously stressful first two years where they struggle with the procedures of lesson planning, physical arrangement of the classroom and curricular expectations. Moreover, the experiences of novice teachers are considered to be the most difficult time in a teacher's career (Gavish &

Friedman, 2010) and have been described in the literature as “sink or swim” (Lawson 1992). A sink- or- swim situation is when one is provided no help and must save oneself by one’s own means or else fail. In such situations, according to Johnson (1986) promising young teachers leave the teaching profession after a year or two because they’ve been exposed to the most negative aspects of schools without having been provided the support they need. Moreover, Darling-Hammond (1996), Brighton (1999) and Feiman-Nemser (2003) find lack of support in these vulnerable years as one of the main factors for novice teachers to leave the teaching profession within three years. Furthermore, Hargrove, Walker, Huber, Corrigan, and Moore (2004) present the notion that lack of support for novice teachers will leave learners with a succession of momentary teachers who were not given the chance to develop into effective and competent teachers.

According to Drago-Severson (2004a), a novice teacher has to own greater internal capacities to meet up with the complex educational challenges and demands on teaching. Hence, there is an urgent call for more effective leadership preparation and professional learning opportunities that focus on supporting adult learning and growth so that novice teachers can better manage the complexities of leading, learning, teaching and living (Drago-Severson, 2004a). Therefore, providing novice teachers with support, helping them build internal capacities, and giving them opportunities to develop professionally is very crucial in the process of effective teacher preparation and retention.

Several research studies conducted by Anderson and Shannon (1988), Cherubini (2007), Fletcher and Barrett (2004), Healy and Welchert (1990), and Wong, Britton, and Ganser (2005) showed that effective mentoring programs have positive influence on both teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Furthermore, according to Ingersoll and

Kralik (2004) and Rippon and Martin (2003), mentoring processes help novice teachers move smoothly to the teaching profession and adapt to their roles as teachers.

Finally, Brooks as cited in Scherer (1999) mentions that learning from one another during daily novice teacher -mentee interactions is probably the best means in teachers' competence enhancement. According to Brooks as cited in Scherer (1999), one of the primary goals of well-established mentoring practices is the improvement of teacher effectiveness which in turn would result in better student academic performance.

The researcher being in the field of education for the last ten years both as teacher then administrator at a specific private school personally witnessed the implementation of various supportive practices provided mainly by mentors and head of departments (coordinators) and the tremendous effect of such practices on novice teachers' development. Moreover, the researcher's experience in the educational field had given her the opportunity to mentor several mentees as a teacher and supervise mentoring practices rendered to novice teachers as a head of division. Hence, the researcher has a keen interest in the exploration of various mentoring practices in different settings and contexts.

Definition of Terms

Mentoring

There is still lack of consensus on a common definition of mentoring. Mentoring relationship is presented by Kram (1985) and Levinson et al. (1978) as a relationship which includes two parties: a mentor who is an older, more experienced person whose main responsibility is to help a mentee, a younger, less-experienced individual towards the professional development of the latter. Besides, for Higgins and Kram (2001) the traditional notion of a mentoring relationship is based on seniority in which a more senior person in the institution supports a more junior person with his/her

professional and personal growth. While the mentoring process is seen by both Frost (1993) and Wilkin (1992) as the process of training beginning teachers in the skills of teaching a subject matter.

For the current study, a combination of definitions for mentoring presented by Noe (1991) and Feiman-Nemser (2003) will be adopted as an operational definition. Noe (1991) defines mentoring as a one-to-one relationship between a more experienced member (mentor) and a less experienced member (mentee) of the profession. The relationship is developed to promote the professional and personal growth of the mentee through training, support, and guidance. Through personalized attention and providing emotional support, the mentor transfers needed information, feedback, and encouragement to the mentee.

Induction versus Mentoring

The terms “Induction” and “mentoring” are not the same although they are used interchangeably as if they were synonyms. Making a clear distinction between the two terms, Wong (2004) explains that “induction” is a full process designed for the support of new teachers, while “mentoring” is only an element in this process. Clarifying further, Wong (2004) states that “induction” is a comprehensive and sustained professional development process which is organized by a school to train, support, and retain new teachers and seamlessly progresses them into a lifelong learning program. On the other hand, “mentoring”, is “an action” performed by mentors to emotionally and academically support new teachers. According to Wong “Mentoring is not induction; a mentor is a component of the induction process” which, in its turn, constitutes a component of professional development.

Professional Development

“Professional development” refers to any practice that leads to the improvement of a teacher’s instructional skills. Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, (2004) define “professional development” as “any experience that enlarges a teacher’s knowledge, appreciation, skills, and understandings of his or her work” (p.36).

Instructional Supervisor and Mentor

It is essential here to define the role of both the instructional supervisor and the mentor. According to Pawlas and Oliva 2008), an instructional supervisor is defined as the person who helps teachers in instructional and curriculum development. This help, in the form of supervision given to novice teachers, affects teachers’ professional development and directly influences effective instruction (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2002; Tracy, 1993).

On the other hand, O’Brien and Christie (2005) define a mentor as a professional expert who has the knowledge, experience, and skills that enable him/her to be a source of advice and information for the novice teacher and thus provide answers to his/her questions and offer him/her useful feedback and training in several areas such as assessment, classroom management, curriculum, planning, and teaching methods. Besides, the mentor, according to Armstrong (2009), is a source of emotional support to the novice teacher.

Instructional supervisors (coordinators) sometimes play the role of mentors in some schools and hence in the present study instructional supervisors will be considered as mentors if they have mentorship roles at their schools.

Rationale

The rationale of this study is based on addressing a gap that has two dimensions. The first dimension of this gap relates to the scarcity of studies in Lebanon that particularly explore the perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers on mentoring practices implemented in their schools. For instance, the results of the qualitative study conducted by Hashem (2013) on experiences of novice teachers at private schools in Greater Beirut area showed that novice teachers face challenges mainly in issues related to their relationship with their students and instructional planning and delivering. The results also revealed the lack of well-established induction practices at the studied schools. Moreover, Hashem (2013) revealed the fact that despite the importance of employment of mentoring practices at schools, only one of the participating schools in her study reported assigning mentors to novice teachers. Most novice teachers seem to be denied the privilege of having a mentor who provides major support for them in their first teaching experiences. Hashem (2013) adds that many of the areas of challenge that novice teachers pointed to in her study could have been alleviated through the presence of a mentor. In the current research study, instead of focusing on the challenges faced by novice teachers, the researcher explored the helpful mentoring practices implemented at private schools in Beirut as perceived by participating principals, mentors and novice teachers.

Moreover, a case study conducted by Hamdan (2011) studied teacher professional development program at a private school in Beirut. The study showed that teachers find the professional development program in their school as helpful in general but needed further enhancement. On another note, a research study conducted in the UAE by Ibrahim (2012) showed the following: all novice teachers in public schools were in need of well-

designed induction/mentoring support. A high percentage of participants were in favor of experienced teachers being their mentors rather than supervisors; and the urge for mentor training on updated teaching methods, communication skills, interacting with novice teachers, different assessment approaches, and classroom management skills. In the current research study, the researcher explored: the mentoring support rendered to novice teachers that would help in the professional development of novice teachers; the mentoring support rendered by school superiors and peers to novice teachers as perceived and presented by the participants.

The methodology adopted to examine the participants' perspectives in Hashem's (2013) study was a qualitative study where two sets of perspectives were explored (principals and novice teachers). While Hamdan's (2011) case study took place in one school and used mixed quantitative and qualitative research methodology. In the current study, the researcher will qualitatively explore three sets of perspective: principals, mentors, and novice teachers.

The second dimension of the gap is related to elucidating particularities in the mentoring practices that are directly related to the cultural context. International literature had shown the positive effect of mentoring practices on novice teachers (Wood, 2001; Huling-Austin, 1992; Odell & Huling, 2000). A set of various studies conducted in different countries present novice teachers' perspectives towards mentoring as positive and helpful. Case studies conducted by Moskowitz and Stephens (1997) in Australia, Japan and New Zealand found that novice teachers were more at ease and felt comfortable in adjusting to school environment and required tasks when they were supported by mentors. Other research studies conducted in Canada by Fantilli and McDougall (2009)

and in Sweden by Lindgren (2005) showed the importance of mentoring support to novice teachers.

Providing support through the implementation of well-established mentoring practices was found to be important for many reasons. According to Feiman-Nemser, Schwille, Carver, and Yusko (1999) rendering assistance to novice teachers would increase the retention of qualified novice teachers and make them become competent teachers at the fastest rate possible. Well-designed mentoring practices according to Rowley (1999) can have remarkable influence on the performance levels of new employees. Hence, novice teachers who were supported by competent mentors experience success, job satisfaction, professional and personal growth, and organizational productivity and success (Kajs, 2002).

A research study conducted by Wynne, Dees, Leech, La plant, Brockmeier and Gibson (2011) showed that a remarkable number of participating novice teachers did not have positive mentoring experience and due to lack of mentoring support, 63% of the participating novice teachers indicated they had already determined they did not see themselves teaching in 10 years. Similarly, another study conducted by Cook (2012) found that a lack of support and guidance in the first days of teaching can lead to high stress levels.

Introducing concepts and theories about induction and mentoring practices in international literature to other cultures and contexts such as Lebanon constrains their utility. This necessitates having studies that generate conceptual understanding of mentoring practices that are grounded in the Lebanese context in order to build a model of mentoring practices that can guide practice and become the basis for further research.

Purpose of the Present Study

This study aims to (1) describe mentoring practices as defined by principals, mentors and novice teachers at nine private schools in Beirut, Lebanon, (2) explore their perspectives towards the implementation of mentoring practices at their schools, (3) identify the aspects of mentoring practices that they find to be helpful or not so helpful, and (4) explore their recommendations on improvement of current practices. In the current study, the term “novice teacher” is operationally defined as beginning teacher with no more than three years’ experience. The perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers were used to identify strengths and weaknesses of the mentoring practices implemented at their schools.

This study adopted a qualitative design methodology and took place in nine private schools in Beirut. It is worth mentioning here, that schools are not required officially to implement mentoring programs to professionally develop their staff. Substantiation of implementation of mentoring programs appears to be absent not only in the teacher training programs offered by the Lebanese schools system but also in the Lebanese Law. According to the Lebanese law (Reg. 512, 7), newly hired teachers in the private Lebanese schools are regarded as trainees for a two- year trial period, after which they either become tenured teachers or are discharged from the job in case they don’t meet the school’s expectations without any mention of a requirement to complete an induction program or participate in an institutionalized mentoring process.

Research Questions

The study attempted to answer the following research questions:

- 1- How is mentoring defined in the context of participant private schools in Lebanon from the perspective of principals, mentors and novice teachers?

- 2- What forms of mentoring support [in terms of structure/design, approach and content] do novice teachers receive in the participating private schools in Lebanon?
- 3- Which aspects of the mentoring practices implemented do principals, mentors and novice teachers find helpful or not so helpful?
- 4- What are the recommendations of principals, mentors and novice teachers to improve the quality of the mentoring practices implemented at their schools?

Significance of the Study

There is a practical implication for this study. From the practical perspective, the results of this study lead to the proposal of a model of well-established mentoring practices that is grounded in the Lebanese context, specifically the private schools. The suggested model includes definition of the term mentoring, structure of mentoring support, process of mentoring support from the perspective of principals, mentors and novice teachers. The study sheds light also on some mentoring practices that are perceived by participants as being not so helpful. In addition it includes recommendations from participants for the improvement of mentoring practices implemented at their schools. The proposed model and study findings offer meaningful implications to national policy makers and school principals by contributing knowledge of novice teachers' and mentors' perspectives about implemented mentoring practices at private schools in Beirut. The proposed model can help policy makers consider the importance of issuing laws that necessitate the introduction and implementation of supportive mentoring practices at schools in Lebanon. Besides, the proposed model can help principals and school administrators who wish to improve their schools by enhancing the appropriate implementation of mentoring practices. As a consequence of implementation of well-

established mentoring practices teachers, specifically novice teachers, would have higher job satisfaction levels, positive perspectives and tendency to stay in the profession for longer periods. Hence, with lower turnover of teachers, and retention of qualified teachers, students would be taught by master teachers and would show better academic performance.

In summary, the current study is important because it attempts to shed light on the mentoring practices implemented in the Lebanese context specifically at nine private schools in Beirut. Moreover, the study contributes to the international literature through exploring and comparing the perspectives of all three key players and elucidating particularities of the context. It also gives school administrations clearer perspective of principals, mentors and novice teachers' perspectives towards implementation of mentoring practices and hence provides them with some recommendations for a positive change in the mentoring practices implemented.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

The novice teachers' initial period of teaching is most of the time anxiety-laden and the experiences they go through have an impact on their decision on staying or leaving the teaching profession. Therefore, novice teachers are to be provided with support to have a smooth and successful entry to the teaching profession. Starting from this belief, this chapter presents: an introduction on the topic in discussion; presentation of mentoring practices and models of teacher preparation; and construction of theoretical framework.

Introduction

A first-year teacher might have acquired the educational and pedagogical theories and principles in her teacher preparation program. However, that teacher may not be prepared to transfer the knowledge acquired during the undergraduate years of university studies to real practice and implementation in the classroom context. Hence, it is erroneous to consider novice teachers as finished products and assume that they are able to accomplish required tasks and duties without any difficulties (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). Moreover, according to Raine (2005), novice teachers are more likely to be loaded with the same responsibilities as experienced teachers are. These high expectations of performance set for novice teachers, according to Bartell (2005), put them in a demanding and challenging situation where they struggle to meet daily tasks and teaching requirements. As a result, the initial period of teaching would be full of anxiety for the novice teachers (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004). Similarly, Feiman-Nemser (2003) presents early teaching experiences, lived by novice teachers, as intimidating and worrisome.

According to Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) and Rippon and Martin (2003), mentoring and induction processes help novice teachers move smoothly to the teaching

profession and adapt to their roles as teachers. Similarly, according to Kajs (2002), supporting novice teachers at the early stages of their profession is very important and helps them make a smooth transition into actual teaching setting. According to Darling-Hammond (2003) and Moir and Baron (2002) novice teachers who are engaged in well-established mentoring practices are retained in the profession at higher rates and become competent quicker than those who learn by trial and error. On the other hand, France and Javis (1996) realize that if novice teachers are not supported they may quit the profession earlier. Similarly, Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) emphasize the impact of the assistance of an effective mentor could have on the novice teacher's decision on remaining in the profession or leaving it in search of an alternative career.

Implementation of well-established mentoring practices, according to Schrodt, Cawyer, and Sanders (2003), enhance the quality of working environment and results in the development of continuous learning professional at academic institutions. Studies conducted by Varney (2009) show that implementation of mentoring practices; in general, contribute to high productivity of staff. Moreover, Varney (2009) adds that mentor-novice teacher relationships which are based on informal communication help the personal, emotional and professional development of both mentors and novice teachers.

Many scholars and educational researchers focused on and emphasized the importance of teacher preparation programs (both pre-service and in-service preparation/training) in enhancing teachers' professional development and improving students' academic performance (e.g., Cherubini, 2007; Drago-Severson, 2004b; Fletcher & Barrett, 2004; Glickman, 2004; Shulman, 1986, 1987).

Moreover, Ingersoll and Strong (2011) distinguish induction from two other forms of teacher preparation: pre-service and in-service teacher preparation. While pre-service

teacher preparation refers to the education and training teachers receive prior to their employment, in-service teacher training refers to the professional development opportunities teachers are offered “on the job”.

Pre-service teacher preparation programs are offered by sixteen private higher teaching institutions in Lebanon (Al-Amin, 2007). It is worth mentioning that while the courses offered by these programs are rich in theoretical content which offers specialized and general knowledge, they are lacking in practical and field-based courses. According to Al-Amin (2007), practical field courses constitute a small proportion across the different teaching programs at all universities. A few studies conducted in the Lebanese context investigated issues related to teacher education pre-service programs. One study conducted by Freiha (1997) showed that teacher education programs did not include enough practical field courses and did not provide novice teachers with general education and cultural courses such as arts and sociology courses. Another study conducted by Farah-Sarkis (1997) shows that the percentage of time dedicated to field work with a mentor teacher is less than 25%. Moreover, a study conducted by Moussalli (2010), shows that field work in university pre-service teacher preparation program includes a “mentor” component however was reported to be insufficient.

Mentoring Support

Mentoring supports vary widely in terms of the type of mentoring activities provided and available resources (Huling & Resta, 2007). However, both the emotional support and instruction-related support are considered the most important aspects of any well-established mentoring practices. Emotional support, according to Stansbury and Zimmerman (2000), addresses the personal and emotional needs of novice teachers. While on the other hand, instruction-related support assists novice teachers acquire the basics of

lesson planning, classroom management and schools rules and regulations (Mutchler, 2000; Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000).

Without the help of mentors, many novice teachers have difficulty adjusting what they learned in the university education courses to their teaching in schools (Jonson, 2008). Moreover, teachers who are mentored by competent veteran teachers show higher levels of instructional skills compared to their peers who are not matched with a trained mentor (Holloway, 2001). On the other hand, research showed that when novice teachers are left unassisted, one-third of them would leave teaching within the first five years (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Due to high turnover and attrition of teachers, promising teachers would not have the opportunity to develop into master teachers and consequently students would be taught by inexperienced teachers (Morrow, 1999).

According to Kajs (2002), if teachers are engaged in well-established mentoring practices, they would have more positive perceptions of their early teaching experiences, feel successful and satisfied at job, and have the tendency to stay in the educational field for longer years. Similarly, Danielson (2002) emphasizes that the attrition rates for novice teachers with mentors is far lower than it is for teachers without mentoring support. Consequently longer periods in the profession would develop more master teachers and hence better academic achievement at the learners' side.

There is a necessity, according to Hargrove, Walker, Huber, Corrigan, and Moore (2004), for redesigning mentoring programs where they include clear procedures of mentor preparation and vivid expectations of novice teachers to enhance the retention of qualified teachers.

Practices and Models for Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

In the sections that follow several mentoring practices and models of teacher preparation and professional development are presented. These models will provide a theoretical framework of well-established mentoring practices in this study

Enabling Effective Mentoring Practices

Mentoring support according to Darling-Hammond (2003) enhances feelings of self-efficacy and teaching skills. Several research studies identify specific behaviors in novice teacher-mentor relationship that are perceived as helpful. For example, in a study conducted by Carter and Francis (2001), novice teachers found their mentors as helpful when those mentors supported them socially, and encouraged collaboration and reflection on teaching practices. In a similar study, Lofstrom and Eisenschmidt (2009) and Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) reported that novice teachers were appreciative of their mentors when the latter helped them socialize into school community. Yet another study conducted by Marable and Raimondi (2007) showed that mentees highly value frequent meetings with mentors, confidentiality shown by mentors and sharing of ideas and resources. Moreover, common planning time with mentors and mentor observation by mentees were reported as important by Ingersoll and Smith (2004) as well as Roberson and Roberson (2009). Finally, Ingersoll and Kralik (2004), after examining several studies of mentoring programs, concluded these programs have a positive impact on teacher retention. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) underscored the importance of teacher commitment and retention, teacher classroom instructional practices, and student achievement in their critical review of research of mentoring programs

Upon reviewing a number of mentoring programs found in the literature, the following mentoring practices seem to be quite successful in enhancing both emotional

wellbeing and instructional expertise at the novice teachers and their mentors' sides. These practices involve the following: First, new teachers are assigned to mentors who provide them with emotional support (Armstrong, 2009) as well as professional support (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010). Second, the role of the mentor is mainly to help the new teachers grow professionally and that is by supporting them in several areas such as classroom management (Armstrong, 2009), curriculum, assessment, planning, differentiating instruction, and communication with colleagues and parents (Kelley, 2004). Third, to be able to perform this role, mentors must have a number of characteristics; they must be experienced teachers with effective teaching performance and interpersonal skills in addition to their being flexible, committed to the teaching profession, and having the desire to help new teachers. Mentor teachers have to join a mentor preparation program. These programs offer mentors a knowledge base on "beginning teacher assistance programs," "mentoring," "classroom management," "effective teaching," "adult learning," "adult and teacher development," "goal setting," "action planning," "coaching of teaching" and others (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2004). Fourth, mentors meet with their mentees on regular basis. During these meetings, the new teacher is involved in a variety of activities that provide them with a good opportunity of professional growth. This includes attending a model lesson given by the mentor, observing other colleagues teaching (Glickman et al., 2004; Kelley, 2004; Moir, 2009), and teaching a lesson in the presence of the mentor followed by feedback (Kelley, 2004; Moir, 2009). During this time, new teachers are also engaged in "team teaching, examining student work, assisting with individual and group assessment, arranging observations of other classrooms" (Kelley, 2004) in addition to designing lesson plans (Moir, 2009).

Shulman's "Model of Pedagogical Reasoning and Action"

Shulman (1986) introduces the notion of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) where he argues that in teacher preparation programs the development of general pedagogical skills is insufficient for preparing content teachers. Shulman (1987) for the purpose of putting PCK into practice presented his "Model of Pedagogical Reasoning and Action" which comprises a cycle of several activities that a teacher should complete for effective teaching.

Shulman presents "comprehension" as the first stage of the cycle. For Shulman teachers have to have a full knowledge of the educational purposes of teaching, the subject matter structures and have various ways of understanding a concept they intend to present. Moreover, he mentions "transformation" as the second stage of his model where teachers have to be able to transform the comprehended ideas into forms that are pedagogically powerful and adaptive to various students' backgrounds and needs. Having grip of content knowledge and learners needs and abilities, effective teachers would sail to the third stage of Shulman's model which is "instruction". Teachers have to be aware of the teaching act which includes the most important aspects of pedagogy such as classroom management, presentations of content, daily interactions with students, discipline, questioning and leading a discovery and inquiry learning etc. At the fourth stage of Shulman's cycle, "evaluation", teachers need to perceive evaluation as an extension of instruction and not a separate entity from the instructional process. It also involves evaluating one's own performance and adjusting for different situations. The fifth stage of Shulman's model is "reflection". When teachers review, reconstruct and critically analyze their own teaching abilities and then group these reflected explanations into evidence of changes they would be in the process of becoming better teachers. Similarly, at the last stage of Shulman's

cycle “new comprehension”, teachers through acts of teaching that are "reasoned" and "reasonable," achieve new comprehension of the educational purposes, the subjects taught, the students, and the processes of pedagogy themselves. It is worth mentioning here that Shulman’s stages of “transformation”, “comprehension”, “instruction” and “reflection” and the instructionally supportive practices they present were included while the process part of the theoretical model was developed and constructed. Hence, a novice teacher has to complete the above mentioned stages of the theory to attain the stage of effective teaching. The presence of a competent mentor supporting the novice teacher would be of great help to successfully pass through all the stages. Mentor and novice teacher through clear communication and continuous dialogue would assess, analyze and reflect on their teaching abilities. Only then they would be able to reconstruct new comprehension and explanations that would lead them to become better teachers.

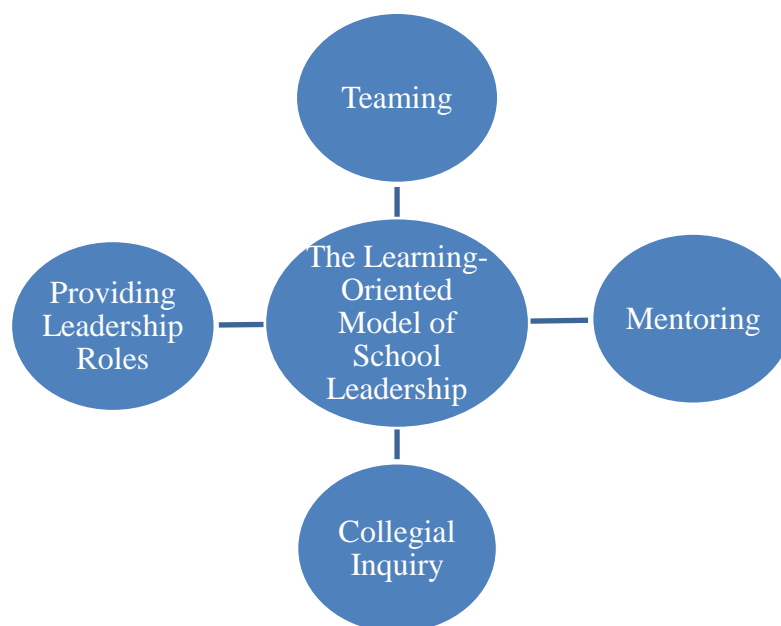
Drago-Severson’s “The Learning –oriented Model of School Leadership”

Drago-Severson in response to the complexity and increasing adaptive challenges of teaching, learning and leadership today, presents “the learning-oriented model of school leadership”, which comprises four pillar practices: teaming, providing leadership roles, collegial inquiry and mentoring.

The employment of the above mentioned practices supports internal capacity building in adults who make sense of their learning experiences in developmentally different ways. Drago-Severson uses the terms growth and internal capacity building to describe the kinds of increases in a person’s cognitive, affective, interpersonal and intrapersonal capacities that enable him or her to better manage the demands of work and life (Drago-Severson, 2004b)

“The learning-oriented model of school leadership” presented below in Figure 1 consists of four distinct yet mutually reinforcing developmental practices, or pillar practices, that can support adult learning and growth. It illuminates the promise and potential of reframing more collaborative structures in schools as developmental opportunities for adults to engage in reflection and shared dialogue in the process of professional and personal growth.

Figure 1. The Learning-oriented Model of School Leadership



Pillar one: Teaming. Teaming, in general, is central to supporting adult learning since it creates opportunities for dialogue and critical reflection as well as strengthens schools as professional learning centers.

Pillar Two: Providing Leadership Roles. Leadership roles provide teachers, staff, and administrators with opportunities for transformational learning. This practice invites teachers to share authority and ideas as teachers, curriculum developers, or administrators working toward building community, sharing leadership, and promoting change.

Pillar Three: Collegial Inquiry. Collegial inquiry is shared dialogue with the purpose of helping people becoming more aware of their assumptions, beliefs, and convictions about their and their colleagues' work. Principals use this practice to engage adults in conflict resolution, goal setting, decision making, and learning about key educational issues.

Pillar Four: Mentoring. Mentoring or coaching creates an opportunity for broadening perspectives, examining assumptions, and sharing expertise and leadership and can be a more private way to support adult development. It takes many forms, including pairing experienced teachers with new teachers or university interns, pairing teachers who have deep knowledge of school mission with other teachers, and group mentoring. Learning-oriented leadership model offers a promising way to support adult growth and, in turn, improvement of practice.

The concepts “teaming”, “mentoring” and “collegial inquiry” as defined by Drago-Severson and the practices suggested to be implemented by the school administrative staff (head of division and head of department) in the development of teachers were taken into consideration in the formation of the theoretical model.

Glickman's Theory of “Developmental Approach to Supervision”

According to Glickman et al. (2004), “developmental supervision” has its roots in the human resources approach. The latter gives attention to individual's needs because needs influence how a person feels and perceives these needs as means to guide learning. Glickman added that high attention is given to the collaboration and partnership between supervisors and teachers. Moreover, “the developmental approach to supervision” engages the teacher to a great extent in a way that meets their needs and satisfaction, respects their perspectives and is contingent on group dynamics and collaboration (Sergiovanni &

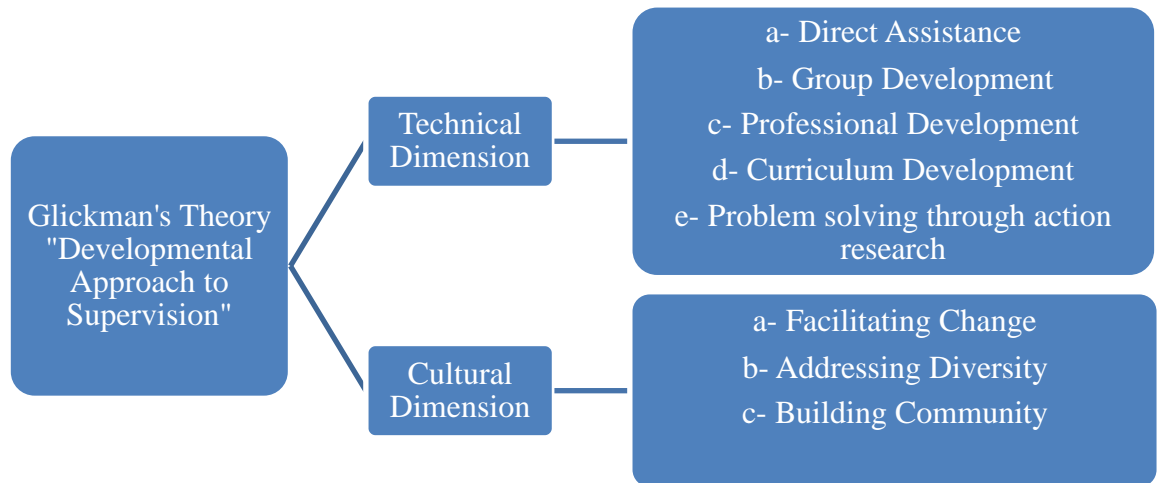
Starratt, 2002; Pawlas & Oliva, 2008). Supervisors who adopt this approach acknowledge that their success is dependent on interpersonal skills rather than on technical skills and knowledge. Consequently, the developmental approach to supervision is concerned with meeting organizational goals and objectives while attending to teachers' needs. The needs of both the organization and the individual have to converge to reach organizational efficiency through achieving "improved student learning" (Glickman et al, 2004, p.12).

Developmental approaches to supervision are based on the following set of assumptions. First, in adopting a certain supervisory option, the supervisor relies on the "knowledge base" about effective teaching. Second, teachers should be aware of the uniqueness of every classroom while implementing and modifying various instructional techniques. Third, the supervisor has to provide his/ her teachers with guidance and opportunities to perform at their optimal levels and hence promote their commitment. Fourth, objective feedback should go hand in hand with collegiality to minimize teachers' defensiveness and negative attitude towards evaluation (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2002; Glickman et al., 2004).

Glickman's (2004) model for the role of the supervisor is divided into two dimensions: the technical and the cultural (presented in Figure 2).

The technical dimension includes the roles that have the potential of affecting teacher development and they are five. (a) direct assistance, (b) group development, (c) professional development, (d) curriculum development, and (e) problem solving through action research.

Figure 2. Glickman's Theory of "Developmental Approach to Supervision"



The first technical dimension is the “direct assistance” where the supervisor provides direct support to teachers in several forms such as peer-coaching, mentoring and clinical supervision. The second technical dimension is the “group development” where the supervisor provides group development to her teachers. A supervisor might give chance to teachers in deciding on textbooks, involving in preparation of professional development plans, developing interpersonal, intrapersonal and conflict resolution skills. The third technical dimension is the “professional development” where the supervisor involves in planning and leading the professional development program, providing differentiated learning experiences to different teachers in order to match their developmental levels. The fourth technical dimension is the “curriculum development” where the supervisor, through curriculum development, attempts to promote school effectiveness. The supervisor decides on the purpose, content emphasis, organization, and format of the curriculum. Besides, the supervisor decides on the form and degree of teachers’ involvement in curriculum development. The fifth technical dimension is the

role of “problem solving through action research”. The supervisor identifies and solves problems in classrooms to help in teachers’ improvement. Moreover, the supervisor decides on the type of assistance the teacher needs depending on the latter’s developmental levels in the area under examination.

The second dimension of Glickman’s (2004) model, the cultural dimension, includes three roles for the supervisor: facilitating change, addressing diversity, and building community.

The technical part of Glickman’s theory and mainly the concepts covered in “direct assistance” and “professional development” were used as references in the construction of the theoretical model.

Theoretical Framework

Based on the literature reviewed and in particular Shulman’s (1987), Glickman’s (2004) and Drago-Severson’s (2004) models as well as the empirical literature on successful mentoring practices, the researcher developed a theoretical framework that incorporated best practices in mentoring practices. This framework was used in this study mainly when data was coded; analyzed and different themes were constructed to form the grounded theory. Accordingly, the framework comprised the following aspects (a) structure/design of the mentoring practices employed and (b) content/process of mentoring practices

Structural Arrangements Enhancing Supportive Mentoring Practices

School principals are responsible for providing the structure of the implementation of well-established mentoring practices. They have to prepare the schedules for both mentors and novice teachers specifying in both timetables hours for mentoring meetings. Besides school principals are to be in charge of mentor-related aspects that are presented

below. These aspects cover structural arrangements related to: criteria for mentor selection; providing incentives to mentors; matching mentors with mentees; training of mentors; mentor-mentee relationship built on commitment, caring respect and clear communication; and mutual understanding of roles and expectations.

Adopting clear criteria for selecting mentors. A qualified mentor has to meet the below mentioned characteristics. These characteristics can be considered as criteria for mentor selection and hence school administrations can take them into consideration. According to Moir and Gless (2001), a mentor has to have an experience of three or more years of effective and successful teaching practice. A mentor has to have good interpersonal and communication skills (Costa & Garmston, 2002). Besides, it is very important for a mentor to have a reflective approach on her own teaching practices (Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007) and have a grip on subject content knowledge and subject-based pedagogy (Moir, 2003). Moreover, mentors have to show commitment to the process of mentoring, ongoing personal and professional growth (Norman & Feiman-Nemser, 2005).

Providing incentives to mentors. Mentors are to be given incentives: monetary and reduced workload. According to Odell and Hulling (2000) mentors receive incentives to compensate for the time it takes to develop and practice their mentoring role. To compensate for their mentoring time, mentors are given fewer teaching hours and more monetary stipends (Villani, 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Youngs (2007) shows that monetary incentives lead to increased systematic involvement of mentors with novice teachers.

Matching mentors with mentees. In well-established mentoring practices, mentors are well-matched to novice teachers according to school site, grade level, and

subject (Wood & Waarich-Fishman, 2006; Bartell, 2005; Schwille, Nagel, & DeBolt, 2000). Moreover, common planning time between mentors and novice teachers are important (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Roberson & Roberson, 2009).

Training of mentors. School principals are responsible for the training of mentors. Administrations are to enroll mentors in mentor preparation programs. To provide a better support mentors have to be aware of novice teachers' needs and characteristics (Moir, 2003; Odell & Huling, 2000; Schwille & Dynak, 2000). Mentors have to be taught and be knowledgeable of strategies for trusting relationships. They should be knowledgeable about student age characteristics, learning modes and effective teaching (Olebe, Jackson, & Danielson, 1999; Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2002). Furthermore, mentors should be trained to acquire observational skills which would help them give objective feedback of novice teachers' classroom observations (Moir & Gless, 2001; Olebe, 2001).

Commitment. Both mentors and novice teachers are to be committed to the relationship and make effort to find common time to meet and share. According to Feiman-Nemser (2001) mentors and novice teachers are to show commitment to the functions and processes of mentoring.

Caring and respect. Studies on mentoring conducted by Kochan (2002) show that both mentors and novice teachers have to develop a sense of caring to one another. The main components of this caring relationship are mutual trust and respect and the willingness to share the good and the bad in the mentoring experience. Moreover, mentors have to show understanding and responsiveness toward the needs of novice teachers and have to recognize and acknowledge novice teachers' valuable knowledge and contributions brought to the relationship (Gold, 1996). According to Kram (1985), a mentor's positive concern toward a novice teacher can nurture the development of trust

which makes the novice teacher feel comfortable in taking risks in the process of professional development.

Clear communication. Both mentors and novice teachers have to feel comfortable when working together and have to have the ability to communicate effectively.

According to Kram (1985), when a mentor communicates positive feedback and encouragement to novice teacher, the latter would feel accepted. Furthermore, when a novice teacher discusses personal concerns related to professional responsibilities with mentor, she might gain perspective and comfort while resolving inner conflicts.

Mutual understanding of roles and expectations. Both mentors and novice teachers have to have a mutual understanding of the nature of mentoring practices and the reasons of their implementation. Both parties have to have clear understanding of their roles and the expectations for each party (Kochan, 2002).

Supportive Aspects of Mentoring Practices

According to Kochan (2002), mentors and novice teachers should maintain professional relationship and show the below mentioned characteristics when interacting with one another in the process of employing mentoring practices.

Engaging in instructionally supportive practices. The role of the mentor is to engage the novice teacher in a variety of activities that provide her with a good opportunity of professional growth. Activities such as lesson planning, assessing learners' work, differentiating instruction, encouraging communication with parents, teaching a lesson in the presence of mentor, attending a model lesson given by the mentor, observing other colleagues teaching, giving feedback/ reflecting on observation sessions, modeling effective techniques for classroom management, encouraging self-assessment etc.

(Glickman et al., 2004; Kelley, 2004; Moir, 2009; Armstrong 2009). The above mentioned

activities and practices are one of the most important practices that both mentors and novice teachers are to engage in.

Appleton (2008) in a research study conducted in Australia found that the key aspect of teachers' support (through mentoring) included cooperative planning between mentor and novice teacher. The planning included identifying and selecting suitable learning experiences for the children; sequencing these so they formed an effective framework for the children's learning; asking probing questions to identify their existing and developing ideas; suggesting explanations, analogies, and models that might help the children reach a desired understanding; challenging children's misconceptions and conclusions; and assessing the children's learning.

According to Shulman (1987), mentors have to introduce, discuss and reflect on the educational goals and subject matter structure with the novice teachers. On another note, Glatthorn (1990) described "transformation" as the process of fitting the material represented by the novice teachers to the characteristics of the students. The mentor has to encourage the novice teacher consider the relevant aspects of students' ability, gender, language, culture, motivations, or prior knowledge and skills that will affect their responses to different forms of presentations and representations (Shulman, 1987). Mentors have to encourage novice teachers to be aware of the teaching act which includes the most important aspects of pedagogy such as classroom management, presentations of content, daily interactions with students, discipline, questioning and leading a discovery and inquiry learning etc. (Shulman, 1987). On another note, Feiman-Nemser et al. (1999), and Kershaw, Blank, Benner, and Cagle (2006) found that co-planning and co-teaching in a novice teacher-mentor relationship help strengthen the novice teachers instruction and classroom learning environment. According to Shulman (1987), both mentors and novice

teachers have to check for students' understanding and misunderstanding during interactive teaching as well as testing students' understanding at the end of lessons or units. According to Hopper (2001), mentors need to support and encourage the novice teachers, listen to them, empathize, evaluate and reflect with them. Similarly, Gilbert (2005) and Mutchler (2000) found that observation and dialogue about teaching is an important component of mentoring programs which provide the opportunity for novice teachers to develop and progress. Moreover, Lucas as cited in Ornstein, Thomas, and Lasley (2000) argued that reflection is an important part of professional development. Through reflection, teachers focus on their concerns, come to better understand their own teaching practices, and help themselves or colleagues improve as teachers. Through reflective practices in a group setting, teachers learn to listen carefully to each other, which also give them insight into their own work (Ornstein et al., 2000).

Engaging in emotionally supportive practices. The mentor is a source of emotional support (Joseph, 2009). The mentor is someone the novice teacher could confide in and is someone who helps novice teachers in building their self-confidence and that is by offering them continuous encouragement, praise, and reassurance during the most challenging times (Armstrong, 2009).

In a study by O'Brien and Christie (2005) which studied the personal and professional characteristics of an effective supporter, interpersonal and psychological development and support was found to be one of the main characteristics that a mentor must enjoy. According to this study, a mentor can provide interpersonal and psychological support for beginning teachers by being "approachable," "sympathetic," "patient," "fair," "friendly," "honest," "reliable," "a good listener," and "reassuring when things go wrong".

Engaging in practices that enhance the novice teacher's professional development. The nature of the mentoring relationship has to be subject to analysis and reflection as mentors and novice teachers live personal and professional growth. According to Mutchler (2000), well-established mentoring practices aim at professional growth and development, a necessary component in order for the novice teacher to progress essentially. On another note, Sergiovanni and Starratt, (2002) believe that the support, in the form of supervision, given to novice teachers affects teachers' professional development and directly influences effective instruction. Development focuses on helping the novice teacher build "a personal understanding of pedagogy—the art and science of teaching and learning—that allows a teacher to continually refine and adjust his/her practice in order to consistently and effectively help students master content and skills". This type of mentoring helps novice teachers focus on the development of a "professional identity through their struggles with and explorations of students and subject matter" (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1995).

Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation. Mentors introduce novice teachers to prevailing school culture, rules and regulations and staff. The concept of mentoring as an enculturation process suggests that mentoring is about helping the socialization of novice teachers into the organization and culture of a particular school community (Feiman-Nemse, 2003).

Moreover, effective mentors have to encourage the novice teachers to socialize and be a part of the school community (O'Brien & Christie, 2005). Lofstrom and Eisenschmidt (2009) and Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) report that novice teachers were appreciative of their mentors when the latter helped them socialize into school community. Note that enculturation is process that includes many parties: school administration, human

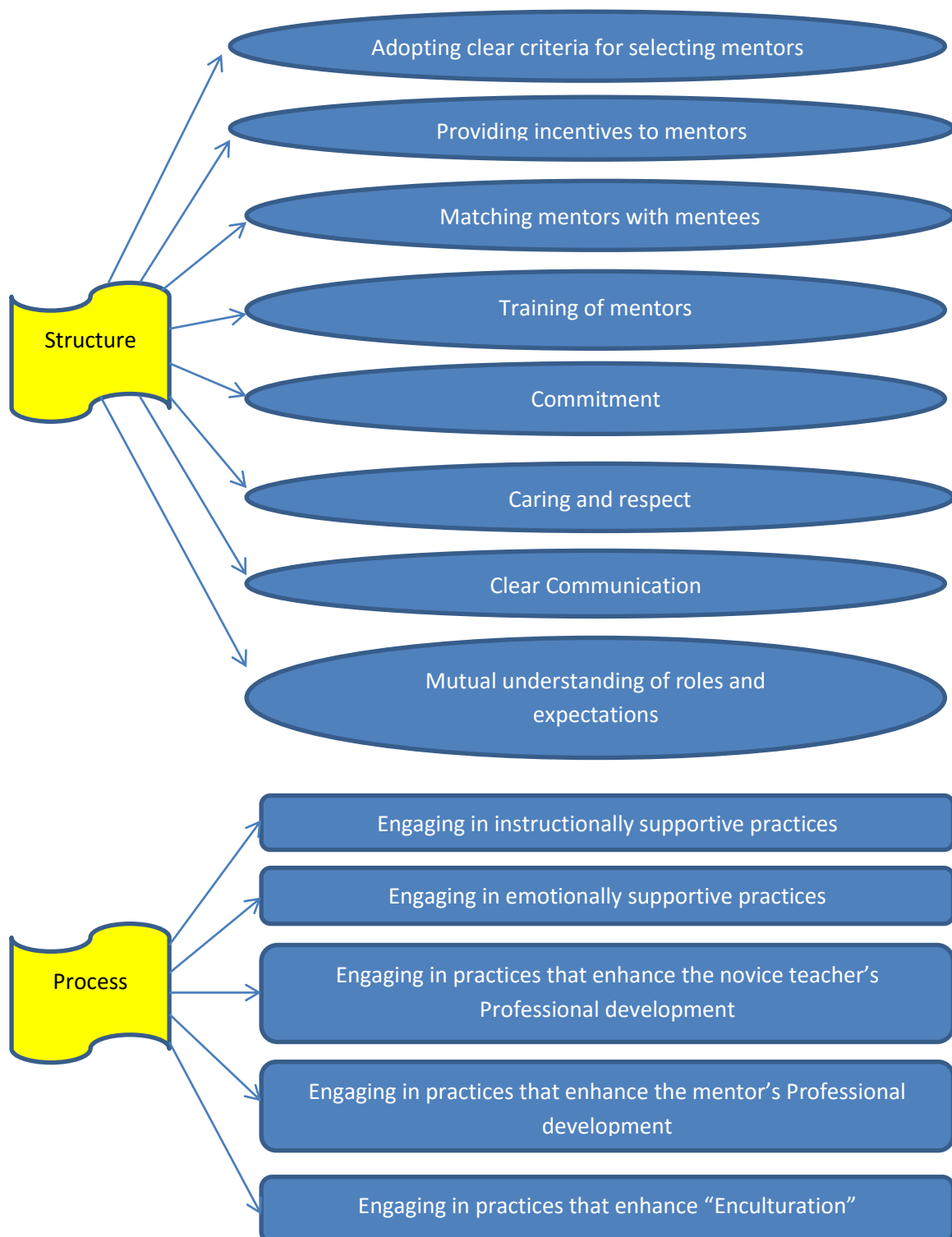
resources department, mentors, novice teachers, teaching staff etc. However, for the purpose of the current study, the role of the mentor is highlighted.

Engaging in practices that enhance the mentor's professional development.

Both mentors and novice teachers have to benefit from the mentoring relationship. A research conducted by Lai (2006) in Hong Kong showed that mentors by working with novice teachers could gain exposure to new teaching ideas and new teaching materials, which would make them more inclined to educational changes. The opportunities to work and communicate with novice teachers enhance mentors' understanding of the development needs of novice teachers. Moreover, Brooks as cited in Scherer (1999), notes that both mentors and novice teachers grow professionally and enhance their skills through reexamining each other's' practices and beliefs. After running the role of mentor in The Teacher Mentor Program according to Ganser, Marchione and Fleischmann as cited in Scherer (1999), twenty five mentors have assumed other leadership positions including the job of assistant principal, central office positions and university assistantships.

The theoretical model of mentoring practices (Figure 3) was constructed based on an analysis of the empirical literature on successful mentoring practices and inclusion of those practices in the process of construction of the theoretical model. Besides, the theoretical model included some of the effective teacher preparation practices detailed in Shulman's "Model of pedagogical reasoning and action" (1987). Moreover, based on the literature reviewed and in particular Glickman's (2004) and Drago-Severson's (2004) models, practices of effective leaders and supervisors in reframing collaborative structures in schools that provide opportunities for professional development were included. Figure 3 shown below presents a summary of the current chapter's main concepts and models of teacher preparation and professional development.

Figure 3. “The Theoretical Model of Mentoring Practices”



Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this research study was to (1) describe mentoring practices as defined by principals, mentors and novice teachers at nine private schools in Beirut, Lebanon, (2) explore their perspectives towards the implementation of mentoring practices at their schools, and (3) identify the aspects of mentoring practices that they find to be helpful or not so helpful; and (4) explore their recommendations on improvement of current practices. This chapter provides a rationale for the research design adopted as well as a description of the procedures that were followed for schools and participants' selection, data collection procedures, and data analysis. Quality criteria and trustworthiness of this research will also be discussed at the end of this chapter.

Research Questions

The study attempted to answer the below mentioned research questions:

- 1- How is mentoring defined in the context of private schools in Lebanon from the perspective of novice teachers, mentors, and principals?
- 2- What forms of mentoring support [in terms of structure/design, approach and content] do novice teachers receive in private schools in Lebanon?
- 3- Which aspects of the mentoring practices employed do principals, novice teachers and their mentors find helpful or not so helpful?
- 4- What are the recommendations of principals, mentors and novice teachers to improve the quality of the mentoring practices implemented at their schools?

Paradigm choice

This study employed a qualitative research design in order to gain an understanding of the perspectives of novice teachers, mentors and principals on mentoring practices implemented in private schools in Beirut. The current study was designed based on the guidelines of the constructivist grounded theory developed by Kathy Charmaz (2006) which emphasizes the flexibility of the method; acknowledges the standpoints, positions, and situations both of the researcher and research process and of the participants; and moves the method further into interpretive inquiry. Grounded theorists emphasize what people are doing and the meanings of their actions, such as their intentions; their own stated explanations; and their implicit, taken-for-granted assumptions (Charmaz, 2006). The constructivist paradigm provides a strong reason to why researchers adopt qualitative and interpretive methods of inquiry. A major purpose of the qualitative research is to gain an understanding of the meanings people attribute to social phenomena (Gall, Gall & Bong, 2010). It allows researchers to “get at the inner experience of participants, determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and discover rather than test variables” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 12).

Methodology choice

The current study was designed based on the guidelines of the constructivist grounded theory developed by Charmaz (2006). The study employed an interpretive case study design for the purpose of developing conceptual categories (Merriam, 1998). According to Merriam (1998) the researcher identifies the case, which is the unit of analysis that is to be investigated, and then within each case, he/she visits numerous sites and interviews several people to collect rich data about that single case. The case study had been used for its importance in offering a means of in-depth investigation of the

phenomenon of mentoring using multiple methods and different sources of data. This methodology is different from the other approaches used in social sciences research; instead of originally starting from a pre-determined hypothesis, the researcher starts with data collection and focuses on the development of concepts and theoretical propositions grounded in the initial data, using an inductive process to develop theoretical understanding through the researcher's observations and interactions (Charmaz, 2006; Merriam, 1998).

Procedure of the Study

Nine schools formed the cases of this study. Purposive (convenience) sampling was the technique used for school selection. The various respondents were chosen from these nine schools and were interviewed. The following represents the process followed for school selection, participant selection, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

Selection of Schools

In order to select the cases for this research, the researcher had used purposive sampling. According to Merriam (1998) purposive sampling is the method of sampling used in most qualitative research studies. Since the primary assumption of purposive sampling was that the researcher wanted to investigate and understand the phenomenon under study, she included participants, according to her judgment, that built up typical sample that satisfy the specific needs of the current study (Cohen, 2000).

Contingent to purposive sampling is creating criteria that form the guidelines for selecting the people or sites to be investigated (Merriam, 1998). Four criteria for school selection were used. The participating schools had to be: (1) non-free private schools; (2) located in Beirut; (3) have English language as the main language of instruction and (4) are organizationally local i.e., follow the Lebanese curriculum and don't implement the

educational policies of a foreign country. The official list of Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD) (2013-2014) was used to identify the schools that meet the selection criteria. Then, human resource administrators or principals of those schools were contacted via phone. The basic information arrived at through the phone conversations led to some knowledge of schools that report having at least one novice teacher hired in the last three years, and show a willingness to cooperate, were included as participants. From the list of private schools that met the selection criteria and that have been contacted by the researcher, nine private schools approved to participate and hence were selected as participating schools.

Selection of Participants

The researcher visited each of the nine schools after approval for participation was obtained from the school principals. The principals of these schools were approached with the initial contact letter (Appendix A) which included the purpose of the study and other details related to the study. Then the researcher met with the contact person at each of the nine schools (with head of division or the head of department) and inquired about the novice teachers' availability and accessibility at each cycle or department. The contact person at each school informed the researcher about the number of novice teacher/s, mentor/s (head of departments and head of divisions) and principals that were accessible. Only seven principals were interviewed instead of the initially intended nine principals due to the fact they were extremely busy and could not meet the researcher in person for an interview. Then, letters similar to initial contact letters were sent to the novice teachers and mentors (13 head of departments, 1 head of division, and 1 mentor colleague) through the principals or head of departments. When approval of participation was reached at, the interviews were administered with: principals, novice teachers and their mentors (13 head

of departments, 1 head of division, and 1 mentor colleague). It is worth mentioning here that during the initial contact with the participating schools' principals the researcher was informed that they regarded their schools' head of departments and head of divisions as the mentors who provide the novices with the needed support. Then, the researcher was introduced to participants of various groups. Upon adding the number of mentors suggested by principals, it was clear to the researcher that the suggested number included thirteen head of departments, one head of division and one mentor-colleague. Based on principals' suggestions those (thirteen head of departments, one head of division and one mentor-colleague) were dealt with participants that belong to the mentor participants' group.

After locating these persons, seven principals, fifteen mentors and eighteen novice teachers participated in this research. Table 1 below shows the different participant groups, their number and distribution at the nine participating schools. While Tables 2, 3, and 4 displayed below show the demographics of the participant principals, mentors and novice teachers respectively.

Table 1

Distribution of Participant Groups at Nine Participating Schools

School	Participant	Participant Mentors	Participant Novice Teachers
School 1 (S1)	Principal 1 (P1)	Mentor 1 (M1)	Novice Teacher 1 (NT1) Novice Teacher 2 (NT2) Novice Teacher 3 (NT3)
School 2 (S2)	Principal 2 (P2)	Mentor 2 (M2)	Novice Teacher 4 (NT4)
School 3 (S3)	Principal 3 (P3)	Mentor 3 (M3) Mentor 4 (M4)	Novice Teacher 5 (NT5) Novice Teacher 6 (NT6)
School 4 (S4)	Principal 4 (P4)	Mentor 5 (M5) Mentor 6 (M6) Mentor 7 (M7)	Novice Teacher 7 (NT7) Novice Teacher 8 (NT8)

School 5 (S5)	Principal 5 (P5)	Mentor 8 (M8)	Novice Teacher 9 (NT9)
			Novice Teacher 10 (NT10)
			Novice Teacher 11 (NT11)
School 6 (S6)	Principal 6 (P6)	Mentor 9 (M9)	Novice Teacher 12 (NT12)
		Mentor 10 (M10)	Novice Teacher 13 (NT13)
School 7 (S7)	Principal 7 (P7)	Mentor 11 (M11)	Novice Teacher 14 (NT14)
		Mentor 12 (M12)	Novice Teacher 15 (NT15)
			Novice Teacher 16 (NT16)
School 8 (S8)	X	Mentor 13 (M13)	Novice Teacher 17 (NT17)
School 9 (S9)	X	Mentor 14 (M14)	Novice Teacher 18 (NT18)
		Mentor 15 (M15)	
Total number of participants	7	15	18

Table 2

Demographics of Participant Principals

Principal	School	Gender	Administrative Experience	Education Level
P1	S1	Male	> than 10 years	MA in Education
P2	S2	Female	> than 10 years	BS, MPH
P3	S3	Male	> than 10 years	PHD in Education
P4	S4	Male	> than 10 years	PHD in Education
P5	S5	Male	> than 10 years	MA in Education
P6	S6	Male	> than 10 years	MA in Education
P7	S7	Male	3 years	MA in Education

Table 3

Demographics of Participant Mentors

Mentor	School	Gender	Years of Experience as mentor	Education Level
M1 (head of department)	S1	Female	1 year	BS in Math
M2 (head of department)	S2	Female	5 years	BA in Education
M3 (head of department)	S3	Female	4 years	BA in Education

M4 (head of division)	S3	Female	> than 5 years	BA in Bus. Admin. BA in Education
M5 (head of department)	S4	Male	3 years	BA in Arabic Literature
M6 (head of department)	S4	Female	5 years	MA in Education
M7 (head of department)	S4	Female	4 years	MA in Education
M8 (head of department)	S5	Female	> than 5 years	BA in Education
M9 (head of department)	S6	Female	> than 5 years	MA in Education
M10 (mentor colleague)	S6	Female	> than 10 years	BA in Education
M11 (head of department)	S7	Female	1 year	BS in Math
M12 (head of department)	S7	Female	> than 10 years	BA in Education
M13 (head of department)	S8	Male	> than 10 years	MA in Education
M14 (head of department)	S9	Female	6 years	MA in Education
M15 (head of department)	S9	Female	> than 10 years	BS in Biology

Table 4

Demographics of Participant Novice Teachers

Novice Teacher	School	Gender	Age	Teaching Experience	Education Level	Subject Taught
NT 1	S1	Female	22	1 year	MA in History	English
NT 2	S1	Female	20	0 year	BA in Education	Math
NT 3	S1	Male	21	0 year	BS in Mathematics	Math
NT 4	S2	Female	27	3 years	BA in Arabic Literature	Arabic
NT 5	S3	Female	23	2 years	BA in Education	English
NT 6	S3	Female	25	3 years	BA in Education	English
NT 7	S4	Female	28	2 years	BA in Education	English
NT 8	S4	Male	25	2 years	BA in Arabic Literature	Arabic
NT 9	S5	Female	20	2 years	High School	English/Math
NT 10	S5	Female	30	3 years	BA in Education	English
NT 11	S5	Female	25	3 years	BA in Arabic Literature	Arabic
NT 12	S6	Female	29	2 years	BA in Education	English
NT 13	S6	Female	26	3 years	BA in Education	English
NT 14	S7	Female	24	3 years	BA in Education	English
NT 15	S7	Female	21	0 year	BA in Education	Math/Science

NT 16	S7	Female	25	3 years	BA in Education	Math
NT 17	S8	Female	20	0 year	BA in Armenian Literature	Armenian
NT 18	S9	Female	21	0 year	BA in Education	English

Data Collection Procedure

At the preliminary stage, the researcher after being granted the thesis committee's approval and having the access to and the acceptance of the schools where the research was conducted embarked on the task. The first stage thus involved the gaining of official permission to undertake one's research in the target community. Then, prior to administration of interviews the informed consent was reached. Diener and Crandall (1978) define "informed consent" as the procedure in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would likely to influence their decisions. Besides, privacy was guaranteed by giving the participants the freedom to decide for themselves in what circumstances and to what extent their personal attitudes, opinions, habits, doubts and fears are to be communicated to or withheld from others. Anonymity was guaranteed by ensuring that the information provided by the participants should in no way reveal their identity (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992). Moreover, following the guidelines by Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) and Burns (2000), confidentiality of the information was protected. This means that although the researcher knew who had provided the information or was able to identify participants from the information given, she would in no way make the connection known publicly. Furthermore, participants were treated with respect, and the researcher made sure that all research procedures and tools were free from any physical or psychological harm to the participants in the study. To protect the privacy of the cases and of the participants, each of the nine schools was given a special number (1 till 9). The participating schools were

coded as (S1, S2,S9.). The participant novice teachers were coded as (NT1, NT2,NT3,NT18). While the mentor participants and principal participants were coded as (M1,M2,M3,...M15) and (P1,P2,P3,....P7).

Sources of data included focus group pilot interviews, individual interviews, school documents, observations, and researcher's journal. In this study, interviews were conducted with the different participants at their respective schools. The researcher had each of the participants sign a consent form (Appendix B) that assured them that the interviews will be used only for purposes of this study and that their confidentiality will be maintained. The researcher also sought their approval for tape-recording. All participants agreed to be interviewed and signed the consent form. The majority of participants except for two participants agreed to have the interview tape-recorded. This necessitated the researcher to take extensive notes during the individual interviews held with them. Total of thirty interviews were conducted in the English language. While eight and two interviews were conducted in Arabic and Armenian languages respectively. Since the researcher is trilingual, was present at the real context and knows about the topic of discussion more than any given translator, she translated and then transcribed these interviews into the English language. To sum up, the researcher followed the following steps in the process of data collection. First focus group pilot interviews were held with participants other than the forty participating in the research study. Then, individual interviews were held with the principals, mentors, and novice teachers (forty in number) participating in the study. Finally, individual interviews aimed at member checking were held with one head of division at each school.

Focus group pilot interviews. Focus group interview was selected as a tool for data collection in this study. Focus group interview is defined as a technique where a

group of 5 to 12 people are given the opportunity to discuss a specific topic under the guidance of an interviewer (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). According to Kvale (1996), the interviewer introduces the topic of discussion and motivates participants to discuss their thoughts, feelings and experiences. Then, the interviewer takes the role of active listener where she only intervenes using some prompts and probes to keep the conversation going. During focus group interviews, Morgan (1988) elaborates that the researcher relies on the interaction within the group to reach data and yield insights that might not otherwise have been available in a straightforward interview. Hence, the participants interact with each other rather than with the interviewer, such that the views of the participants can emerge—the participants' rather than the researcher's agenda can prevail. Focus group interviews in qualitative methods are often used to learn about topics or people that are “weakly” understood (Morgan, 1998), to understand differences in perspectives between groups of people, have an insight about complicated topics where the emphasis is related to complex behavior (Krueger, 2000). As such, the focus group interviews fit the purpose of this study. The protocol for focus group interviews is presented in Appendix C.

Prior to the onset of data collection procedure with the above mentioned forty participants, the researcher conducted three focus group pilot interviews with participants other than the forty participating in the research study. The purpose behind administering pilot focus group interviews was to develop a more refined form of the research questions along with the probes to be used during individual interviews. Hence, the first focus group pilot interview was held with a group of six novice teachers, the second focus group pilot interview comprised five mentors, and the third focus group pilot interview included five principals. During the focus group pilot interviews, participants were asked questions that are directly derived from the study's research questions (Appendix C). Then, the data

collected from the focus group pilot interviews were transcribed and analyzed. Based on the results obtained, refined research questions and probes were derived and used during individual interviews with the study's selected participants. Prior to commencing with the focus group pilot interviews, the researcher briefed the nature of the interview and tried to make the participants feel comfortable. Then the researcher informed the participants that the focus group pilot interviews were to be audio recorded and took their consent.

Recording of the sessions is crucial for the researcher to make sure that all what has been said was captured accurately in a way that leaves no room for uncertainties and misinterpretations (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). A note taker assigned by and accompanying the researcher was present besides the researcher during the focus group interviews to take notes of the discussions held. According to Morgan (1988), note taking might help to keep the data collected intact in the face of some data distortion in noisy interviews.

Individual interviews. The researcher used individual semi-structured interviews with open-ended question as tool for data collection. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), the most data condensed interviews are those that are unstructured with open-ended questions. Individual interviews were conducted with seven school principals, eighteen novice teachers and fifteen mentors. During the individual interviews, participants were probed to share specific incidents and examples from practice to illustrate their views. The researcher posed the questions and had the participants provide their own definitions and reveal their in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under-study. Probes and follow-up questions were used in the interview. The interview questions along with the probes used are found in the Appendices D, E, and F.

Individual interview aimed at member checking. Member checking was conducted with one head of division at each school. Member checking involves, according to Merriam (1998), taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are acceptable. This technique allows participants to have a chance to evaluate whether the researcher's reconstructions reflect their perspectives and are plausible (Erlandson, 1993).

This was done at the end of the data collection procedures and after reaching the categories and sub-categories during data analysis. The researcher shared with each head of division the results of her initial conclusions from analysis of data gathered from individual interviews with the participants, observations, and analysis of documents and asked each to validate, to give clarifications, and to reflect on them. Individual interviews then member checking procedures will allow the researcher to reach advanced levels of understanding and make the adjustments to the information gathered, as needed (Erlandson, 1993). The participating head of divisions, for the aim of member checking, informed the researcher that the presented model of mentoring practices was reflective of real practices implemented at their schools.

School documents. A number of school documents were examined. These documents included: the formal job description of the head of department/mentor; the formal job description of head of division/mentor; documented information on the structure, content and process of mentoring practices implemented at a given school. It is worth mentioning the following related to school documents: (1) two schools did not have clear documents related to the job description of the head of departments and head of divisions (2) four schools were not willing to share such documents (3) three schools provided the researcher with "PDF", "Word" and photocopied documents (to maintain

confidentiality, these documents were not included as appendices). Hence, the researcher had included the documents presented by the above mentioned three schools in data analysis. These documents shed some light on different participants' job descriptions, assigned roles and expectations held of each party.

Researcher's journal. The researcher kept a thorough journal all through the procedures of data collection. The researcher had three types of entries. The first included perceptions and observations during the various visits to the schools and during individual interviews. The second encompassed methodology notes such as questions and probes added during interviews, the extent of the respondents' participation, logistical changes or issues, and others. The third comprised reflexive notes for the researcher documenting her emerging insights as the work progresses. Journal entries had helped the researcher in: getting acquainted with the school culture; forming clearer understanding of the dynamics that govern the relationship between novice teachers and their mentors (head of division and head of department); developing probes that enhance participants' engagement in the study and collaboration in providing needed info. All these factors helped the researcher attain a deeper comprehension of the data collected at various stages of data analysis. A sample of the researcher's journal is shown in Appendix H. The researcher visited her journal during data collection, analysis of collected data and construction of the theoretical framework. Appendix H depicts the researcher's observations of a given school site, interaction between novice teacher and mentor and logistics change for interview etc.

Data Analysis

Data collected during focus group pilot interviews and individual interviews were audiotaped then transcribed and analyzed. According to Cohen, Mansion and Morrison (2000), in qualitative data the data analysis is almost unavoidably interpretive; hence the

data analysis is a representation of a reflexive and reactive interaction between the researcher and the decontextualized data that are already interpretations of a social encounter. The researcher in order to be able to reach a reasonable interpretation of data had to go through various stages in data analysis. To answer the research questions presented in this study, the data collected in the interviews were analyzed based on the constant comparative method (Merriam, 2009). This method is about looking for similarities and differences between one occurrence in the data and another. This allows the development of categories and the identification of properties and dimensions specific to each category (Merriam, 2009). The theoretical framework and the different parts that it encompasses were referred to when codes (in the grounded model) were developed. Some categories found in the grounded model were directly derived and used as suggested in the theoretical framework (e.g. engaging in practices that enhance enculturation). In the construction of most of the categories and sub-categories shown in the grounded model, the researcher referred to the theoretical framework as well, however, for the purpose of remaining faithful to the terminologies used by the participants, the researcher exchanged some terms with others (e.g. "instructionally" supportive practice was exchanged with "ongoing academic support"). Moreover, to help build these categories, two strategies were employed: open coding and analytical coding. Table 5 below shows an example of the open and analytical coding of data.

While open coding refers to taking notes in the margins as data is being scanned, analytical coding is about seeing common patterns in these open codes and placing them under categories which could be modified later as more data is analyzed (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The researcher relied strictly on the concepts and terms used by the participants as the main source of data.

After collection of notes and documents during the study, the researcher divided the answers she got from each group of participants into meaningful parts. The first step in open coding after dividing into meaningful segments was to break down and conceptualize data through making comparisons and asking several questions such as, “what is the common pattern among the several answers of group participants in each area?” In the course of the research, the researcher came up with conceptual labels (e.g., lesson planning, delivery of instruction, observation, reflection on observation and peer observation). The concepts (i.e., planning and delivering instruction, observing and reflecting on observation, and encouraging peer observation), which pertain to the same phenomena were grouped into categories, such as the category named “Academically supportive practices”. Concepts featuring mentoring and supportive mentoring practices were given codes. These codes were used on the margin of the documents including the data collected. A sample of the codes used is presented in a table in Appendix G.

In analytical coding, data was put together in new ways after open coding by making connections between categories. For example, participants’ perspectives on the supportive mentoring practices were categorized into “providing ongoing academic support”, and “providing ongoing non-academic support”. These two categories were grouped in one category, “Supportive aspects of mentoring practices”. The categories “providing ongoing academic support” and “providing ongoing non-academic support” were further analyzed to include six sub-categories. The category “providing ongoing academic support” included sub-categories such as: “helping in planning and delivering instruction”, “encouraging and monitoring the progress of novice teacher by observing and reflecting on observations” and “encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation”. While the category “providing ongoing non-academic support” comprised

the following three sub-categories: “providing support in classroom management”, “dealing with students with special needs” and “engaging in emotionally supportive practices”.

Table 5

Example of the Coding Process

Category	Analytical Coding	Open Coding	Interview Transcript
Definition of Mentoring	-Support given to novice by guidance	-Providing academic support to novice teachers	<p>-“Mentoring is guiding a novice teacher who has no experience or little experience by giving them different perspectives, listening to their problems.”</p> <p>-“I help my novice teachers by trying my best to introduce new ideas to them, to help them in finding new ideas, methods and activities for teaching certain objectives, trying to organize the work, how it should be done in order to help them and let them not be overwhelmed later on during the academic year.”</p> <p>-“The mentor gives the teacher’s editions to novice teachers, she focuses on the main points that novice teachers have to follow in their lesson plans. The mentor supports her novice teachers with all the material needed, visual aids.”</p>

		special needs cases	<p>teachers to those files that include all the details related to a given student's case.”</p> <p>-“The head of division meets the novice teachers and discusses with them the cases of students with special needs then presents the recommendations given by the specialists who work with the students outside the school.”</p>
Process of supportive mentoring practices	Providing academically supportive practices	-Planning and delivering instruction	<p>-“I guide a novice teacher in lesson planning. How a given topic is to be introduced to students along with the activities and the materials to be used in class. Then we discuss the unit plan, we modify. I might comment on anything that might be helpful to add or something that might not be accurate for the session or chapter.”</p> <p>-“Under mentoring I would also like to mention that we actively help teachers prepare their material. I make a point that my teachers prepare for each and every single thing that they are going to teach. So I have to be very knowledgeable. Let me give you an example,</p>

	<p>-Providing non-academic supportive practices</p>	<p>-Engaging in emotionally supportive practices</p>	<p>when a teacher of mine goes into his grade of 11 to teach “Hamlet”, I have to have full knowledge of the play, have to have read it myself, have to gone over it with him and myself in order to discuss the best teaching methodologies. I think this goes a long way because I cannot mentor if I’m not aware of everything being taught in the classroom. So that requires quite a lot of reading, quite a lot of preparation and quite a lot of sharing.”</p> <p>-“In case teachers’ need emotional support they refer to me. For example, there was a novice who really wanted to be a grade 2 teacher. So we gave her grade 2. But she felt that she cannot be a successful teacher there. I tried to support her by one to one counseling and working together for a week or so. But she felt that she really missed something, she didn’t feel that she can really be successful at the class. I really understood her reasons. We came up with different solutions. We gave her something different. We were able to manage that without really harming or hurting the feelings of</p>
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			<p>that teacher.”</p> <p>-“I think emotionally supportive mentoring practices take place every day. Actually it happens informally even in the corridors. Sometimes you meet a teacher in the corridor and you see that there is something wrong, you feel it. Then you just stop, drop everything you are doing and you are like “What can I do for you?” especially for new teachers.”</p>
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The participating private school principals, mentors and novice teachers were asked about their definition of mentoring and their conceptions of mentoring practices implemented at their schools. After data have been collected through individual semi-structured interviews, the analysis involved coding the participants' responses and generating concepts which led to major themes and sub-themes of the implementation of mentoring practices at their schools.

The responses of each principal, mentor and novice teacher were arranged first in tables in the form of themes and sub-themes. The frequency of each theme was counted showing the number of participants that mentioned this theme in their responses. The second step of analyzing the data consisted of building an individual profile including the definition for mentoring and mentoring practices implemented at given schools as have been proposed by each participant. The second layer of analysis was done per each group of participants and involved comparisons of the themes and sub-themes across individual profiles of participants in each group. The aim was twofold: (a) to identify the themes which were repeatedly reported by principals, mentors and novice teachers; and (b) to note any emerging differences between different participant groups. The third step of analysis aimed to build a compiled profile for each group of participants which includes definition for mentoring, forms of mentoring support, supportive aspects of mentoring practices implemented at given schools and participants' recommendations for improvement of current mentoring practices as have been proposed by the participants themselves.

Conceptual categories emerging from the analysis of data formed the basis to propose a model of mentoring practices that is grounded in the context of private schools in Beirut. The proposed model was compared to the theoretical framework developed. Similarities and differences were highlighted and interpreted.

Quality Criteria

According to Lincoln and Guba (1990), the central criterion for judging the quality of the research process is trustworthiness, which is defined indirectly as having four major aspects: credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability), and confirmability (objectivity). To ensure the quality of his work, a researcher who is conducting a qualitative research study has to be concerned with the trustworthiness of his study (Erlandson, 1993). To increase the credibility of a qualitative research Lincoln and Guba (1990) suggested the use of techniques such as prolonged engagement with the phenomenon, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing and member checks. For transferability, they suggested the use of thick description of data. For the dependability and confirmability they suggested an audit trail.

Credibility (Internal Validity). According to Merriam (1998, 2009), credibility of a qualitative research study is concerned with how research findings agree with, resemble or are consistent with reality. To increase credibility, the researcher pursued: triangulation, member checking, and note taking in her journal. According to Merriam (2009), “Triangulation” is a procedure that relies on several sources of data to validate findings in a qualitative research study. For the current study, the researcher’s focus was on data and method triangulation. Data was collected from principals, novice teachers, and mentors. To increase the validity of the information attained during the interviews, some school documents were used as well. Member checking involves “taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible” (Merriam, 1998, p. 204). This technique allowed respondents to have a chance to evaluate whether the researcher’s reconstructions reflect their perspectives and are plausible (Erlandson, 1993). Furthermore, the individual interview with one head of

division at each of the schools provided another source of validation of the data collected. The researcher presented to each head of division the preliminary framework for the mentoring practices asked for each one's feedback. Finally, the researcher's journal was also used to triangulate data as it included insights, logistics and explanation for methodological decisions.

Transferability (External Validity). Transferability is the extent to which findings can be transferred and applied to other situations (Merriam, 1998, 2009). Using the researcher's journal can enhance transferability. Merriam (1998) asserts that "overall, the issue of generalizability centers on whether or not it is possible to generalize from a single case or from qualitative inquiry in general" (p. 208). According to Merriam (1998) when researchers assume that one cannot generalize results regard generalizability as a limitation of the method. In this study, the researcher is an advocate of the above mentioned position and hence treats transferability as a limitation of the method.

Dependability (Reliability). According to Merriam (1998), dependability refers to the extent to which research findings can be repeated yielding the same results. Since human behavior changes constantly, expecting arrival to the same results might be problematic in social sciences. Merriam (1998) emphasizes on the notion of "rather than demanding that outsiders get the same results, a researcher wishes that, given the data collected, the results make sense" (206). To ensure consistency of the results with the data, Merriam (1998) suggests three techniques: clarifying the researcher's position through an exhaustive explanation of the assumptions of the researcher, triangulation by using varied sources to ensure that the findings reflect the data collected, and audit trail through describing in detail "how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry" (Merriam, 1998). The researcher for the

purpose of ensuring reliability used individual interviews with a head of division in each and every participating school as member checking. Besides, the researcher when constructing the theoretical framework stated clearly notions of effective mentoring practices stated in the western based literature. Moreover, the researcher kept a field journal noting the steps that she took to collect the data and describing her reasoning throughout the data analysis process.

Confirmability (Objectivity). Since “all observations and analyses are filtered through the human being’s worldview, values, and perspectives” (Merriam, 1998, p.22) the researcher should be aware of her biases and assumptions at the beginning of the research process to ensure neutrality. To increase confirmability, the researcher used member checking, the researcher’s journal and audit trails. Besides, the researcher had her advisor’s consent and feedback on the procedures followed during the whole process of conducting the research study.

Limitations of the Study

The current research study has some limitations that need to be introduced. First, the researcher relied on individual interviews as the main source of data due to scarcity or unwillingness of sharing school documents by school administrators. Hence, the researcher had included the school documents of only three schools that showed willingness to share. Relying heavily on data collected from individual interviews is considered a limitation.

The researcher assumes that despite the many benefits of case studies discussed in earlier sections, results cannot be generalized from a single case in a qualitative research study to other context. Lack of generalizability is considered a limitation by itself.

Chapter 4

Research Findings

This study aimed to explore and compare the perspectives of seven principals, fifteen mentors and eighteen novice teachers from nine private schools in Beirut on the subject of mentoring practices implemented at their schools. The current chapter offers answers to the four research questions under study based on the interviews conducted with principals, mentors and novice teachers, school documents and researcher's journal. Hence, it presents the results of the study under four main sections: the perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers regarding the definition of mentoring; the perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers regarding the forms of mentoring support novice teachers receive; the perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers regarding the helpful and not so helpful aspects of mentoring practices implemented; and finally the recommendations of principals, mentors and novice teachers to improve the quality of the mentoring practices employed at their schools.

The current chapter includes a summary of all the results based on the data collected from the different participants. The data was analyzed using the constant comparative method. The perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers were compared respectively.

The collected data have been presented in three cumulative models including the definition for mentoring, forms of mentoring support, mentoring practices implemented at participating schools, and recommendations for improvement of implemented mentoring practices as have been proposed by principals, mentors and novice teachers respectively. Then data were examined across these three cumulative models to compare the perspectives of principals, mentors and teachers on definition for mentoring, forms of

mentoring support, mentoring practices implemented at their schools and recommendations for improvement and to identify the similarities and highlight the differences in their views. This chapter presents grounded model of mentoring practices stemming from the participants' perspectives in the Lebanese context.

This chapter is divided into four main sections addressing the four research questions:

- 1- How is mentoring defined in the context of private schools in Lebanon from the perspective of novice teachers, mentors, and principals?
- 2- What forms of mentoring support [in terms of structure/design, approach and content] do novice teachers receive in private schools in Lebanon?
- 3- Which aspects of the mentoring practices employed do principals, novice teachers and mentors find helpful or not so helpful?
- 4- What are the recommendations of principals, novice teachers and mentors to improve the quality of the mentoring practices implemented at their schools?

To start with the participating principals' responses on the four research questions are presented respectively. Then, a compiled profile of principals' perspectives is presented. The profile was constructed by including those definitions and mentoring, forms of mentoring support, mentoring practices and recommendations for improvement considered representative of the group of participants.

Principals' Perspectives: Definition of Mentoring

The participating principals' responses reveal that principals conceive mentoring as the process by which the novice teachers are guided and provided with support on the academic and non-academic aspects, and on the emotional level.

Mentoring is giving guidance and support to novice teacher. All the participating principals defined mentoring as the support given to the novice teacher through guiding. It is worth mentioning that the participating principals during their first encounter with the researcher informed the latter that they don't have formal mentoring programs but confirmed that they engage in supportive mentoring practices. All the participating principals confirmed that their head of departments (coordinators) and head of divisions play the role of the mentors to novice teachers.

Mentoring is providing academic support. According to the seven interviewed principals, mentors (mainly head of departments) provide academic support. The head of department (coordinator) is regarded as the main source of the academic support. A thorough reading of the school document presented by S1, show that the head of department's main job responsibility, as cited in the document (to maintain confidentiality, the document was not included as appendix), is orienting and mentoring novice teachers in addition to engaging in supervisory tasks that enhance novice teachers' professional development. (P1) shared his experience saying:

“We make sure new teachers are fully prepared, at least a month before the onset of the scholastic year, in unit planning, material they need”.

Mentoring is providing non-academic support. The seven participating principals pointed out that mentors provide non-academic support. According to them, helping a novice teacher in his/her classroom management is considered a non-academic support. (P5) introduced the head of division as the person “who helps the novice teacher in the classroom management and controlling the classroom.”

Mentoring is providing emotional support. According to five of the seven principals interviewed, mentoring practices provide emotional support for the novice teacher when the latter is facing stressful conditions. (P1) explained:

“By sharing personal experiences of problems faced and resolved, could give the novice teacher several options for solutions when encountering similar problems”.

On the other hand, (P2) provided emotional support and gave an example of this practice by sharing the following personal experience.

“I like to visit the teachers’ lounge without prior announcement and set agenda. I sit with them (teachers) and drink coffee. This creates an atmosphere of friendship and they would put all their defenses down. I like the close approach. I ask them about their families, their children. If I find out that there is a sick person in the family, I call to ask about them.”

Mentoring is helping novice teacher build skills to improve. Two of the interviewed principals find that mentoring practices help novice teachers develop the skills that they had acquired in university and relate to real context. One of the principals (P3) had this unique definition for mentoring:

“Mentoring is a process which helps a person where he or she has to be, it’s building the skills of the other person, building the capacity to improve himself or herself, to be able to manage and direct their own future.”

In short, the interviewed principals conceive “mentoring” as a supportive process where the novice teacher through the support and guidance of their mentors, relate what they have studied in theory to practice.

Principals’ Perspectives on Forms of Mentoring Support

The seven interviewed principals considered that mentoring support provided to novice teachers is performed by many members of the school community as they perform their formal leadership responsibilities. All of the interviewed participants believe that the head of the departments (coordinators) and head of divisions render mentoring support for

the novice teacher on the onset of his/her career as part of their formal role responsibilities. According to all the principals interviewed the mentoring support rendered by both the head of department and the head of division complement one another in making the novice teacher's early teaching experiences to be more successful. The participating principals' perspectives on mentoring support offered as part of the formal role responsibilities of head of departments and coordinators were presented in themes and sub-themes as shown below.

Supervisory support of the head of department. The head of department at almost all of the participating schools played the role of a mentor supporting and guiding novice teachers in academic aspects of mentoring. Mentoring support presented by the head of department include the following practices: "Guiding novice teacher" and "Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback."

Guiding novice teacher. Five of the seven participating principals emphasized the point that the head of departments (coordinators) guide their novice teachers in academic aspects. P2 confirmed that a coordinator's guidance is revealed in the following practices: showing different teaching methodologies; instructing; advising and monitoring the progress of the novice teacher. Moreover, school documents presented by P1 include detailed job description of the head of department who is considered a resource person who: orients and mentors new teachers; works with teachers on planning processes and checks their implementation; and sets with teachers plans for professional development (to maintain confidentiality, the document was not included as appendix).

On the other hand, P4 explained:

"The head of department (coordinator) guides the novice teacher by checking the content of the lesson plan presented and intervenes where needed to correct missing details in the written plan and upon delivery of lesson."

Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback. According to six of the seven principals interviewed observing the novice teacher's classroom then giving feedback on is the main supportive practice the coordinator is engaged in. This kind of evaluation followed by effective feedback aim at: following-up novice teacher's performance in classroom and encouraging and monitoring novice teacher's progress. These practices were regarded by the participating principals as practices that provide mentoring support to novice teachers due to the fact that they help improve novice teacher's performance in class and contribute in the professional development of the latter. In an attempt to describe the experience at her school principal P1 elaborated on the approach their coordinators use to convey their feedback to teachers by saying:

“Our coordinators are not intimidating. During novice teachers' evaluation, they always highlight the positive. The coordinator makes sure to start with the positive aspects then bring forward the negative aspects or areas that they (novice teacher and coordinator) have to work on together. These are the areas that help us decide what type of professional development is needed so that we can provide them with.”

Supervisory support of the head of division. According to the seven principals interviewed, the head of divisions help the novice teachers in both academic and non-academic aspects. These academic and non-academic aspects include: providing classroom management support; introducing the novice teachers to cases of learners with special needs; and conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback.

Helping novice teacher in classroom management. One of the aspects of support provided by the novice teachers' superior is embodied in the help that head of divisions offer in classroom management. All of the seven principals participating in the study found that a head of division plays an important role in supporting novice teachers manage their classrooms. P7 shared the following:

“The head of division supports the novice teacher in her classroom management. Even the most competent teacher who has a full grasp of the material she teaches, if she does not have good classroom management skills would fail to deliver a successful session and fulfill the objectives intended for that session.....”

Introducing novice teacher to cases of learners with special needs. According to three of the seven principals interviewed, the novice’s superior, especially the head of division, can be very helpful in guiding the novice teachers in introducing them to the cases of learners with special needs prior to novice teachers entering their classroom for the first time. One of the principals, P3 mentioned:

“All the students with learning difficulties have files of their own. It’s the responsibility of the head of division to give access to novice teachers to those files that include all the details related to a given student’s case.”

On the other hand, the participating principals admitted that after presenting their novice teachers to cases of learners with special needs they suggest that the novice teachers deal with the learners according to the recommendations given by the specialists who work with the students outside the school. This indicates that many participating schools lack the presence of departments that deal with learners with special needs and depend mainly on the recommendations given by external sources. This raises a big question on the effectiveness of the support they render to their novice teachers on how to deal with learners with special needs.

Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback. Five out of seven principals informed the researcher that their head of divisions observe their novice teachers classroom several times per year and give feedback. A participating principal P4 mentioned that the coordinators and head of divisions at their school discuss their observations, areas of strengths and areas of weaknesses with the observed teacher and decide on an action plan that tackles issues or areas that need improvement at the novice

teacher's side. On the other hand, P3 shared school document (to maintain confidentiality the document was not included as appendix) elaborating on how the head of division evaluates a novice teacher's work according to the "Performance Appraisal Form".

Structural arrangements supportive of mentoring practices. School superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) who provide mentoring support to novice teachers carry some tasks related to structural arrangements that govern the dynamics of the mentoring process and might enhance the implementation of the supportive practices. These superiors as part of the supervisory responsibilities they hold decide on the following aspects: workload assigned to novice teacher's colleagues who provide them with mentoring support and incentives offered to mentors.

Assigning lower workload for mentor. To enhance the effective contribution of the mentor-teachers, coaches and parallel teachers to the process of mentoring support, some principals give unannounced lower workload to supporting colleagues. The interviewed principals' responses show that supporting colleagues are given some exemptions from recess duties, morning duties and standby sessions.

Three principals out of seven principals interviewed admitted that they give lesser workload to mentors (mentor-teachers, coaches, parallel teachers). P4 admitted that although he does not have written laws governing this practice, he personally gives lesser workload. P4 added:

"I don't say that because I like people to volunteer then once they volunteer, I look at it and give lesser e.g. recess duties. I look at it but don't announce it as benefit because I rather have people volunteer and then I reward the volunteer."

Offering incentives to mentor. Participating principals recognize the effective contribution of supporting colleagues (mentor colleagues, coaches and parallel teachers) and acknowledge their hard work by offering some incentives. The given incentives might

take the form of monetary compensation, an acknowledging message sent to the supporting teacher or a pat on the shoulder of the supportive teacher. Most of the participating principals express their acknowledgement by sending email messages.

Three principals out of the seven interviewed, give monetary incentives to mentors (mentor colleagues, coaches, parallel teachers). On the other hand, P4 broadened the scope of incentives beyond the monetary compensation. Sharing his personal experience P4 gave a detailed description:

“People who go outside their call of duty and do many things like participate in committees, achieve good results with students, volunteer to become mentors, I recognize them in one way that is meaningful to them..... I ask teachers if you want to be recognized at one time, would you like to be recognized privately or in public; if I want to recognize you, what is the recognition you like to receive the most, more money, lesser workload, a bunch of flowers etc. and recognize them according to their wishes or interests.”

Principals’ Perspectives on Supportive Aspects of Mentoring Practices

As mentioned earlier, the principals considered the novice teachers’ superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) as their mentors and the main source of support for a novice teacher. The mentoring support provided by the superiors play an important role in helping novice teachers sail into the teaching profession smoothly and making the experiences of novice teachers more successful.

According to the participating principals’ responses school superiors engage in supportive and helpful practices from the day a novice teacher applies for the job. The principals believe that the practices employed at their schools help the novice teachers’ integration into the school culture. Besides, the ongoing academic and non-academic support rendered to novice teachers result in better job performance of the latter. It is worth mentioning that the implementation of these practices varies from one school to the other and some practices might be present at some and absent in some other contexts.

According to most of the participating principals these supportive practices are important in the process of novice teachers' professional development. The participating principals' responses were presented in themes and sub-themes as shown below.

Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation. The participating principals realized the importance of the supporting practices that take place during the orientation days held at the onset of the academic year. Participating principals highlighted the importance of integrating new teachers into the school culture. To help novice teachers adapt to a completely new place and new culture, school superiors introduce novice teachers to other teachers and staff during the meetings that are held at the beginning of the year. Besides, school superiors through acquainting of the novice teachers with different key departments, help novice teachers know where to refer to asking for various services. Moreover, introducing school philosophy and rules and regulations to novice teachers would help them have knowledge of what to expect and what is expected of. Furthermore, the workshops held during the orientation days with the important issues and concepts they tackle and the opportunity of novices getting acquainted with other teachers are considered by principals as being supportive to novice teachers. It is worth mentioning here that although some of these activities are not addressed specifically to novice teachers, they obviously are regarded as supportive practices by the principals.

Introducing novice teacher to school mission statement and rules and regulations; introducing novice teacher to staff and key departments. All the seven principals interviewed informed that they had "orientation days" held at the beginning of the year where the teachers are introduced to mission statement of school; rules and regulations governing the school life; other staff members etc.

When talking about "Orientation program" at his school P1 said:

“Orientation program starts with a meeting the school principal where he introduces the new comers to school’s history, mission and philosophy. Then they would go to a tour around school and get to be introduced to facilities and key people running these facilities.”

P1 shared a school document (to maintain confidentiality, the document was not included as appendix) that specifies providing orientation for novice teachers as one of the job responsibilities of the head of division at his school. This practice employed by the head of division shows that the process of orienting novice teachers is shared responsibility among various personnel (head of division, principal).

On the other hand, P3 mentioned that he introduces the school philosophy and rules and regulations orally then the new teachers receive a booklet where all the rules and regulations, school mission statement and philosophy are mentioned.

Organizing orientation workshops. Most of the principals participating in the study mentioned that workshops are held at the beginning of the year at their schools. P2 and P3 had the practice of holding workshops that tackle issues related to concepts related to school life such as: “classroom management” and “introduction to special education department”. P5 highlighted the importance of the novice teacher knowing the general policy of school before entering the classroom. P5 informed:

“Workshops are held at the beginning of the year where the novice teachers are introduced to concepts such as “evaluation of students”; “different types of assessments” and “sequence of objectives”.

Providing ongoing academic support. To begin with, according to the interviewed principals, novice teachers receive an ongoing academic support from their superiors (head of departments and head of divisions). The academic support of the school superiors are revealed in practices that enhance novice teachers’ capacity in planning and delivering of lesson. Besides, the feedback given to novice teachers and the discussion that

follows after each class or peer observation might give insights on the strengths and weaknesses a novice might have and asked to adjust performance accordingly.

Building novice teacher's instructional capacity through demo lessons. For the purpose of diagnosing the needs of novice teachers and helping them acquire lacking skills, four principals out of seven principals interviewed ask their novice teachers to present “demo/mock lessons”. It is worth mentioning here that the terms “mock lessons” and “demo lessons” are used by principals to refer to the lessons prepared by novice teachers and presented in front of a given audience. According to P1, “Mock lessons” help novice teachers experience classrooms, deliver their lesson plans and implement their activities prior to handling a real audience of students. P1 elaborated further by saying:

“Last year we held mock classrooms where we had a group of teachers and asked a new teacher to give one of the lessons that she had prepared. We acted like students; we tried to emulate situations that might happen in the classroom. We consulted the drama teacher who was with us and we tried to create scenarios while the novice teacher was explaining. Then after each case we would stop and discuss how the novice teacher behaved and what the novice teacher should have done. The feedback on having “Mock lessons” was very positive. It is very important for novice I hope that this would become routine in the mentoring program.”

P3 applied a similar practice at his school as well. The mentioned principal P3 emphasized the importance of giving novice teacher feedback on the demo lesson presented and providing the novice teacher with the practices that help the latter acquire the missing skills that entail him/her perform better in class.

“When there are some missing links, they would receive training later on. The demo lesson is not delivered to decide whether the novice teacher passes or does not pass the exam. But it helps in how we accumulate skills and cooperation on the marge that they already have.”

Helping in planning and delivering instruction. According to six of the interviewed principals, the novice's superiors, especially the head of departments, can be very helpful through the guidance they offer in planning delivering of instruction.

P1 highlighted the role of the head of department in helping the novice teacher apply concepts and teaching strategies he/she had learnt in university to school context.

“It is important to make novice teachers conscientious of everything they have learnt in the university and start applying, to start reflecting on and start using those approaches more and figuring out how they can be applied and how can we adapt these strategies to reality.”

On the other hand, P5 shared the experience of a more directive approach to coordination where the head of department almost imposes his teaching strategies and the activities to be introduced in class by the novice teacher.

“The coordinator meets with the novice teacher on weekly basis and one-to-one meetings going into details related to the subject matter taught, how is it to be taught and the activities to be introduced”

Encouraging and monitoring the progress of novice teacher by observing and reflecting on observations. Six of the seven interviewed principals have their head of departments and head of divisions observe novice teachers classrooms and share their feedback by reflecting on the observed sessions with the novice teachers themselves. P1 mentioned that the head of department observes and reflects on his observation stating:

“The classroom observation during the year take the form of the “formative assessment”, it is based on open communication and advice. The end of year evaluation takes the form of a more summative decision: ‘shall we continue like this’; are there a lot of changes you should do’. We use teacher appraisal to work on professional development and this is what communicated with teachers. The weaknesses that we have identified are opportunities for professional development.”

Encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation. Three principals out of the seven interviewed encourage the practice of peer observation at their schools. Peer

observation offers an opportunity for novice teachers to learn from their peers through observing their classes and later on discuss and reflect on their observations with the observed peers. P4 mentioned:

“Peer observation is very common at our school where teachers enter each other’s classrooms and observe. This rotation is very helpful because teachers see each other’s classrooms and benefit from it.”

On the other hand, P7 emphasized the benefit that both novice teachers and their more experienced peers get through mutual observation of classes.

“Both novice teachers and old teachers observe each other’s classrooms. The novice teacher would benefit from the old teacher’s experience and the old teacher from the novice teacher’s new methodological approaches.”

Providing ongoing non-academic support. The interviewed principals considered the novice teacher’s superiors (mainly the head of division) the main source of non-academic support for a novice teacher. Participating principals believe that the head of divisions at their schools play a crucial role in supporting novice teachers in classroom management and in dealing with learners with special needs.

Providing support in classroom management. Four of the seven principals participating in the study, confirmed that their novice teachers are provided support in classroom management. However, the support the principals provide differ immensely between one school and the other. According to P1 there is no formal procedure employed at their in supporting a novice teacher in classroom management. Their support is restricted to advising and giving hints on classroom management.

On the other hand, P7 had a more personal approach in conveying classroom management skills to novice teachers. She shared her personal experiences when dealing with misbehaving students when she used to be a teacher. She shared what follows:

“I guide the novice teachers before they enter their classrooms for the first time. I tell them that it’s very normal for a new teacher to have classroom management problems. It happens with everybody and it happened with me when I first started teaching. I advise on practices related to classroom management by saying “When you lower your voice, they would calm down and lower their voice to be able to hear you.”

Providing support in dealing with learners with special needs. Three out of seven principals interviewed believe that their novice teachers are introduced to the cases of learners with special needs. Two of the principals, admit that their support given to novice teachers on how to deal with learners with special needs is restricted to sharing the case histories and recommendations suggested by external specialists on how to deal with these specific cases. The practice differs in S1 and takes the form of a more structured support of the Special Education Department (SED). According to P1 at S1 the novice teachers not only are presented to the cases of learners with special needs but are also provided with the strategies on how to deal with learners with special needs.

“During SED department meeting, the novice teachers are introduced to the cases. They would discuss each and every learner. They go over each and every case. They introduce the case, the history, what shall be done, how we shall be worked with the case. And in the classroom novice teachers might have shadow teachers to help them with learners with special needs and learners with special needs might be pulled out as well.”

Novice teachers dealing with learners with special needs at different schools contexts might face varying degrees of challenging situations depending on whether they are given basic minimum on how to deal with cases or have the full support of the SED.

Engaging in emotionally supportive practices. Principals see the importance of the emotional support provided by the novice teachers’ superiors in making their early teaching experiences smoother.

Five principals of the seven principals interviewed confirm that their novice teachers are provided emotional support. P1 when talking about the emotional support rendered to a novice teacher elaborated:

“When mentoring there is the part of sharing the expertise of the mentor, so that the teacher would have the resource, someone to go to, someone would help them in dealing with problems and issues. There is an ongoing communication and support when interacting with a novice teacher. A novice teacher needs to feel supported. And the problems that they are facing are problems that any novice teacher might face.”

Principals’ Perspectives on “Not so helpful” Aspects of Mentoring Practices

Participating school principals were asked to provide the researcher with specific practices that are “not so helpful” and that hinder the implementation of effective mentoring practices. The purpose of this inquiry was to shed some light on those practices that need improvement and help schools in the betterment of their current mentoring practices. Surprisingly, all the seven participating principals were satisfied with and had a very pink view of the practices held at their schools and were not able to provide the researcher with a single example of a practice that is “not so helpful” in nature.

Principals’ Recommendations on Improving Quality of Mentoring Practices

Participating principals’ responses depict various recommendations on improving the quality of the mentoring practices implemented at their schools. The principals’ recommendations highlight effective practices that are presented in three different areas. To start with, two participating principals (P1 and P5); necessitate the practice of signing early contracts with novice teachers to enable the latter getting acquainted with school culture earlier. On the other hand, two principals (P2 and P4) believe that improvement in the mentoring practices implemented at schools can be achieved when schools develop effective mentoring programs and document the procedure of implementation. Finally, two other principals (P6 and P7) find that the workload of the mentor has to be reduced

This section presents the recommendations suggested by participating principals under three different areas.

Signing early contracts with novices. P1 recommended that the contracts signed with novice teacher be accomplished earlier and elaborated the purpose of this practice by saying:

“If we could sign the contracts with the new teachers earlier, we would enable the new teacher attending the school, observing sessions, observing real classrooms with expert teachers and then take time during the summer vacation to reflect on them.”

Similarly, P5 emphasized on the importance of knowing earlier the staff that would join the teaching team for the next academic year and accordingly start with the practices that enhance the novices’ skills.

“According to the law a teacher has up to July 5 as deadline to present his resignation. I honestly and personally prefer to choose the novice teacher who would replace the resigning one before this date to check on his/her capabilities and credentials. However, in this case this is done after July 5 where logistically the novice teacher won’t have time and feasibility to attend intense training sessions and set of workshops.”

Developing effective mentoring programs. According to P2 and P4, there is an urgent need for the development of effective mentoring programs and the documentation of the elements of those mentoring practices such as: the characteristics of the mentor, mentor selection criteria, the structure of the mentoring practices, the expectations held for both mentor and mentee, and the process by which the supportive mentoring practices are to delivered. P2 shared the following:

“...I wish we have some written documents that include guidelines that govern the relationship between a mentor and a mentee.....To have guidelines where you can follow the expectations of each party.”

Reducing workload of mentors. Two principals, P6 and P7, recommended that mentors be given lesser workload to enable them follow-up the novice teachers thoroughly in academic and non-academic aspects of the teaching process. In what follows, the cumulative model of principals' perspectives is presented.

Cumulative Profile of Mentoring Practices from the Principals' Perspectives

The first profile presented herein is that of principals. The profile was constructed by including those definitions, forms of mentoring support, mentoring practices and recommendations for improvement considered representative of the principals' perspectives. The reason was to highlight the themes that had agreement between participants of each group and to highlight the mentoring practices perceived as important by participants. The principal participants identified particular definitions, forms of mentoring support, mentoring practices, and the recommendations for improvement of mentoring practices implemented at their schools. The principals' perspectives on mentoring practices are illustrated in table 6.

Table 6

Principals' Perspectives on Mentoring

Principals' Perspectives on Definition of Mentoring	Principals N=7
Mentoring is support given to a novice teacher by guiding	7
Mentoring is providing academic support	7
Mentoring is providing non-academic support	7
Mentoring is providing emotional support	5
Mentoring is helping novice teacher build skills to improve	1
Principals' Perspectives on Forms of Mentoring	
Supervisory support of the head of department	7
Guiding novice teachers	5
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback	6
Supervisory support of the head of division	7

Helping the novice teacher in classroom management	7
Introducing the novice teachers to cases of learners with special needs	3
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback	5
Structural arrangements supportive of mentoring practices	3
Assigning lower workload for mentor	3
Offering incentives to mentor	3
Principals' Perspectives on Supportive Aspects of Mentoring Practices	
Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation	7
Introduction of school mission statement and rules and regulations; introduction of novice teachers to staff and key departments	7
Organizing orientation workshops	7
Providing ongoing academic support	6
Building novice teacher's instructional capacity through demo lessons	4
Helping in planning and delivering instruction	6
Encouraging and monitoring the progress of novice teacher by observing and reflecting on observations	6
Encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation	3
Providing ongoing non-academic support	7
Providing support in classroom management	4
Providing support on dealing with learners with special needs	3
Engaging in emotionally supportive practices	5
Principals' Recommendations on Improving Mentoring Practices	6
Recommendations on Improving Mentoring practices	
Signing early contracts with novices	2
Developing effective mentoring programs	2
Giving lesser workload for mentors	2

Mentors' Perspectives on Mentoring

The participating mentors' responses on the four research questions were presented respectively. Then, a compiled profile of mentors' perspectives was presented. The profile was constructed by including those perspectives on definition of mentoring, forms of mentoring support, supportive mentoring practices and recommendations on improvement of mentoring practices considered to be representative of the participant group. Here as

well the participating mentors like the participating principals regard the head of departments and head of divisions at their schools as the personnel who play the role of mentor.

Mentoring is giving guidance and support to a novice teacher. Participating mentors' responses show that mentors conceive mentoring as the guidance and support given to novices in both academic and non-academic issues. They seem to agree that mentors' support on both emotional and professional levels helps in enhancing the novice teachers' smooth entrance to the teaching profession and their performance in the classroom. Ten out of the fifteen mentors participating in the research study define mentoring as the support given to the novice teacher through guiding. According to M1, "Mentoring is a kind of guiding a novice teacher into a new path." While M3 defined mentoring as "guiding novice teachers to reach common ground that suits the school or the institution they are working at."

Mentoring is providing academic support. According to all the fifteen participating mentors (head of department and head of division), mentors provide novice teachers academic support. M1 (head of department) mentioned:

"I help my novice teachers by trying my best to introduce new ideas to them, to help them in finding new ideas, methods and activities for teaching certain objectives, trying to organize the work, how it should be done in order to help them and let them not be overwhelmed later on during the academic year."

A group of mentors (M5, M7 and M8) who all occupy the post of head of departments at their schools see that the mentors' (head of departments') support in academic aspects is revealed as support and guidance in the curriculum, lesson planning and methodology.

Mentoring is providing non-academic support. In addition to the academic support, novice teachers are provided with non-academic support when dealing with challenging situations that occur in class. Eleven of the fifteen mentors (13 head of departments, 1 head of division, 1 colleague mentor) participating in the study find mentoring as the process by which novice teachers are rendered support in non-academic aspects. M3 (head of department) helps her novice teacher in classroom management by sharing her personal experiences and how she had resolved similar behavioral problems. On the other hand, M4 (head of division) shared the practice of introduction of novice teachers to learners with special needs by explaining:

“At the beginning of the year, we send the novice teachers an email including the names of learners with special needs, the case and the academic level of the students and the recommendations given by the specialists on how to deal with a given case.”

Mentoring is providing emotional support. Nine (7 head of departments, 1 head of division, 1 colleague mentor) out of the fifteen mentor participants conceive mentoring as providing emotional support to their novices. M3 (head of department) provides emotional support by backing up a novice teacher when this latter is being verbally attacked by and criticized by a parent during parents meetings. On the other hand, M9 (head of department) sees that a mentor supports a novice teacher emotionally all the time not only during the coordination meetings. The support is given whenever the need is felt by the mentor. M10 (colleague mentor) elaborated her support to a novice teacher by saying:

“At the beginning of the year, in order not to put the novice teacher in a stressful situation, I prepare everything, all kinds of paper, worksheets, lesson plans etc.”

Mentors' Perspectives on Forms of Mentoring Support

Based on the participating mentors' responses, the school superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) are in charge of providing mentoring support to novice teachers and are called as their mentors.

This part of the chapter tries to answer the research question on the structure of mentoring practices that take place at private schools. The school superiors besides the mentoring practices they are engaged in, they make some structural arrangements that enable the implementation of mentoring practices.

The majority of the interviewed mentors (head of departments) focused on the formal role of the head of department as mentor. While some mentors (head of departments) have mentioned that some mentoring support is given by novices' peers.

Supervisory support of the head of department. According to almost all of the participating mentors (13 head of departments, 1 head of division, 1 colleague mentor), the head of department plays a crucial role in guiding novice teachers both on the academic and non-academic ground. The head of departments are mainly responsible of: conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback, holding regular meetings with novice teachers, designating specific teachers to mentor novice teachers.

Guiding novice teachers. Ten of the fifteen participant mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) informed that the head of departments play a mentoring role through guiding novice teachers in several ways. According to M1 (head of department), the head of department introduces new ideas to new teachers to help them get used to implementing a new curriculum or system in the school.

A head of department's main responsibility according to M4 (head of division) and M5 (head of department) is guiding a novice teacher by checking weekly, monthly and

yearly lesson plans, conducting formative and summative assessments, deciding on the percentages given to questions and sequence of questions, providing resources etc. Talking about the guidance given by the mentor, M6 (head of department) said:

“The guidance that a mentor (head of department) gives to a novice teacher is very important. The guidance of the mentor, the support that she gives, and details she provides about the layout of the school are very beneficial. Besides, the information given by the mentor related to paperwork; the reports to be written; the deadlines; the emails; who to refer to in specific issues are very important.”

M7 (head of department) referring to the guidance given to novice teachers mentioned the following:

“You have to guide a novice teacher and take care of him as a mother takes care of her baby. You have to give him all the support. The novice teacher has to be followed up in the classroom, you have to provide him with the materials needed, the books etc. You have to give him details related to distribution of the students, the levels his going to teach, you have to answer all his inquiries.”

Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback. The novice teachers’ superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) can be a major source of support in their professional growth. The regular formative observation they carry out in the novices’ classrooms and the effective feedback that accompanies this observation is reported by nine mentors (head of departments) as a supporting practice. M3 (head of department) mentioned:

“..... What I try to do once I finish classroom observation is to meet the novice teacher to tell her about the good things and the things that really need improvement.”

Similarly M6 (head of department) elaborating on the structure of mentoring practices prevailing at their school emphasized the fact that both head of departments and head of divisions are the main personnel that hold the role of a mentor who observes then provides feedback to novice teacher to help the latter’s performance improvement.

Holding regular meetings with novice teachers. Nine of the interviewed mentors (8 head of department and 1 head of division) informed that they meet with their novices

once per week. The agenda of the meetings vary depending on the period of the academic year they are held at or depending on the need for intervention with given novices. M4 (head of division) mentioned:

“I meet with novice teachers once per week. First, I introduce the agenda of the administration, what they need from teachers and then I have my vision as well, maybe new strategies, for example I attend a workshop and liked the approach that they had presented about a specific topic, I convey it to my teachers. Besides, I listen to novice teachers if they have concern or worries about specific issues.”

Another mentor, M11 (head of department) emphasized the importance of general coordination meeting that he holds at the beginning of the year. During this meeting he helps novice teachers getting acquainted with other teachers, curriculum and the grading system to be followed in grading books. He elaborated:

“During the general meeting I introduce myself, how many years of experience I have. The teachers introduce themselves. I introduce them to: rules and principal points we need to regard throughout the year; books we need to use and how are we going to work on the grading copybooks; kinds of exams they need to prepare etc. while during the coordination meeting which I hold on weekly basis, I follow up with the teacher.”

Designating specific teachers to mentor novice teachers. The participating mentors (head of departments) introduced the notion of designating specific teachers to provide mentoring support to the novice teachers. The mentors (head of departments) engage in this practice of asking specific teachers to help them in their mentoring tasks due to the fact of they themselves being overloaded with work are not able to meet all the novice teachers mentoring needs. Seven (head of departments) out of the fifteen mentor participants (13 head of departments, 1 head of division, 1 colleague mentor mentioned) their input in designating parallel teachers and coaches to novice teachers.

One of the mentors M9’s (head of department) response shows that she depends highly on the contribution that colleagues bring to the mentoring process of the novice.

Her response shows that she relies on the peers' mentoring support in both academic and non-academic aspects of mentoring. However, this fact was not obvious when mentors were asked about forms of mentoring supported provided at their schools.

“We pair novice teachers with more experienced teachers in order to be guided by them all the time. Be guided in the terms of how they perform in the classroom, how they prepare their lesson plans, even how they carry themselves in the classroom as in body language, facial expressions, even the dress code. So I usually pair new teacher with a more experienced teacher, they share exactly the same class, so they prepare together, they have weekly meetings during which they write up all the material they want to give, they prepare all the resources, handouts, all that is going to be given in the classroom.”

Similarly M14 who is a head of department elaborates by saying:

“We have several sections for each class, so we have parallel teachers. One of these parallel teachers might have experience in teaching and she or he will help the novice teacher. That means that there will be one or more co-teachers who will help me in mentoring. During the meeting sessions, the experienced teacher and the novice teacher get the chance to meet together in order to brainstorm to see what is being done which saves time.”

Supervisory support of the head of division. According to the seven (1 head of division, 6 head of department) of the fifteen mentors interviewed, the head of divisions perform a mentoring role through helping the novice teachers in academic and non-academic aspects. These non-academic aspects include: providing classroom management support and conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback on observation.

Helping the novice teacher in classroom management. Seven (1 head of division, 6 head of department) out of fifteen mentors interviewed emphasized the role that a head of division plays in helping a novice teacher in classroom management. M3, who occupies the role of both Head of division and Head of department at the same time, mentioned:

“I help a novice teacher when she's facing classroom management issues. I share my experience with her in similar situation and tell her how I had resolved the problem.”

While M4, M8, M9 and M10 said that the head of division introduces her novice teachers to classroom management tips, techniques and strategies that would help the novice teachers in managing their classrooms. As for M5 she expressed her perspective by saying:

“...A head of section deals with behavioral problems as well. She introduces what is called “behavioral law”, to the novice teacher and help her in the implementation of the law. I help and encourage the novice teachers to refer to the law in deciding what kind of infraction the student had committed and the appropriate corrective measure to be taken.”

Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback. Observing novice teachers’ classrooms for the purpose of carrying out formative evaluation was regarded by eleven (1 head of division, 10 head of departments) out of the fifteen interviewed mentors as a source of support for novice teachers since after this observation, novice teachers usually receive feedback and guidance aimed at fostering their professional development.

Eleven (1 head of division, 10 head of departments) out of fifteen participating mentors mentioned that the head of divisions collaborate with the coordinators at their schools in novice teacher’s performance appraisal. Both head of divisions and head of departments observe novice teachers’ classrooms, share their feedback and decide on a plan of action. M6 referring to the collaboration that takes place between head of division and head of department in the process of formative evaluation said:

“Head of department and head of division work as a team and complement one another. If I had seen something during my observation of a novice teacher’s classroom, I discuss the thing with the head of division and see if she has seen that as well and we try to solve the problem. We identify problem areas and then share solutions.”

Structural arrangements supportive of mentoring practices. The school superiors (principals, head of departments and head of divisions) are in charge of some

structural arrangements that govern the daily interactions of personnel, incentives offered, criteria for mentor selection and collegial relationships. Working by and according to some of the structural arrangements mentioned might enhance the implementation of the efficiency of the mentoring practices employed.

Offering incentives to mentor. Seven (head of departments) out of the fifteen participating mentors said that mentor teachers are given different forms of incentives as a gesture of appreciation. According to a group of mentors (head of departments) mentors M1, M6, M9 and M11 (head of departments) the incentives given to mentors (coaches, parallel teachers) are not very often materialistic in nature but rather are revealed as encouraging words and pats on the shoulders. M3 when referring to the material and non-material incentives given to mentor-colleagues shared the following:

“Definitely it’s not a financial reward. Sometimes when you pat on the shoulder of a teacher and tell him “Good job” means a lot. I do have the habit of doing that and they love that. It’s a matter of self-esteem, a matter of trust, a matter of giving emotional incentive to the teacher. They need it more than the financial one.”

Deciding on criteria of mentor selection. Only one mentor (head of department) out of fifteen mentors participating in the study informed that they follow criteria in selecting the mentor (assigned) teacher who assists a novice teacher. The criteria they follow at S4 was presented to the researcher (to maintain confidentiality, the document was not included as appendix) M5 shared the following on mentor selection criteria:

“Yes, we have a policy for that; we had prepared something for that like job description for the mentor. We choose who has experience, someone who has been at school for a long time, someone who knows everything at school, from little things to the most important things. We don’t choose someone who teaches the same subject because the head of departments follow on issues related to academics. But we choose those who teach at the same cycle because you need to have someone that you can see on daily basis.”

Facilitating collegial relationship. Seven of the participating mentors (head of departments) informed that they facilitate collegial relationship between novice teachers and their peers. Some participating mentors (head of departments) mentioned that they work in collegial teams with the novice teachers. The professional and personal support provided to novice teachers in this kind of relationship help many of the novice teachers have positive feelings towards their jobs and tend to stay in the profession.

M12 (head of department) described her relationship with the novice teachers by saying:

“A successful mentor (head of department)- novice teacher relationship is based on my ability to build self confidence in the novice teachers. I do my best to highlight the positive traits in the novice teachers’ characters as teachers in order for them to have self-esteem in themselves. I should believe in a novice teacher as being an effective teacher. But she should believe in me as a mentor who is seeking for improving her teaching process and help her when she needs it. She should believe after all that I am sharing with her my experience and ideas for the benefit of the school, the students, and herself as well.”

Some other participating mentors (head of departments) highlighted the point that when both mentors (head of departments) and novice teachers work in collaboration toward achieving common goals, novice teachers feel a part of a team and feel supported on the emotional and professional levels. M3 (head of department) shared her experience:

“Long time ago mentoring was difficult between teachers and the head of department. We used to feel the head of department as some sort of authority. It might be scary sometimes to talk to the head of department Today I do sense that coordination or mentoring is kind of mutual understanding between the two, most probably sharing the experiences, sharing knowledge, sharing worries and concerns. It’s not being one person giving orders to another.....So it’s not matter of one direction, or one way relationship. It’s two way relationship. As I said before it’s a matter of sharing concerns on conditions that we share the same global vision, or the vision that matches with school mission and policy.”

Mentors’ Perspectives on Supportive Aspects of Mentoring Practices

The participating mentors' responses present all the supportive and helpful practices a novice teacher receives from the moment he/she applies to the job till the end of the novice's first scholastic year. Most of the participating mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) find these supportive practices to be very crucial in making the first year experiences as less stressful and enhancing novice teachers' performance in the classroom. Practices that help the novice teachers integrate in the new school culture and practices that provide the novice teachers with ongoing academic and non-academic support are regarded as helpful practices.

Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation. Participating mentors (head of departments) believe that the practices held during the orientation days at the beginning of the academic year help novice teachers integrate into school culture, become acquainted with teaching and administrative staff and attain knowledge related to school rules and regulation. These practices might help novice teachers feel less stressed and build sense of belongingness to school. As a result the novice teacher might feel more satisfied at job and perform better in class.

Introducing novice teacher to school mission statement and rules and regulations; introducing novice teacher to staff and key departments. According to twelve (11 head of departments and 1 head of division) out of the fifteen participating mentors, activities held during the orientation days help the novice teachers adapt to school community and to the system.

M4 who is a head of division described the general meetings held at their school at the beginning of the year as not very formal and it is when the "ice-breaking" between the novice teachers, the old teachers, the principal and the administration takes place.

"In our school we start with a general meeting done by the principal. We do so many activities to introduce each other. Later we have individual meetings with the

novice teachers. First of all we start with rules and regulations at school, from the appearance of the teacher and the mission of the school and our vision. We give the novice teacher the list of the students. We introduce to her to the classroom and the emergency doors. We let her live at school as if she knows the school. This is how “ice breaking” happens.”

Organizing orientation workshops. Seven (head of departments) of the fifteen mentors participating in the study informed the researcher that a set of workshops are held at the beginning of the scholastic year with varied topics. The participating mentors (head of departments) when organizing workshops at the beginning of the year try to introduce topics useful to novice teachers’ professional growth. Besides, they introduce topics that address specific needs that were detected during classroom observations. M5 (head of department) told the researcher:

“The head of departments prepare the workshops to be given at the beginning of the year and throughout the year. The topics are decided upon based on the need that the coordinators feel when observing the classrooms”.

Introducing novices to applications and software used at school. To help novice teachers use the applications efficiently and perform effectively in class, five (head of departments) of the fifteen mentor participants informed the researcher that they introduce the novice teachers to applications and software used at their schools. M7 (head of department) shared what follows:

“Our school uses a lot of technology (applications) e.g. e-book, LCD Projectors, interactive boards. A new teacher might face problems if he does not know how to operate these. Our role here is to introduce him to these applications and help him use them professionally and efficiently.”

Providing ongoing academic support. According to the interviewed mentors (head of departments and head of division), the schools’ head of departments play an important role in rendering an ongoing academic support to their novice teachers. Practices that enhance novice teachers’ capacity in planning and delivering of lesson; build the instructional capacity through demo lessons; enhance the progress of novice

teacher by observing and reflecting on observations; encourage peer observation and reflection on observation; help the novice in constructing assessments and providing ready lesson plans are considered by the head of departments as some of the main supportive practices that they are engaged in and that help the teachers' performance and professional growth.

Building novice teacher's instructional capacity through demo lessons. Nine (head of departments) of the fifteen mentors confirmed that they have the practice of requiring novice teachers present a demo lesson before they sign contract with school's administration. The purpose behind this practice is getting acquainted with the novice teachers, and providing guidance and assistance in some areas observed as missing or underdeveloped.

M6 (head of department) elaborated the purpose of requiring a novice teacher present a demo lesson:

“A novice teacher gives a demo lesson. We can see the weak points that we have to work on. For example, someone comes in and you know here at school we apply interactive technology. If we notice that this teacher needs more assistance in technology, we do that. We make sure that she gets the assistance that she needs.”

Helping in planning and delivering instruction. As part of the practices they implement during the process of providing mentoring support, nine (head of departments) of the fifteen mentors said that they help their novice teachers in lesson planning and delivery of instruction. According to M1 (head of department), she is engaged in the following practices:

“I guide a novice teacher in lesson planning. How a given topic is to be introduced to students along with the activities and the materials to be used in class. Then we discuss the unit plan, we modify. I might comment on anything that might be helpful to add or something that might not be accurate for the session or chapter.”

According to a school document presented by M1, a head of department at S1, monitors proper implementation of curriculum throughout the departments to ensure that

students master appropriate concepts and skills before advancing to the next level (to maintain confidentiality the document was not included as appendix).

Another mentor M9 who is a head of department talked elaborately on the practice at her school mentioning:

“Under mentoring I would also like to mention that we actively help teachers prepare their material. I make a point that my teachers prepare for each and every single thing that they are going to teach. So I have to be very knowledgeable. Let me give you an example, when a teacher of mine goes into his grade of 11 to teach “Hamlet”, I have to have full knowledge of the play, have to have read it myself, have to go over it with him and myself in order to discuss the best teaching methodologies. I think this goes a long way because I cannot mentor if I’m not aware of everything being taught in the classroom. So that requires quite a lot of reading, quite a lot of preparation and quite a lot of sharing.”

Another mentor, M11 who is a head of department described some sort of a directive approach to providing support in lesson planning where she decides on almost all aspects of planning and delivery of instruction. M11 told the researcher the following:

“We as coordinators explain for the novice teacher how to begin the lesson and the steps to write a lesson plan with examples and a model we have. Academically, we help her in every single lesson. We help her prepare the activities, the lesson plan, and the exercises.” She added “We give her the yearly plan with the objectives of each lesson with the activities that should be given for each lesson. Then the novice teacher has to prepare the weekly and monthly plans.”

Encouraging and monitoring the progress of novice teacher by observing and reflecting on observations. Seven of the participating mentors (head of departments) mentioned that they observe the novice teachers’ classrooms and give feedback. Mentors hold meetings with the novices after the classroom observations to discuss and reflect on the observed practices. Then they suggest a plan of action with some detailed practices on how to improve performance in class. This practice would help the head of departments monitor novice teachers’ progress and intervene when needed.

M5 (head of department) discussing the supportive nature of the steps that follow classroom observation and feedback informed the researcher what follows:

“.....What we do with the classroom observation is the following. We have individual meetings with the teacher that have been observed in the classroom, and then we have a “professional developmental day”. On this day, we organize workshops and activities covering topics on some weaknesses we had noticed near some teachers. These activities help improve the teachers’ performance. If let’s say we found that differentiated learning wasn’t used that much in classrooms, during the developmental day, we’ll have “differentiated” workshops held for the teachers (both novice and old) to help them in this particular thing.”

Encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation. Eight (head of departments) of the fifteen mentor participants mentioned that they encourage peer observation among teachers. Discussing the importance of the practice of peer observation and then reflection on the observed classrooms, the mentors agreed that the novices benefit from the new teaching strategies and methodologies they might be introduced to during peer observation sessions. M7 (head of department) elaborating further said:

“...The novice teachers might benefit from the implemented methodologies. For example, if a teacher is very good in using technological tools in his session, we tell the novice teacher to go and observe the colleague’s classroom to improve his skills as well.”

Helping in constructing assessments. According to six (5 head of departments, 1 colleague mentor) of the fifteen mentors interviewed this kind of support is mainly provided by the head of departments. The head of department’s help takes the form of giving approval on the structure of the exam, the objectives to be tested, checking the structure and grade distribution of the exam. M1 (head of department) explained:

“We, the novice teacher and I start preparing for the formative and summative assessments ...I discuss the objectives and I make sure that every skill mentioned in the preparation of the unit plan is also there. For example, when a novice teacher prepares a test, I start with the objectives and check whether they are included and how many times the objectives are tested....So I go into all these details.”

A head of department (coordinator) in S3, according to school document presented, monitors and approves assessments given to students (to maintain confidentiality, the document was not included as appendix).

While another mentor who is a mentor colleague mentioned guiding the novice teachers in designing exams by providing them with readymade ones during the first period through which they learn how to design their own exams after a while.

Elaborating further M10 who is a mentor colleague said:

“In the beginning, I prepare all the quizzes and tests. Then I give the novice teacher assignments little by little. For example, for the coming week, she’s going to prepare a quiz for the first time. As long as she feels comfortable in the beginning, I’m ok. I’m ready to take the hard part now because later on she would be in charge.”

Helping in checking on and evaluating students’ academic performance. Six of the mentors (head of department) participating in the study said that they help novices check on and evaluate students’ academic performance. This practice according to the mentors aims at not only analyzing students’ performance and detecting the need of any concept to be retaught but to help the novice teacher in applying teaching techniques to reach all students. Mentor 12 (head of department) explained:

“I am responsible for students’ academic achievements. So I sit with the novice teacher and discuss each student performance and decide on intervention means to help the student improve academically.”

On the other hand, a head of department in S1 helps and ensures that students’ work is checked regularly for both form and content as a means of evaluating students’ performance (to maintain confidentiality, the document was not included as appendix).

Providing novice teachers with previously prepared lesson plans. Six of the participating mentors (head of departments) said that to emotionally help novice teachers

and to avoid overload and stress of lesson planning they provide them with previously prepared lesson plans and resources. M6 (head of department) mentioned the following:

“A novice teacher is given the lesson plans used in the previous years, activities, videos, e-books whatever. She is given the archive of the classroom. At the beginning of the year we encourage her to use what we have so that she gets into the flow because we are a little bit different from other schools, we are not traditional.”

While M9 (head of department) explained:

“I actively encourage my teachers to share, sometimes I impose it. If at the same time the two of us preparing, why would we do the work twice. It’s not efficient anyway. Of course I have to read the content, the literature but if you prepare the lesson plan, I will know what I am supposed to teach. I go and read my material, I take little notes, and you saved me half the journey.”

Providing ongoing non-academic support. In addition to the academic support, the participating mentors (6 head of departments and 1 colleague mentor) said that they provide their novice teachers with emotional support as well. The emotionally supportive practices include providing support to novice teachers in classroom management, helping novices deal with learners with special needs and other helping novice teachers emotionally in other contexts that might be stressful.

Providing support in classroom management. Seven (1 mentor colleague and 6 head of departments) of the participating mentors mentioned that they support the novice teachers in classroom management. Mentors share their personal experiences and how they had dealt with misbehaving students before. This practice of sharing would help the novice teachers be aware of the commonness of the problems encountered in classroom management and would help the novices adopt suggested solutions and use whenever similar problems are encountered.

While M10 who is a mentor colleague had a different approach in helping a novice teacher develop classroom management skills. M10 would let the novice teacher observe

her classroom and get hints on classroom management. This supportive practice would enhance the novice teacher's classroom management skills, help her be in charge of her classroom and deliver a teaching session successfully. Describing her experience on helping novice teachers in classroom management said:

“The novice teachers attend my classes. There was a novice teacher who attended my class once per week all throughout the year. During her visits, I tried to come up with things that she needed to observe. I tried to make the class as active as possible to show her what is needed in grade 1. Let's say for one session, I taught her for example how to have classroom management etc.”

Providing support on dealing with learners with special needs. Realizing the challenges novices would encounter when dealing with learners' with special needs, six of the mentors (1 head of division, 5 head of department) participating in the study told the researcher that they help their novice teachers in how to deal with students with special needs. M4 (head of division) explained

“We support the novice teachers by giving them some hints on how to deal with students who have learning difficulties. What can we do with a student who has learning difficulties? We advise her to make the student sit in the front and encourage him. We do this before the students come, especially when the teachers are new.”

While M6 (head of department) shared a more structured and systematic support their novices get through the “learning support department” found at the school.

“We have a head of Learning Support Department. She is responsible for everyone who has learning problems.... Head of section and head of Learning support meet with a novice teacher and tell her everything about techniques, accommodations, modifications to cater the needs of this child....We have a meeting with the head of learning support and head of section and all the teachers at the beginning of the year. We discuss students with cases. How can we help in case something happens, how can we intervene...”

Engaging in emotionally supportive practices. Six out of the fifteen mentor (head of departments) participants said that they emotionally support their novice teachers

helping them overcome the challenging and stressful conditions they might face during their early teaching years. Mentors believe that by providing emotional support novice teachers would feel less stressed and able to concentrate on important teaching requirements. M3 (head of department) shared a personal experience and elaborated:

“... There was a novice who really wanted to be a grade 2 teacher. So we gave her grade 2. But she felt that she cannot be a successful teacher there. I tried to support her by one to one counseling and working together for a week or so. But she felt that she really missed something, she didn't feel that she can really be successful at the class. I really understood her reasons. We came up with different solutions. We gave her something different. We were able to manage that without really harming or hurting the feelings of that teacher...She felt that this is not her place and she would not be able to give her best in that class. For that reason we made a shuffle, we made a change.”

While M9 (head of department) focused on the point that she provides an ongoing emotional support. Her emotional support to novices is not shown during coordination meetings only but rather in any context that might need emotionally uplifting interventions.

“I think emotionally supportive mentoring practices take place every day. Actually it happens informally even in the corridors. Sometimes you meet a teacher in the corridor and you see that there is something wrong, you feel it. Then you just stop, drop everything you are doing and you are like “What can I do for you?” especially for new teachers.”

Mentors' Perspectives on “Not so helpful” Aspects of Mentoring Practices

The researcher, in the third research question inquired about the mentoring practices that were regarded as not so helpful by participants. The participating mentors shared some examples of practices implemented at their schools related to workload of mentors (head of department), workload of novice teachers, workshops and lack of peer observation and considered them as not so helpful.

Workload of mentor (head of department). M1 who is a head of department had concerns about being overloaded with work. Hence, besides holding the responsibility of coordination, she was required to teach as well. She expressed her worries about not being

able to meet the expectations set for an effective coordinator. M1 shared her concern by saying:

“I think having 20 sessions to teach and being a full time coordinator is not considered a very helpful mentoring practice. Because I’m new to this position, I have been teaching for 10 years and I want to be as perfect as possible as a coordinator. I’m a bit scared to be honest for having 20 sessions per week and holding the responsibilities as a coordinator.”

Workload of novice teacher. One mentor who is a head of department considered the practice of giving a novice teacher extra workload as not so helpful practice which hinders the successful and effective implementation of the intended mentoring support.

M15 added the following:

“The issue of workload is decided on by the administration.... They make use of the novice teacher by giving her more workload than the more experienced teachers. They ask her to teach more than one subject matter because it will cost the administration less money than when hiring two or three more teachers.”

It is worth mentioning here that the collected data revealed that three out of seven principals, seven out of fifteen mentors and nine out of eighteen novice teachers agreed on the fact that a novice teacher is given the same amount of workload as a more experienced teacher. All principals admitted that they follow the rules governing this aspect which is set by the ministry of education. However, the practice of giving the same amount of workload to novice teachers might put the latter in a very stressful situation. Novice teachers face challenging situations where they have to adapt to a new school culture, plan and deliver lesson, and maintain a classroom environment that induces learning. Besides, they need to have time to get engaged in activities that enhance their professional development.

The inefficacy of general workshops. One mentor (M9) who is a head of department had concerns about the very general workshops prepared by the administration

and their efficiency in providing the desired results in the process of teacher preparation and teacher development. M9 shared the following:

“...Sometimes I would feel that in general workshops, things are way to general... Usually when you have a general workshop, you are talking to a very mixed audience. You have the experienced teachers who know exactly what they are doing and you have the very new teachers. So the experienced teachers would be fidgeting or bored because the workshops are not telling something new. While the novice teachers are busy and cannot do what I want them to do, which is the experienced teachers mentoring the novices specifically in English. I would rather have purely departmental workshops and mentoring rather than having general workshops.”

Lack of peer observation. Two mentors M3 (head of department) and M10 (mentor colleague) complained about lack of peer observation and/or insufficient number of sessions scheduled for peer observation.

M3 (head of department) shared the notion that they don't have the practice of peer observation blaming the “Lebanese mentality” which hinders this practice.

“We don't have peer observation. We share experiences and information. The Lebanese mentality would not really accept peer observation. I really love the fact that I invite a teacher to my class. But they would say “she's calling us to her class to brag about her capacities.”

While M10 (mentor colleague) focused on the point that observing a parallel teacher's classroom once is not enough and shared her point of view on peer observation saying:

“A novice teacher observing a parallel teacher's classroom for one session is not enough. We face problems in the classroom, we solve problems for students, we have cases, and we have so many things in the classroom, not only teaching and assigning H.W. and so on. A novice teacher has to observe each and every detail in the classroom. So that she would be able to be completely on her own and not face problems later on. Or in case she faces a similar problem, she knows what to do.”

Mentors' Recommendations on Improving Quality of Mentoring Practices

The participating mentors (thirteen head of departments, one head of division and one colleague mentor) suggested quite varied recommendations on improving the mentoring practices implemented at their schools. The mentors' recommendations covered different areas and included themes such as: conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback more frequently; organizing more of the skill building workshops; developing mentoring programs with clear criteria; giving lesser workload to mentors; signing early contracts with novices; and increasing time for coordination meetings. There were two mentors (head of departments) who did not recommend any change to the quality of mentoring practices at their schools based on their belief that the mentoring practices implemented as such were effective enough and did not need any improvements.

Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback more frequently. Two of the participating mentors, M1 and M15 (both head of departments) emphasized the point that head of departments should have a consistent and systematic follow up on the novice teachers. They recommended that head of departments observe novice teachers' classrooms more, conduct formative evaluation and give effective feedback more often to enhance the performance of the novice teachers. M15 (head of department) said:

“I think we should be given more time to observe the novice teachers. We observe them twice per term. We need more time to be with them in the lab as well, especially those who are not originally Chemistry teachers. But at the same time, I am a teacher and I know that there are limited hours set by the administration for teacher observation. So I need more time to be close to the new teachers.”

Organizing more of skill building workshops. According to two participating mentors, M2 and M7 (both head of departments) the workshops delivered and the topics they cover are not enough to enhance the desired progress in the novice teachers performance. Hence, they recommend workshops: to be prepared and delivered by

specialists, to include variety in the topics presented and to be distributed over the academic year. M7 shared the following:

“...The specialists who for example are experts in technology should deliver workshops on how to apply practices related to technology used at school....this applies to workshops that address team work as well...”

Developing mentoring programs with clear criteria of mentor selection. Two mentors, M4 (head of division) and M5 ((head of department) believe that mentoring programs should be developed further at private schools. M5 recommended the implementation of more effective mentoring programs at schools with clear criteria of mentor selection. M5 elaborating further put emphasis on the importance of assigning mentors to novice teachers with matching personalities so that the interaction is positive and the feedback given be helpful to the novice. M5 shared her experience:

“...In choosing the mentor we have to know whom to choose....They have to be experienced teacher....We have to look at the personalities as well not only what they know.

Giving lesser workload to mentors. A group of mentors (M9, M12, and M13) who run the job of head of departments at their schools and provide mentoring support to novice teachers find that the mentors (head of departments) should be given lesser workload. The majority of the participating mentors (head of departments) in addition to coordination responsibilities are asked to teach several hours per week. Hence, holding the dual responsibilities of coordination and teaching at the same time overload the mentor (head of department) and may not be able to meet with novice teachers and provide the needed effective mentoring support. For the mentioned reasons, M9, M12 and M13 (head of departments) recommend giving lesser workload for mentors.

M13 mentioned the following as his recommendation:

“A mentor whether a head of department or head of division has to have more time to give to the novice teacher. Besides, a coordinator has to update his knowledge on new educational methodologies and strategies.”

M14 (head of department) stressed on the point of giving lesser workload (mainly no teaching responsibilities) to mentors (head of departments) and at the same time increase the frequency of coordination meetings held with the novice teachers. M14 shared:

“...I recommend increasing time for coordination among novice teachers and the coordinator. I recommend having two or three sessions per week and not only one.

While on the other hand, M10 (mentor colleague) complained that she does not have time to mentor properly and recommended that mentors (mentor colleague) be given lesser workload as well. M10 reported:

“...I don't have enough time. I teach 24 hours. The novice teacher and I meet once per week and sometimes during the meeting, we are asked to substitute an absent teacher....So we cancel our meeting.”

Similarly M5 (head of department) found that colleagues and parallel teachers are overloaded with work.

“Sometimes a colleague mentor or a parallel teacher has a lot of teaching hours then she cannot give much of time to the other novice teacher. So this is a difficulty that we are facing sometimes. So we are trying whenever we are preparing lists of mentors to find someone who has time to give.”

Signing early contracts with novices. Another mentor M14 (head of department) regards the early signing of contracts with novices as beneficial because it gives the novice an opportunity to get acquainted with school culture, observe some classrooms and is introduced the textbooks he will use the coming academic year. On the other hand, two mentors, M6 and M8 who are head of departments surprisingly did not have any recommendations to improve the quality of the mentoring support at their schools.

According to M6, they at their school are doing what is needed and provided the support expected of them in the process of mentoring support.

“...We have a very friendly atmosphere at school. So we do things unconsciously....although giving mentoring support is not mandatory, you cannot but help....Because of the environment and the atmosphere, everybody’s helping everybody, you tend to help even if it’s not part of your job description.”

Cumulative Profile of Mentoring Practices from the Mentors’ Perspectives

The second profile presented herein is that of mentors. The profile was created by comprising the definitions, forms of mentoring support, mentoring practices and recommendations for improvement considered representative of the participant group.

These definitions and practices are illustrated in table 7.

Table 7

Mentors’ Perspectives on Mentoring

Mentors’ Perspectives on Definition of Mentoring	Mentors N=15
Mentoring is support given to a novice teacher by guiding	10
Mentoring is providing academic support	15
Mentoring is providing non-academic support	11
Mentoring is providing emotional support	9
Mentors’ Perspectives on Forms of Mentoring	
Supervisory support of the head of department	14
Guiding novice teachers	10
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback	9
Holding regular meetings with novice teachers	9
Designating specific teachers to mentor novice teachers	7
Supervisory support of the head of division	7
Helping the novice teacher in classroom management	7
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback	12
Structural arrangements supportive of mentoring practices	7
Offering incentives to mentor	7
Deciding on criteria of mentor selection	1
Facilitating collegial relationship	7
Mentors’ Perspectives on Supportive Aspects of Mentoring Practices	

Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation	12
Introduction of school mission statement and rules and regulations; introduction of novice teachers to staff and key departments	12
Organizing orientation workshops	7
Introducing to applications and software used at school	5
Providing ongoing academic support	8
Building novice teacher's instructional capacity through demo lessons	9
Helping in planning and delivering instruction	9
Encouraging and monitoring the progress of novice teacher by observing and reflecting on observations	7
Encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation	8
Helping in constructing assessments	6
helping in checking on and evaluating students' academic performance	6
Providing novice teachers with previously prepared lesson plans	6
Providing ongoing non-academic support	7
Providing support in classroom management	7
Providing support on dealing with learners with special needs	6
Engaging in emotionally supportive practices	6
Mentors' Recommendations on Improving Mentoring Practices	
Recommendations on Improving Mentoring Practices	13
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback more frequently	2
Organizing more of skill building workshops	2
Developing mentoring programs with clear criteria of mentor selection	2
Giving lesser workload to mentors	6
Signing early contracts with novices	1

Novice Teachers' Perspectives on Mentoring

The participating novice teachers' responses on the four research questions are presented respectively. Then, a compiled profile of novice teachers' perspectives is presented. The novice teachers' perspectives on definition of mentoring, forms of mentoring support, supportive mentoring practices, not so helpful mentoring practices and

suggested recommendations for improvement of the implemented mentoring practices are presented respectively.

Mentoring is support given to a novice teacher by guiding. Twelve of the eighteen novice teachers participating in the study define mentoring as the support given to the novice teachers through guidance. NT1 defined mentoring as:

“I would say that mentoring is a kind of guidance whether in a professional or personal setting. The mentors individually provide you with the necessary information and guidance that you need to progress from point A to point B.”

Another novice teacher NT5 described mentoring as follows:

“In general, mentoring is guidance between a well experienced teacher and another one who needs help to master new skills in his or her new job. In teaching, it is guidance done between experienced teacher and coordinators and other staff and the novice teacher. They help him or her with the procedures applied and the school policies.”

Mentoring is providing academic support. Eleven of the eighteen participating novice teachers described mentoring as the academic support rendered to a novice teacher.

NT3 in an attempt to describe the academic support given to novice teachers said:

“What mentors do is that they teach me how the system works and what my responsibilities are, and how I should teach. They give me tips of how to deal with a certain class and how to proceed with teaching. For me, the most important thing about the mentor’s role is to teach me how the system of the school works.”

Mentoring is providing emotional support. Nine of the eighteen participant novice teachers emphasized the emotional support provided to novice teachers as part of

mentoring process. NT3 shared his thoughts by saying:

“The novice teacher shouldn’t be confused about what I should do in this new school. So the mentor provides emotional support to make the novice teacher has a smooth flow in his career in the new school.”

Another novice teacher, NT16 viewed the act of providing emotional support as:

“It is the act through which someone encourages you and gives you hints to teach in a good way and somehow in a perfect way. This person also identifies your mistakes and gaps and tries to mend them.”

Novice Teachers’ Perspectives on Forms of Mentoring Support

Novice teachers when asked about the forms of mentoring support they receive and sources of that support, without any hesitation regarded the head of departments, head of divisions and peers as the main sources of support. In the absence of well-structured mentoring programs at all of the participating schools and unavailability of explicit notification of the persons in charge of the mentoring process, novice teachers tend to recognize the above mentioned three different contributors to mentoring process as their mentors.

Supervisory support of the head of department. All of the eighteen novice teachers participating in the study emphasized the role that a head of department plays in providing mentoring support. The mentoring support provided by the head of departments is mainly academic in nature according to the novice teachers interviewed. The head of department’s role encompasses “guiding the novice teachers”, “conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback” and “holding regular meetings with novice teachers”.

Guiding novice teachers. Twelve out of the eighteen participant novice teachers stressed on the importance of the role the head of departments play in guiding novice teachers. According to NT1 guidance was revealed in practices that elaborate the expectations held for both novice teachers and mentors (head of department and head of division) and introduction to the dynamics of the school system.

“We were welcome and learned our roles as teachers and the expectations of us as teachers. The mentors (head of departments and head of division) told us what they are supposed to be doing as a head of division and a head of department. During the orientation meeting the novice teachers were welcomed and given guidance in the way the school system runs.”

Novice teachers, NT4, NT5, and NT6 talked about the guidance and the support they received from their head of departments in teaching methodologies, implemented procedures and school policies.

Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback. Nine of the eighteen novice teachers participating in the study said they have been observed by their mentors (head of divisions and head of departments). However, most of novice teachers when talking about the mentors' (head of divisions and head of departments') observation of their classrooms refer mainly to the observation that takes place during the demo lessons presented by the novice teachers prior to being hired. Most of these observations were not formative in nature and novice teachers were not given the appropriate feedback that enhances their performance. Only three of the novice teachers reported that they were supported by their mentors and were given clear feedback. Based on missing skills observed at the novice teachers' side, the mentors had provided systematic help on how to improve novice teachers' instructional performance in class.

Another novice teacher (NT14) also reported being observed by her head of department however complained about the observation held being late (second month of school) and not receiving any feedback after the first observation despite her belief that feedback could have been very helpful in guiding her in several academic and non-academic issues.

“...The second time, the coordinator, and the principal observed me. It was much better because they gave their feedback after the observation.”

Observing the given novice teacher earlier during the academic year and giving feedback of the observed missing skills, would have helped the novice teacher's progress, performance in class and would have exempted her from stressful situations.

Holding regular meetings with novice teachers. The entire eighteen participating novice teachers mentioned the frequency of meetings held with the coordinator and emphasized on the importance of issues tackled during the coordination meetings. Almost all of them meet their mentors (head of departments) once per week.

In an attempt to describe the frequency of meetings with the coordinator and the agenda of meeting NT15 said:

“I attend the coordination meeting once per week. She follows up with me: where I reached with the lesson, what the activities I gave are, whether the activities match the objectives and the students’ needs or not, whether the exam questions fit the students’ needs or not. She supports me in every single detail.”

Supervisory support of the head of division. The participating novice teachers informed the researcher that they receive varying degrees of support from their head of divisions in aspects related to classroom management, dealing with learners’ with special need and classroom observation followed by feedback.

Helping the novice teacher in classroom management. Eight of the eighteen novice teacher participants informed the researcher that their head of divisions provide mentoring guidance through helping them in classroom management. NT1 talking about the disciplinary measures she was told to apply with misbehaving students said:

“I am told that you need to give such students a verbal warning first, and then if it doesn’t work, give them a written warning. So there is the Punishment system, but it shouldn’t be given to them all the time. The mentors tell me that they don’t want it to be devalued.... We are supposed to talk to the students quietly, at the eye level and without shouting. We shouldn’t point at them. We shouldn’t label them as well. Also we were given information in case of forgetting to do the homework. Also if the students don’t abide by the uniform or didn’t dress up properly, we should send after their parents.”

Another novice teacher, NT8 emphasized the role the head of division plays in providing support in classroom management.

“Head of the section is responsible for the disciplinary issues. We meet and discuss how to solve such problems. If a student is a newcomer, we discuss how to make him or her cope with his or her classmates. During the process of teaching, if I encounter a problem, I refer to the head of section.”

Introducing novice teachers to cases of learners with special needs. Five of the participating novice teachers said that they had been introduced to cases of learners with special needs however were not guided sufficiently enough on how to deal with those learners. NT2 said she was only told that she would be having learners with special needs in her classroom. She added:

“I got a general idea about their cases. I wasn’t told how to deal with these cases. I was told, for example that X has ADHD and that I have to be careful while dealing with him. I only knew how many hours he would be spending in class and how many hours he would be pulled out. The head of the special needs department had left and I didn’t know who the students’ with special needs were.”

On the other hand, NT3 said:

“I have only three students and I teach one student per session. As for misbehaving students with special needs, I wasn’t given any hints of how to deal with them.”

Novice teachers’ responses depicted a very important fact that due to the insufficient support, they had faced challenging situations in the classroom which hindered the flow of instruction.

Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback. Novice teachers believe that their superiors can be a great source of support by observing their classroom and giving feedback. For the novice teachers receiving formative evaluation and effective feedback was regarded as an opportunity to develop and perform better in class. However, only two of the interviewed novice teachers (NT6 and NT9) were being formatively evaluated by their head of division and given effective feedback.

NT 6 shared the following:

“When the head of division attends my class and gives me an objective evaluation, she helps me a lot by pinpointing my weaknesses and strengths. It would be a chance for me to learn from my own mistakes.”

On the other hand, six of the interviewed novice teachers (NT12, NT13, NT14, NT15, NT17 and NT18) talked about the head of division attending their demo lessons at the beginning of the year and evaluating their performance in that context. The main purpose of observing demo lessons prepared by novice teachers is to assess the weaknesses and strengths of a given teacher. However, observation sessions should be followed up by feedback where the novice teachers are to be guided in developing further their instructional capacities. This was not the case with the interviewed novice teachers.

Collegial support of peers. Twelve out of eighteen novice teachers had been supported by either parallel teachers or more experienced teachers in general. The mentoring support rendered by colleagues was voluntary in nature. Hence, novice teachers agreed on the point that they had been provided support by their colleagues although the latter were not obliged to or mandated to take the responsibility of the mentoring support. NT9 about the voluntary support she had got said:

“When I began teaching, I got Grade One, four sections. So there weren’t any parallel teachers. I used to meet the other teachers I used to discuss teaching issues and the students’ characters and learning abilities. They were very helpful even in classroom management.Even though they weren’t responsible for providing support, they helped me and provided me with new information.... I appreciated their helpfulness”.

On the other hand, one of the novice teachers, NT4 talking about the helpfulness of teachers said that colleagues give support in both academic and non-academic issues

“The teachers are so helpful in making the novice teacher feel at ease when she first comes to school. What I like most in this school is that your coworkers are so helpful. You aren’t left alone. They aid you in everything you want. They just explain for you even without asking them.”

Receiving voluntary ongoing academic and non-academic peer support. Twelve of the novice teachers emphasized the support they had been offered by their peers in both academic and non-academic issues. Two novice teachers, NT7 and NT11 reported the practice of sharing experiences and reflecting on them during the departmental and general meetings held at school.

NT11 stressed on the importance of sharing experiences during general and departmental meetings saying:

“Usually the meetings that we have and all the teachers from all levels come to attend the meeting are of a good help. We meet every two months and we exchange ideas. The ideas are related to everything. In every meeting we discuss a different idea related to a different academic and behavioral issue. This is very helpful.”

On the other hand, NT13 and NT14 discussed the indirect support they had got from their peers during their presence in the teachers’ room. NT14 shared the following:

“Being in the Teachers’ Room among experienced teachers helped me a lot. I listened to them while discussing disciplinary problems and they also helped me a lot in handling misbehaving students. They told me, for example, not to stop at every single step a student does. I should ignore the minute actions that a student does in class as long as he is still not disruptive.”

Novice Teachers’ Perspectives on Supportive Aspects of Mentoring Practices

The participating novice teachers reported that they were offered with various kinds of supportive practices in varying degrees of efficiency and effectiveness. Novice teachers regarded the support they had been rendered during the orientation days as helpful in the process of enculturation in the new school culture. Moreover, they had mentioned that they were provided with support in both academic and non-academic issues.

Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation. Fourteen out of eighteen participating novice teachers found the experiences that they had been exposed to and the

activities they had been engaged in during the orientation days had helped them getting acquainted with the school culture and school personnel. The novice teachers reported that they had been introduced to school mission statement and rules and regulations. Besides, they had attended workshops that covered various topics.

Introducing novice teacher to school mission statement and rules and regulations; introducing novice teacher to staff and key departments. Fourteen out of the eighteen participating novice teachers had gone through some sort of “orientation program” at the onset of their career. To start with, NT1 provided the following detailed description on the importance of the practices held on orientation days in getting introduced to staff and the services rendered by each department.

“... We were welcome and learned our roles and the expectations held for us as teachers. The mentors (head of division and head of department) told us what they are supposed to be doing as a head of division and a head of department. The head of division directed the meeting and for every division whether it is the upper, the middle, or the upper school. There was also an orientation meeting led by the principal who welcomed all the teachers. Such kinds of meetings are held for all of the school for both new and old teachers.....Until last week I can't deny that I have been a little bit confused.... Now I know where I can get the projector from, and where to find the library, and how to use the smart board. Even when it comes to books, I got them from the teachers' resources.”

While NT2 found all of the mentoring practices implemented during the orientation sessions helpful. She informed:

“Actually all of the practices were helpful. The fact that they mix the novice teachers with the old ones was very helpful. During the first meeting, we had to introduce ourselves. It was very nice as I got to meet different teachers. I know the library; it is in the upper floor. I knew where the teachers' room today. ... Today and tomorrow, they are going to teach us how to use the active boards. I think grade 6 has already had it. They are installing it.”

Organizing orientation workshops. Ten out of eighteen novice teachers interviewed informed that they had attended workshops during “orientation days”. Some novice teachers emphasized the topics that were discussed in those workshops had helped

them develop their classroom management skills and improve their teaching strategies.

The topics of the workshops differed from one school to the other.

Another novice teacher, NT6 shared her personal experience mentioning what follows:

“...the administration’s decision on workshop topics is directly related to detected needs or weaknesses in certain areas at the teachers’ side. There are workshops done in the beginning of every year at school that cover different topics. For us, the grades 1 and 2 teachers, we attended workshops about Arts. We use the information that we receive from the workshops to teach our students more effectively. They were very beneficial. Our teaching involves a lot of drawing for students. So because of these workshops, we could draw pictures quickly and effectively.”

Introducing applications and software used at school. Five out of the eighteen novice teacher participants told the researcher that they had been introduced to applications and software used at school. This practice helps the novice teachers in becoming more knowledgeable about the usage of this software and helps them deliver more interesting, more interactive and effective lessons. NT1 mentioned the following:

“During general meeting sessions we were introduced to the software used in lesson planning, entering the grades on the system etc. All our work is technology based because our lesson plans are all made on the internet on software systems.”

Providing ongoing academic support. Novice teachers valued the importance of the academic support they had been given by their mentors (mainly head of departments). They regarded the support that they had got from their head of departments in lesson planning and delivering and construction of assessments as helpful practices. The supportive practices of academic nature are presented in the lines that follow.

Building novice teacher’s instructional capacity through demo lessons. Thirteen out of the eighteen novice teachers interviewed said that they had to prepare a lesson plan and had demo lesson prior to being hired as teachers. Some of these teachers benefited from the feedback of the head of departments and head of divisions given after the

observation. However, the feedbacks given were considered by the majority of the novice teachers as irregular, not very clear and systematic.

NT17 talked in detail about the demonstration lesson she was asked to prepare, the stress she had gone through and feedback of the head of department on the areas that needed improvement.

“...They told me what topic to prepare about and the grade level. Because it was too late and the school was going to start, I had a demo lesson for two subjects Math and Science at the same time. They gave me one period to teach both Math and Science. I divided the period into half to teach both subjects. Honestly, it was a kind of pressure on me because for Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, you need one whole period to achieve one objective. When I finished, the coordinators gave me some notes. They gave me the positive and negative points that they noticed in my class.”

Another novice teacher, NT18 said that she had been given the head of department's remarks about her performance but was not given clear guiding lines for improvement.

“The coordinator commented on the voice tone, my attitude with the students, if I was addressing all the children, how I was using materials, how active I was in class, etc. They asked me if the information I gave was teacher-centered or student-centered.”

Helping in planning and delivering instruction. Thirteen of the eighteen participating novice teachers informed the researcher that they have been supported by their mentor (head of department) in lesson planning and delivery of instruction. NT1 found the practice of being provided with readymade lesson plans very helpful.

While NT2 had a different experience concerning lesson plans. The head of department had a say in each and every aspect of the lesson planning. Based on the novice teachers' responses, it seems to be that the majority of their mentors (head of departments) were very directive and interfering in all aspects of the lesson planning and delivering.

These facts along with being provided by ready-made lesson plans were considered helpful practices by the novice teachers.

NT18 described in details the academic support she has got from her mentor (head of department) saying:

“The coordinator tells me how to ask my students questions. For example, in reading comprehension, she told me that I need to vary my questions. They shouldn’t be direct all the time. I should include critical thinking questions and questions that make students reflect as well.....The coordinator focused on training us about the methods of teaching, group work, ways to explain concepts in different ways, asking questions in varied ways as well.”

Encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation. Eight of the eighteen novice teachers participating in the study said that their mentors (head of departments) encourage them to observe their peers. Novice teachers are aware of the benefits of getting introduced to new methodologies and approaches to teaching while observing. However, they informed the researcher that there was no systematic plan or set schedules that govern the peer observation process. This might hinder the employment of this practice. One of the novice teachers, NT6 shared:

“We are encouraged to observe each other’s classrooms. When there were parallel teachers teaching grade 2, as there were three sections, I had to attend the parallel teacher’s class to check if I am on the right track and if both of us are explaining the same lesson.”

Helping in constructing assessments. Eight of the eighteen novice teachers participating in the study informed the researcher that they are supported by the head of department in getting acquainted with the grading system and the know-how of constructing assessments. NT2 shared the following:

“During faculty meetings, novice teachers are introduced to the grading system: The points given to each item on an assessment, the total grade of a give assessment and the coefficient of each assessment in the total grading system.”

On the other hand, NT13 said that the support rendered to her by the head of department is not limited to the format of the assessment rather it extends to test analysis, and analysis of results. This would help a novice teacher in getting to know her students better and suggest plans for intervention.

“I know from my university how to prepare exams. But here in school, there is a different way in preparing them. So the coordinator helped us a lot in everything related to exams, test analysis, results, books and the guides.”

Providing ongoing non-academic support. Novice teachers reported that besides the academic support that they receive from their mentors (head of departments and head of divisions), they are supported on how to manage their classrooms and how to deal with learners with special needs. In general they are emotionally supported in stressful situations. The rendered support (when available) enhances the emotional wellbeing of the novices and helps them attain better instructional capacities.

Providing support in classroom management. Nine out of the eighteen novice teachers participating in the study told the researcher that they have been supported in classroom management. However, the novice teachers’ responses reveal that most of them receive suggestions and tips on how to deal with students when they encounter problems in the classroom. They are told how the “punishment” or “disciplinary” system works but are never given clear support on how to avoid the occurrence of the disturbing behavior from the beginning.

“...I am told that I need to give misbehaving students a verbal warning first, and then if it doesn’t work, give them a written warning. So there is the Punishment system, but it shouldn’t be given to them all the time.... We are supposed to talk to the students quietly, at the eye level and without shouting. We shouldn’t point at them. We shouldn’t label them as well.

On the other hand, NT9 said that giving oral recommendations are not enough to enhance the classroom management skills of novice teachers. Elaborating further she shared the following:

“They gave me directions about how I should treat children like how I speak to them and how I shouldn’t shout or raise my voice in front of them. Such stuff is very familiar to me. What I need is to learn how to apply the skills I learned in the classroom.”

Providing support on dealing with learners with special needs. Seven out of the eighteen participating novice teachers mentioned that they were supported in how to deal with learners with special needs. However, most of the time the support rendered was restricted to the introduction of novice teachers to the names and cases of the learners’ and very primitive means on how to deal with students with special needs. What the novice teachers needed most was a thorough support on how to deal with the special needs’ learners. NT1 commented:

“...During the orientation days meetings we are introduced to what LD department does and what type of programs they offer for students with learning disabilities. So we are given hints on how to deal with students with special needs....”

Engaging in emotionally supportive practices. In addition to the support given in classroom management and on how to deal with learners with special needs, nine out of the eighteen novice teachers participating in the study said that they had been emotionally supported by their superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) and by their colleagues when they had been going through stressful conditions other than the challenging conditions faced when dealing with misbehaving and special needs learners. One of the novice teachers, NT6 sharing the way she felt at the beginning of the year mentioned:

“In the beginning, I was lost and scared. I used to teach in another school, but this school is different. The atmosphere here is different. ... the mentors (head of

departments and head of divisions) here were emotionally very supportive and helpful. They weren't judgmental at all. I felt I am working in a family atmosphere."

Two novice teachers, NT14 and NT17 informed the researcher that honesty prevails in the interactions that take place between them and their mentors (head of departments) and that they share all their worries and concerns with them. NT17 shared her personal experience saying:

"I am so honest with the coordinator and tell her whatever I am facing. I told her how some teachers told me to do the lesson plan and show it to the coordinator but in the classroom I can do whatever I want. The coordinator told me that I am a teacher as you are. So if you find yourself late with a lesson, tell me. It is not a problem. It happens. I am very flexible."

Finally, NT14 discussing her experience and how supportive her mentor (head of department) was mentioned:

"Once I realized that my parallel teacher was one lesson and half ahead of me and I haven't begun explaining the lesson yet. I got depressed and asked her (parallel teacher) to help me but she wasn't responsive. I asked for the coordinator's help... she relieved me. I told her how I haven't begun the lesson while the other teacher was far ahead of me.... I was really overwhelmed. She soothed me and told me that I am on the right track ... She told me to keep working on the same pace. I really felt better."

Novice Teachers' Perspectives on "Not so helpful" Aspects of Mentoring Practices

The novice teachers when asked about the aspects of mentoring practices that were not so helpful expressed concerns about lack of adequate support in classroom management rendered to novice teachers and the inefficiency of the support given to novice teachers on how to deal with students with special needs.

Lack of support in classroom management. Two of the novice teachers who were not provided sufficient support in classroom management considered this practice as not so helpful mentoring practice. One of those teachers NT2 was not given effective

support in classroom management and was told that she had to solve behavioral problems in her class by herself.

“They tell me that I need to be the authority figure in the classroom. That scares me actually. I have a lot of students with special needs in my classroom. I have about seven students in each class. I have been given hints in classroom management but indirectly.”

Another novice teacher, NT17 shared her experience saying:

“No one gave me any hints about disciplinary issues. Actually, I had some difficulties with students’ misbehaviors and I followed what I know and what I did before. But sure, I lost my voice. I have a very rude and stubborn student in grade 1. He doesn’t listen to my orders and doesn’t abide by any rules I set..... and the head of the division doesn’t meet me and give me any hints.”

Lack of support on how to deal with learners with special needs. On the other hand, there were few novice teachers who faced challenging situations when dealing with learners with special needs. They were neither informed about the presence of learners with special needs in the classroom, nor were introduced to their cases and how to deal with them. NT14, who did not have any clue of the cases and did not know how to cater for learners with special needs, shared the following:

“What I dislike the most was that nobody told me about the students with special cases in my classroom. I have realized that by accident.....We enter the classroom thinking that all students are the same, so when a student shows a remarkable problem in understanding a certain point in the lesson, we realize that there is a problem....”

Another novice teacher, NT15 complained about not having specialists at school guiding them on how to deal with students with special needs. NT15 reported:

“I was not informed about the cases that I had in class. Besides, we don’t have a psychiatrist or a sociologist to help us with the cases. I had a hyper student and we doubted if he had ADHD... the parents were advised to take their son to a specialist and inquire about their son’s case and get a report with recommendations on how to deal with him.”

Similarly NT16 revealed the absence of specialized department at their school that guides teachers in dealing with students with learning difficulties. She said that this fact puts additional stress on the novice teacher who is already overloaded with work and other instructional responsibilities. NT16 elaborated further by saying:

“...The students with learning difficulties are recommended to be followed up by specialist outside school. Then once we receive the report about the case from the specialist, we follow the specialist’s instructions. ...I took a course at the university about approaching students with learning difficulties. But I am not qualified to identify the case and treat it.... It would be effective if the specialist is available most of the time at the school so that you can be in direct contact with her to give you a detailed idea about the student and help you approach this special case. In this way, you don’t have to wait for the report about the student’s case or progress.”

Novice Teachers’ Recommendations on Improving Quality of Mentoring Practices

A remarkable number of novice teachers did not have any recommendations to suggest on improving the mentoring practices implemented at their schools. Surprisingly nine of the participating novice teachers (NT1, NT2, NT4, NT7, NT8, NT9, NT10, NT11 and NT18) refrained from giving specific recommendations for various reasons. Reasons for refraining from giving explicit recommendations included: not having specific recommendations, being too early to suggest a recommendation, or being provided the needed mentoring support. Novice teachers tend to have no clear expectations set for them and those providing them with mentoring support make them unable to decide the areas in the mentoring structure and process that need improvement.

The responses of novice teachers who had clear and explicit recommendations for improvement are presented in the paragraphs that follow. The novice teachers’ recommendations covered the following areas: signing early contract; enhancing peer observation; assigning colleagues as mentors; giving lesser workload for mentors (coordinators); and giving lesser workload for novice teacher.

Signing early contracts with novice teachers. One of the participating novice teachers (NT3) recommended that early contracts be signed with novice teachers and that they to be summoned to school before September to enable them to:

“...know the classroom atmosphere better and help them out with teaching tips and give them information about each student’s background so that they expect clearly about the way to deal with them.”

Encouraging peer observation. Another novice teacher NT6 recommended that novice teachers visit the other sister schools of the school she works at. The aim of the sister schools’ visits is to have peer observations and reflecting on observations. This practice is regarded as supportive since it enhances the instructional performance of the novice teachers. NT6 added: “In this way, we enlarge our mentoring experiences and we benefit from each other’s ideas.”

Assigning colleagues as mentors. To improve the mentoring practices implemented at her school, NT12 recommended that parallel teachers be assigned as mentors to novice teachers. Having parallel teachers as mentors is more helpful because they teach the same grade level and know the grade level curriculum in details compared to a coordinator who most of the time teaches higher grade levels at the schools.

“... What applies to the higher level doesn’t apply to grades 6 and 7. I feel the novice teacher gets more specific and clear directions and information from another teacher who is teaching a parallel class, more than she does from the coordinator or another teacher who is working with higher level classes.”

Giving lesser workload for mentors. In order for mentors (head of departments) to have ample time to conduct formative evaluation of the novice teacher then give effective feedback on the skills observed in the novice’s classroom, NT13 recommends head of departments be given lesser workload and exempt them from teaching duties.

“I prefer that the mentor doesn’t teach. She should be busy helping the novice teacher and attend her classes more frequently to specify the areas of good performance and the areas that need improvement. My coordinator is a devoting person and she is available all the time. But, I will not be the only novice teacher whom she will help. She will have other teachers in the future. So if she will teach and at the same time help us, she will be so exhausted and the new teachers will not be able to benefit from her.”

Giving lesser workload for novice teacher. NT15 describing her exhaustive daily routine and explained that due to incredible workload put on her shoulders, it is infeasible to meet her mentor (head of department) and benefit from the mentoring support that the latter could provide. Hence, she recommends that novice teachers are given lesser workload and responsibilities to enable the implementation of the mentoring support needed. NT15 described her daily routine and shared her recommendation saying:

“We have a lot of pressure on the teacher. By pressure here, I don’t mean pressure in teaching, but the teacher has a lot of tasks to do outside class as well. Sometimes, you can’t have a free period for yourself. You go home with many tasks to do. You have many exams to be corrected, so you need to use your free period to finish your work. So I would address the principal and the coordinator to consider this pressure and put themselves on our shoes because they were teachers like us one day.”

Cumulative Profile of Mentoring Practices from the Novice Teachers’ Perspectives

The third profile presented herein is that of novice teachers. The themes and sub-themes on mentoring and the mentoring practices perceived as important and representative of participants were included in the profile. The novice teacher participants identified particular definitions; forms of mentoring support; mentoring practices implemented at their schools; along with their recommendation for the improvement of current practices were included. These definitions and practices are illustrated in table 8.

Table 8

Novice Teachers’ Perspectives on Mentoring

Novice Teachers’ Perspectives on Definition of Mentoring	Novice Teachers N=18
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Mentoring is support given to a novice teacher by guiding	12
Mentoring is providing academic support	11
Mentoring is providing emotional support	9
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Novice Teachers' Perspectives on Forms of mentoring	
Supervisory support of the head of department	18
Guiding novice teachers	12
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback	9
Holding regular meetings with novice teachers	18
Supervisory support of the head of division	8
Helping the novice teacher in classroom management	8
Introducing novice teachers to cases of learners with special needs	5
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback	9
Collegial support of peers	12
Receiving voluntary ongoing academic and non-academic peer support	12
<hr/>	
Novice Teachers' Perspectives on Supportive aspects of Mentoring Practices	
Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation	14
Introduction of school mission statement and rules and regulations; introduction of novice teachers to staff and key departments	14
Organizing orientation workshops	10
Introducing to applications and software used at school	5
Providing ongoing academic support	10
Building novice teacher's instructional capacity through demo lessons	13
Helping in planning and delivering instruction	13
Encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation	8
Helping in constructing assessments	8
Providing ongoing non-academic support	9
Providing support in classroom management	9
Providing support on dealing with learners with special needs	7
Engaging in emotionally supportive practices	9
Novice Teachers' Recommendations on Improving mentoring Practices	5
Signing early contracts with novice teachers	1
Encouraging peer observation	1
Assigning colleagues as mentors	1
Giving lesser workload for mentors	1
Giving lesser workload for novice teacher	1

Comparison between Principals', Mentors' and Novice Teachers' Themes

Based on the comparative analysis, there appeared to be many areas of similarity between the perspectives of principals, mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and novice teachers. Principals, mentors and novice teachers agreed on a great number of characteristics of definition of mentoring and some characteristics revealed in the structural arrangements that are considered supportive of the mentoring process. However, they seemed to disagree on some forms of the mentoring support and some sub characteristics of the practices that were considered helpful and enhancing of the mentoring process. There appeared to be differences in the weight of their responses reflecting distinctions in the way they perceived the nature of these characteristics. Moreover, there were a few remarkable differences in the sub-themes of some categories. The results of the comparison between the perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers are presented below (Tables 9 and 10).

Table 9

A Comparison between the Perspectives of Principals, Mentors and Novice Teachers Models of the Perceived Themes (frequency of responses)

Themes	Principals N=7	Mentors N=15	Novice Teachers N=18
Perspectives on Mentoring			
Mentoring is support given to a novice teacher by guiding	7	10	12
Perspectives on Forms of Mentoring			
Supervisory support of the head of department	7	14	18
Supervisory support of the head of division	7	7	8
Collegial support of peers	*	*	12
Structural arrangements supportive of mentoring practices	3	7	9
Perspectives on Supportive Aspects of Mentoring practices			
Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation	7	12	14
Providing ongoing academic support	6	8	10
Providing ongoing non-academic support	7	7	9

Participants' Recommendations			
Recommendations on Improving Mentoring practices	6	13	6

* Category is non-existent

Table 10

A Comparison between the Perspectives of Principals, Mentors and Novice Teachers Models of the Perceived Sub-Themes (frequency of responses)

Sub- Themes	Principals N=7	Mentors N=15	Novice Teachers N=18
Mentoring is support given to a novice teacher by guiding			
Mentoring is providing academic support	7	15	11
Mentoring is providing non-academic support	7	11	*
Mentoring is providing emotional support	5	9	9
Mentoring is helping novice teacher build skills to improve	1	*	*
Supervisory support of the head of department			
Guiding novice teachers	5	10	12
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback	6	9	9
Holding regular meetings with novice teachers	*	9	18
Designating specific teachers to mentor novice teachers	*	7	*
Supervisory support of the head of division			
Helps the novice teacher in classroom management	7	7	8
Introduces the novice teachers to cases of learners with special needs	3	*	5
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback	5	12	9
Collegial support of peers			
Receiving voluntary ongoing academic and non-academic peer support	*	*	12
Structural arrangements supportive of mentoring practices			
Assigning lower workload for mentor	3	*	*
Offering incentives to mentor	3	7	*
Deciding on criteria for mentor selection	*	1	*
Facilitating collegial relationship	*	7	*
Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation			
Introduction of school mission statement and rules and regulations; introduction of novice teachers to staff and key departments	7	12	14
Organizing orientation workshops	7	7	10
Introducing applications and software used at school	*	5	5
Providing ongoing academic support			

Building novice teacher's instructional capacity through demo lessons	4	9	13
Helping in planning and delivering instruction	6	9	13
Encouraging and monitoring the progress of novice teacher by observing and reflecting on observations	6	7	2
Encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation	3	8	8
Helping in constructing assessments	*	6	8
Helping in checking on and evaluating students' academic performance	*	6	*
Providing novice teachers with previously prepared lesson plans	*	6	*
Providing ongoing non-academic support			
Providing support in classroom management	4	7	9
Providing support on dealing with learners with special needs	3	6	7
Engaging in emotionally supportive practices	5	6	9
Recommendations on Improving Mentoring practices			
Signing early contracts with novices	2	1	1
Developing effective mentoring programs	2	2	*
Giving lesser workload for mentors	2	6	1
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback more frequently	*	2	*
Organizing more of skill building workshops	*	2	*
Encouraging peer observation	*	*	1
Assigning colleagues as mentors	*	*	1
Giving lesser workload for novice teacher	*	*	1

* Category is non-existent

Mentoring is support given to a novice teacher by guiding. All participating principals (seven in number), ten out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and twelve out of the eighteen novice teachers defined mentoring as the support given to a novice teacher through guiding. Moreover, there was a total agreement between all participating principals (seven in number) and all mentors (fourteen head of departments and one head of division) on the point that mentors (mainly head of departments) provide academic support for the novice teacher. Similarly, eleven out of eighteen novice teachers agreed that mentors' (head of departments') main task is providing academic support for the novice teacher. On the other hand, all participating

principals (seven in number) and eleven out of fifteen mentors (mainly head of departments) emphasized on the non-academic support rendered to novice teachers while this aspect was not brought up by any novice teachers and there was a huge inconsistency in defining mentoring by novices as providing non-academic support. Hence, when asked about their definitions of mentoring, novice teachers emphasized on the notion of mentoring as the academic support provided to novices that help them in the instructional process and performance in class. Five out of seven principals, nine out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and nine out of eighteen novice teachers focused on the point that novice teachers are emotionally supported by their mentors (head of departments and head of divisions).

Supervisory support of the head of department. There was a total alignment between all of the participating principals (seven in number), fourteen out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions), and all participating novice teachers (eighteen in number) that a head of department plays a major role as mentor in providing academic support for the novice teacher. Five out of seven principals, ten out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and twelve out of eighteen novice teachers stressed on the point that a head of department plays in guiding novice teachers. While six out of seven principals, nine out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and nine out of eighteen novice teachers found that a head of department's one of the main supervisory tasks is conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback to guide the novice teacher and help enhancement of the latter's performance in class. All the three participant groups seemed to agree in theory that conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback is one of the formal responsibilities held by the head of department. The analyzed data show that principals tend to limit the

role of the head of departments to guiding and conducting formative evaluation and providing feedback. Mentors and novice teachers emphasize the role that mentors (head of departments) play in structural arrangement that help implementation of supportive practices. Supervisory mentoring practices held by the head of departments such as holding regular meetings with novice teachers and designating specific teachers to mentor novice teachers were totally absent from the perspectives of the participating principals. This absence most probably is due to the fact that principals underestimate the mentoring support rendered by colleagues. Hence, based on this belief principals refrain from including “designation of specific teachers (colleagues) to mentor novice teachers” as one of the supervisory mentoring practices that a head of department might get engaged in. However, nine out of the fifteen mentors and all participant novice teachers (eighteen in number) regard the task of head of departments holding regular meetings with novice teachers as one of the practices that enhance interaction between novice teachers and mentors(head of departments) and serves as means of interaction that help the head of departments convey supportive practices.

Supervisory support of the head of division. All of the seven principals, seven out of fifteen mentors ((head of departments and head of divisions) and only eight out of eighteen participant novice teachers found that a school’s head of division has an effective part in providing mentoring support to the novice teacher. Principals, mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and novice teachers, with varying weights, reported that this support is shown through the head of division’s engagement in practices that encourage and enhance novice teachers’ progress through conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback to the novice teachers (six out of seven principals compared to nine out of fifteen mentors and nine out of eighteen novice teachers). In addition to conducting

formative evaluation and giving feedback, head of divisions' tasks include helping novice teachers in their classroom management. Hence, all participant principals (seven in number), seven out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and eight out of eighteen novice teachers regard the role that a head of division plays in helping a novice teacher in classroom management as a crucial role. Differences between principals', mentors' and novice teachers' views on the point that a head of division introduces novice teachers to cases of students with special needs were obvious. Three out of the seven participant principals and five out of eighteen novice teachers regarded the task of introducing learners with special need is performed by the head of division. However, the head of division's supervisory support revealed in the form of introducing novice teachers to learners with special need was not brought up by any mentor (head of departments and head of divisions). Due to lack of implementation of effective mentoring programs, absence of job descriptions of different personnel engaged in providing supportive practices and ambiguity in where one personnel's job starts and where it ends bring about discrepancies in the views held among different participating groups.

Collegial support of peers. There was a remarkable disagreement in the views between principals, mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and novice teachers regarding the voluntary mentoring practices that take place at schools when more experienced teachers support novice teachers without being assigned that responsibility. Twelve out of eighteen novice teachers confirm the importance and value of the collegial support that they receive from colleagues on both academic and non-academic issues. Surprisingly, all the principals (seven in number) and mentors (fourteen head of departments and one head of division) seem to overlook the collegial support of peers. It is interesting to know that when principals and mentors (fourteen head of departments and

one head of division) state the forms of mentoring support, they disregard the voluntary collegial support as one form of support. Both principals and mentors tend to focus on forms of mentoring support of those (head of departments and head of divisions) assigned formal supervisory roles in the school.

Structural arrangements supportive of mentoring practices. School administrations are responsible for making some structural arrangements that govern the dynamics of the mentoring process and might enhance the implementation of the supportive practices. Deciding on lower workload for mentors, providing incentives to peers who mentor novices, and deciding on criteria for mentor selection might help the performance of novice teacher and encourage the positive contribution of peers to the mentoring process implemented at schools.

This aspect was highlighted by three out of seven principals and seven out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions). Participating principals' and mentors' groups held different views on the structural arrangements made at their schools and the impact they leave on the enhancement of the mentoring practices and eventually the development of novice teachers' performance.

Three out of seven principals compared to seven out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) revealed that various forms of incentives are given to teachers both novice and more experienced teachers. On the other hand, there was a huge discrepancy in the views between principals and mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) regarding the workload of a mentor (head of department/ mentor colleague). While three out of seven principals admitted that they give lesser workload to mentors (coaches, parallel teachers), mentors (head of departments) complained about being overloaded with teaching responsibilities besides mentoring and coordinating duties.

On the other hand, there was a huge discrepancy in the views between principals and mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) regarding the workload of a mentor (head of department/ mentor colleague) and incentives given to both mentors (head of department/ mentor colleague) and more experienced teachers. These notions were absent in the novice teachers' perspectives. This discrepancy might be due to lack of concern or knowledge from the novice teachers' side concerning the structural arrangements governing mentor related issues.

Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation. There was alignment between principals (seven out of seven), mentors (twelve out of fifteen) and novice teachers' (fourteen out of eighteen) perspectives on the supportive practices that are held on during the orientation days. Predominantly the introduction of novice teachers to school mission statement, rules and regulations, staff and key departments was considered one set of the main supportive practices implemented at school that would help integration of novice teachers in the school system and culture. Novice teachers once they feel integrated into the school community and develop a sense of belonging, tend to feel more at ease and consequently achieve better performance in academic and non-academic aspects. Moreover, all of the seven participant principals, seven out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and fourteen out of eighteen novice teachers confirmed that a set of workshops are organized for both novice and more experienced teachers. The topics of workshops most of the time are general and target the audience of both novice and experienced teachers, However, some of these workshops address topics related to classroom management, teaching strategies, assessment tools etc. might be beneficial to novice teachers in a sense that they aim at the professional development of the novice teachers and improvement of teachers' performance in the classroom context.

Providing ongoing academic support. The supportive mentoring practices that are characterized by their academic nature are mainly provided by the head of departments. This aspect of academic support help the professional development of novice teachers by: building novice teachers' instructional capacity; conducting formative evaluation and providing the novices with feedback; helping the novice teachers in planning and delivering instruction; encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation; helping in constructing assessments; and introducing novices to applications and software used at school. Four out of seven principals, nine out of fifteen mentors (mainly head of departments) and thirteen out of eighteen novice teachers regarded the practice of giving feedback after a demo lessons presented by a novice teacher as supportive practice that builds the novice teacher's instructional capacity. Principals and mentors aiming at knowing the skills of the novice teachers and providing support in underdeveloped areas confirmed that they ask their novice teachers to present "demo lessons" when they apply for a teaching job at school. Novice teachers said that they were asked to prepare a lesson plan with specific objectives and presented in front of students or a group of administrative staff such as the head of department, the head of division and other teachers. However, the objectives of holding such practice and the purpose it serves were not very clear to novice teacher especially when they were not provided with effective feedback.

Based on the responses of six out of seven principals and eight out of fifteen mentors (mainly head of departments), mentors (mainly head of departments) engage in academically supportive practices that include helping novices in planning and delivering instruction, encouraging novices' progress by conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback and encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation. On the other

hand, differences were obvious with regards to the mentor's (head of department) role in helping a novice teacher in constructing assessments and checking on and evaluating students' academic performance. These practices were mentioned by six out of fifteen mentors (mainly head of departments) as enhancing the performance of the novice teachers in classroom yet not brought up by any principal. These practices being very detailed in nature and very specific to the practices a head of department is engaged in had most probably made the principals overlook their importance in providing mentoring support to novice teachers.

Moreover, according to six out of seven principals, nine out of fifteen mentors (mainly head of departments) and thirteen out of eighteen novice teachers, novice teachers are supported in lesson planning and delivery of instruction. Despite the moderate alignment between principals' and novice teachers' perspectives on the importance of the supporting practice revealed in the form of helping novice teachers in planning and delivering instruction, yet discrepancies occurred with respect to other academically supportive practices such as helping and guiding novices in construction of assessments and were recognized by eight out of eighteen novice teachers respectively yet were overlooked by principals. On the other hand, six out of seven principals, seven out of fifteen mentors (mainly head of departments) and two out of eighteen novice teachers considered the process of conducting formative evaluation followed by effective feedback as one of the important academically supportive practice that helps novice teacher's progress and performance in the classroom. This practice entails head of departments and head of divisions observing novice teachers classrooms and share their feedback by reflecting on the observed sessions with the novice teachers themselves. This practice was explicitly mentioned by only two of the novice teachers as being supportive.

Three out of seven principals, eight out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and eight out of eighteen novice teachers revealed that the practice of peer observation is encouraged at their schools. Besides, six out of fifteen mentors (mainly head of departments) and eight out of eighteen novice teachers confirmed the point that head of departments help the novice teachers in construction of assessments.

Providing ongoing non-academic support. The data collected show that all the participating principals (seven in number), seven out of fifteen participating mentors (head of departments and head of divisions), and nine out of eighteen novice teachers reported that various non-academic supportive practices are implemented at their schools. The non-academic support includes supportive practices rendered to help the novice teacher in the classroom context such as providing support in classroom management with misbehaving learners and helping in dealing with learners with special needs. Moreover, a novice teacher is provided with emotional support when dealing with stressful situations not necessarily related to learners' behavior in class. There is discrepancy in the responses given by different groups of participant. Five out of seven principals reported that their novice teachers are provided emotional support while only six out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and nine out of eighteen novice teachers reported that they had been supported emotionally by their superiors. Moreover, the results show that twelve out of eighteen novice teachers acknowledge the emotional support they receive from their peers. This shows that novice teachers are emotionally supported more by their peers compared to being supported by their superiors. Hence, novice teachers are rendered collegial support through daily close interaction with their peers in different contexts. This helps novice teachers feel accepted and excel in instructional tasks.

Recommendations on improving mentoring practices. Twenty four out of forty participants participating in the study had recommendations on aspects that need to be improved that in their opinion enhance the betterment of the implemented mentoring practices. The recommendations covered issues related to giving lesser workload for mentors, signing early contracts with novice teachers, developing effective mentoring programs, conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback more frequently, organizing more of skills building workshops, encouraging peer observation, assigning colleagues as mentors and giving lesser workload for novice teachers. The number of responses given for each recommendation is presented in the lines below.

Giving lesser workload for mentors. To start with, recommendations for giving lesser workload for mentors (specifically head of departments) were suggested by two out of seven principals, six out of fifteen mentors and one out of eighteen novice teachers. All participants recommended reduced workload for mentors (head of departments) for the purpose of enabling the latter's more efficient contribution in the process of mentoring support.

Signing early contracts with novice teachers. Two out of seven principals, one out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions), and one out of eighteen novice teacher recommended that contracts be signed with novice teachers at the end of a given scholastic year and in the preparatory period for the coming academic year. Hence, participants believe that novices are to be introduced to school not at the onset of a new academic year but rather at the end of the previous year. This aspect was mentioned by participants in the three different groups. Although "signing early contracts" is not considered as supportive mentoring practice, but the fact that it is being mentioned by all groups makes us stop at it and search for the reason behind it. Although great number of

research participants report that the activities they engage in during the orientation days enhance the enculturation process, but the recommendations reveal that most probably the period of time given to enculturation practices is not enough and the activities are not efficient in successfully integrating novice teachers in the school culture.

Developing effective mentoring programs. Two out of seven principals and two out of fifteen mentors (1 head of department and 1 head of division) recommend that mentoring programs develop further at private schools in Beirut. The participants emphasized on the need for formalized mentoring practices that clearly mention the responsibilities of mentors and criteria for mentor selection. The institutionalization of the mentoring practices would enhance the implantation of more effective and helpful mentoring practices which consequently would help in the professional growth of all school staff.

Organizing more of skill building workshops. Two out of fifteen participating mentors (both head of departments) recommended the organization of more workshops with varied topics distributed on all over the academic year. Besides, the preparation and delivery of such workshops has to be done by specialists to achieve the desired progress in the novice teachers' performance.

Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback more frequently. Two mentors out of fifteen (both head of departments) recommended head of departments in the process of monitoring novice teachers' work and encouraging progress and improvement, conduct systematic formative evaluation and giving feedback more frequently.

Encouraging peer observation. One out of eighteen novice teachers recommended that practice of peer observation be employed in a more systematic way with effective feedback and discussion session following the observation session where teachers reflect on their observations. She had doubts on the efficiency of the current peer observation practices in the enhancement the professional growth of the novice teacher.

Assigning colleagues as mentors. One out of eighteen novice teachers recommended that a mentor colleague formally assigned to occupy the role of the mentor. Here as well the need for more formalized mentoring practices is brought forward. The mentor colleague who teaches the same grade level as the novice teacher would be more helpful compare to the mentor (head of department) in supporting and following up more regularly the novice teacher.

Giving lesser workload for novice teachers. One out of eighteen novice teachers recommended that novice teachers are given lesser workload. Due to the fact that novice teachers are overloaded with task and responsibilities, they are not able to meet their mentors (head of departments and mentor colleagues) regularly and the novice teacher is not benefiting as expected from the support provided. Here as well the need of institutionalization and documentation of the mentoring practices would help the implementation of those practices properly.

Grounded Model of Mentoring Practices

The researcher presents below a ‘grounded model’ emerging from the Lebanese context and which captures all the participants’ perspectives. The grounded model is constructed by comparing the themes (and sub-themes) across the three cumulative models (principals’, mentors’ and teachers’) and by taking into consideration the themes that have

been common across all the three models and which are representative of each participating group's perspectives.

To sum up, the grounded model of mentoring practices includes main (general) themes adopted from principals', mentors' and novice teachers' cumulative models and built based on their perspectives. Most of these themes are manifested in a number of practices (sub-themes) and have been selected for inclusion in the grounded model. The themes mentioned by all participant groups as well as themes exclusive to a specific group were included to ensure the inclusion of all perspectives and representation of each group. Table 11 shown below includes the major themes and sub-themes that form the model of supportive mentoring practices grounded in the experiences of Lebanese principals, mentors and teachers.

Table 11

Grounded Model of Mentoring Practices

Definition of Mentoring

Mentoring is support given to a novice teacher by guiding

Mentoring is providing academic support

Mentoring is providing non-academic support

Mentoring is providing emotional support

Forms of Mentoring Support

Supervisory support of the head of department

Guides novice teachers

Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback

Holding regular meetings with novice teachers

Designating specific teachers to mentor novice teachers

Supervisory support of the head of division

Helps the novice teacher in classroom management

Introduces the novice teachers to cases of learners with special needs

Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback

Mentoring from colleagues

Receiving voluntary ongoing academic and non-academic peer support.

Structural arrangements supportive of mentoring practices

Assigning lower workload for mentor

Offering incentives to mentor
Facilitating collegial relationship

Supportive Aspects of Mentoring Practices

Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation

Introducing school mission statement and rules and regulations; introducing novice teachers to staff and key departments
Introducing applications and software used at school
Organizing skill building workshops

Providing ongoing academic support

Building novice teacher's instructional capacity through demo lessons.
Helping in Planning and delivering instruction.
Encouraging and monitoring the progress of novice teacher by observing and reflecting on observations.
Encouraging peer observation and reflection on observation
Helping in constructing Assessments
Helping in checking on and evaluating students' academic performance.
Providing novice teachers with previously prepared lesson plans

Providing ongoing non-academic support

Providing support in classroom management
Providing support on dealing with learners with special needs
Engaging in emotionally supportive practices

Recommendations on Improving Mentoring Practices

Signing early contracts with novices
Developing effective mentoring programs
Giving lesser workload for mentors
Conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback more frequently
Organizing more of skill building workshops
Encouraging peer observation
Assigning colleagues as mentors
Giving lesser workload for novice teacher

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, a qualitative research design and methods were used to collect and analyze data to construct a model of supportive mentoring practices stemming from the participants perspectives at each of the nine participating schools. The research questions used helped the researcher uncover specific data regarding the perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers on the mentoring practices implemented in nine private schools in Beirut. This chapter reports: comparisons between novice teachers', mentors' and principals' perspectives and reveals the emerging differences; presents a discussion of the results based on a comparison with the literature; conclusions, and recommendations for practice and research are offered.

Comparing the Perspectives of Principals, Mentors and Novice Teachers

The comparison drawn between the perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers regarding definition of mentoring, some forms of mentoring support and some helpful mentoring practices shows a general alignment of their perspectives. However, further analysis of the results reveals that different groups of participants show limited agreement on some of the points and clear discrepancy in others. In this section, the discussion examines the "Areas of agreement" and "Areas of discrepancy" in the perspectives of different groups of participants.

Areas of agreement in perspectives

The three participating groups agree on the "Definition of Mentoring". All parties agree on the theme and the sub-themes that constitute the definition of mentoring. All agree that mentoring consists of guiding novice teachers in academic and non-academic issues. Moreover, all participating groups agree on the structure of mentoring support. All

parties approve of the fact a novice teacher is rendered both academic and non-academic support mainly by the head of department (coordinator) and the head of division.

Areas of discrepancy in perspectives

Despite the agreement on several points, the findings of this study show discrepancies in the perspectives of principals, mentors and novice teachers with respect to mentoring support provided to novice teachers by peers (collegial support of peers), purpose of workshops delivered, and some helpful mentoring practices. These discrepancies are demonstrated in three main ways: some of the areas are mentioned by the novice teachers but not by the principals and/or mentors (head of departments and head of divisions), some are mentioned by the principals and/or mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) but not by the novice teachers and others were points that principals, mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and novice teachers mentioned but described differently.

Areas overlooked by principals. Analysis of data shows that there are aspects of mentoring support that the principals have completely or partially overlooked. There was a remarkable disagreement in the views between principals and novice teachers regarding the collegial support of peers that takes place at schools. Twelve out of eighteen of the novice teachers confirm the importance and value of the support that they receive from colleagues on both academic and non-academic issues. Surprisingly, all the principals seem to overlook the collegial support rendered to novice teachers by their peers.

Areas overlooked by principals related to the mentor's role and supportive practices. Participating principals overlooked other aspects related to the role and supportive practices a mentor (mainly head of department) is engaged in. These include some aspects that characterize the role of the head of department (coordinator) in "holding

regular meetings with teachers” and “assigning designated teachers to mentor novice teacher”. They also overlooked some of the aspects that were considered by mentors (mainly head of departments) and novice teachers as academically supportive practices such as: “mentors’(head of departments’) support in the construction of assessment” and “help the novice teacher in checking on and evaluating students’ academic performance”.

To begin with, the principals completely overlooked all the aspects that novice teachers regarded as collegial support presented by their peers. Comparing the principals’ and novice teachers’ perspectives, it’s very surprising to see that while none of the principals regarded as important the collegial support provided by peers, twelve out of the eighteen novice teachers described many aspects of the collegial support they had received from their peers. Moreover, all the participating principals overlooked the academic support a mentor (mainly head of department) renders a novice teacher in the form of “support in the construction of assessment” and “help the novice teacher in checking on and evaluating students’ academic performance”.

Areas viewed differently. Furthermore, sometimes even when principals, mentors and novice teachers seem to agree on some points, their different interpretations of these points draw completely different views. This is apparent in two main points: the way principals, mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and novice teachers perceived the support given in dealing with learners with special needs and the way they viewed the support given or received. First, three out of the seven principals mentioned that they support the novice teacher in introducing them to the students with special needs. Principals did not mention any academic or non-academic strategies implemented at schools to help the novice teacher deal with the cases. On the other hand, the mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) had a different view. Mentors said that novice

teachers are helped in modification of assessments given to students with special needs and strategies on how to deal with students with special needs. While novice teachers mentioned that they are introduced to cases with special needs but most of the time they are not given the tools on how to deal with disruptive behavior or case. Second, the principals and mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) view workshops and the purpose of organizing workshops differently than novice teachers. All participating principals (seven in number), seven out of fifteen mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and ten out of eighteen novice teachers agree on the point that workshops are held at the beginning of the year to help teachers in various academic areas. The novice teachers put emphasis on the workshops held at the beginning of the year during orientation days. It is worth mentioning here that not all the topics of workshops held at the beginning of the year are exclusively planned to meet the novice teachers' needs. However, principals and mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) agree on the fact that the delivery of workshops is not restricted to the orientation days but are held during the year as well. According to the participating mentors (mainly head of departments), the topics of workshops are decided upon the teachers' needs and based on the classroom observations both the head of departments and head of divisions have during the year.

Discussion of the Participants' Perspectives and Comparison with Literature

This section discusses the perspectives of principals, mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) and novice teachers through highlighting on how they conceive mentoring, the forms of mentoring support available at their schools and the mentoring practices implemented at their schools. To provide a deeper view of the implications these perspectives carry, aspects such as definition of mentoring, forms of mentoring and

mentoring practices depicted in this study will be compared to what has been found in the literature.

Definition of mentoring. Participating school principals were asked to provide the researcher with the documented procedures that validate the school practices directed at supporting novice teachers as they enter the teaching profession. The aim of this demand was to identify the formal and institutionalized support novice teachers receive at the onset of their career and to locate the person assigned the job of rendering that support (mentor). Seven of the participating principals admitted that they don't have institutionalized mentoring programs applied at their schools. However, all of the interviewed principals shared the fact that their head of departments and head of divisions play the role of mentor who supports novice teachers. Moreover, only one principal informed the researcher that besides the head of departments and head of divisions, colleague mentors are assigned to help the novices on one to one basis. This principal shared with the researcher some documents describing the role and responsibilities held by colleague mentor. On the other hand, two principals willingly shared the formalized supervisory job description of their head of departments and head of divisions due to the fact that they are regarded as the mentors for the novice teachers.

Based on the reviewed literature mentoring is defined as a one-to-one relationship between a more experienced member (mentor) and a less experienced member (mentee) of the profession. The relationship is developed to promote the professional and personal growth of the mentee through training, support, and guidance. Through personalized attention and providing emotional support, the mentor transfers needed information, feedback, and encouragement to the mentee (Noe, 1991). A documented and formalized concept of a more experienced teacher rendering the mentoring support on one to one

basis to a novice teacher is totally absent in the practices depicted at the schools under study.

Mentoring, supervision and induction. One aspect of the findings unique to the research context is that the participating principals tend to use the terms supervising, coordinating and mentoring interchangeably. Hence, they don't realize the difference between mentoring as a function and approach used when the mentoring support is delivered and the formalized supervisory roles held by the head of department (coordinators). Moreover, due to the lack of documented procedures of institutionalized mentoring programs and lack of explicit definition of who the mentor is and what specific duties and responsibilities his/her job description encompasses, the participants in this research study tend to regard any personnel who provides the novices with support as "mentor".

Another aspect of finding unique to the research context is that the participants tend to understand "mentoring supportive practices" and "induction practices" as being the same. Hence, when participants were asked about the mentoring support that they had received on the onset of their career, they went back to the first day that they had applied to school and volunteered to present the practices that they considered helpful from that moment and on. For example, some practices that take place during the "orientation days" and most of the time principals are engaged in were regarded by the participants as "mentoring support" and included them in the list of helpful support.

The current study is a qualitative study which was designed based on the guidelines of the constructivist grounded theory. Grounded theorists emphasize what people are doing and the meanings of their actions, such as their intentions; their own stated explanations; and their implicit, taken-for-granted assumptions (Charmaz, 2006).

Hence, the researcher having these assumptions in mind played the role of the messenger in conveying participants' explanations and assumptions as truly as possible. As long as the participants were successfully able to connect their suggested supportive practices to mentoring, those practices were considered by the researcher "mentoring support" even though some of those practices prevail more in "induction programs".

Forms of mentoring support. A closer look at the forms of mentoring support rendered shows aspects that are unique to the experiences of the novice teachers in this context. First, the support provided to novice teachers is offered by group of personnel members who carry out the different functions which may even sometimes overlap. This includes, in addition to the principal, head of department, head of division and peers. Hence, the above mentioned personnel or staff contributes to the process of supporting novice teachers. Each member might play different yet complementary role.

The reviewed literature described two forms of mentoring support that enhance the development of the novice teachers on the professional and emotional levels. These include the supervisory support of the superiors and the collegial support of colleagues.

Supervisory support of the head of division and head of department. Drago-Severson's (2004b) "The learning oriented model of school leadership" focuses on the role that a school supervisor (head of divisions and head of departments in the context of the schools under study) can play in reinforcing developmental practices that can support adult learning and growth. Moreover, it illuminates the crucial role of school supervisor (head of division and head of departments) in reframing more collaborative structures in schools as developmental opportunities for adults to engage in reflection and shared dialogue in the process of professional and personal growth. Moreover, Glickman (2004) in his theory of "Developmental approach to supervision" focuses on the role that

supervisors play in: providing direct support to novice teachers in several forms such as mentoring and clinical supervision; and providing professional development opportunities to novice teachers. Hence, the reviewed literature focused on the role that a supervisor plays in encouraging the formation of collegial teams; encouraging dialogue critical reflection between peers; assigning mentors; clinical supervision and providing professional development opportunities.

Based on the collected data, school supervisors (head of divisions and head of departments) are engaged in some practices that are similar to the practices mentioned by the theories presented Drago-Severson (2004b) and Glickman (2004). Several of the above mentioned aspects of the superior's support mentioned in the literature seem to align with the findings of this study. The practices include: guiding novice teachers, making structural arrangement that govern the mentoring practices, conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback, providing on-going academic and non-academic support, and providing opportunities for professional development. Despite this alignment, there is a certain aspect that emerged from the findings that seem to be unique to the research context. This aspect includes: contradictory perspectives on the efficiency of the practices that enhance novice teachers' professional development. Based on the review of the literature, "Professional development" refers to any practice that leads to the improvement of a teacher's instructional skills. Glickman and his colleagues (2001) define "professional development" as "any experience that enlarges a teacher's knowledge, appreciation, skills, and understandings of his or her work".

Based on the collected data participating principals and mentors (head of departments and head of divisions) found that there are three main supportive practices that enhance the professional development of the novice teachers. These practices

according to the findings are: encouraging peer observation, organizing skill building workshops and conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback. According to six principals and eight mentors they encourage observation of novices the classroom of more experienced teachers then meet to reflect on the observed session. This can only suggest that although some principals and superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) believe in the importance of peer observation and the role it plays in the novice teacher's professional development, this practice seems to be limited to mere encouragement of the novice teachers in the absence of the institutionalized practices of structured peer observing practices.

Moreover, six participating principals and seven head of departments believe that they help in the professional development of their novice teachers by observing teachers' performance, then assessing the needs of the novice teachers and introducing a plan of action for improvement. However, only two of the novice teachers admit that they receive this kind of evaluation. The data collected show that the majority of novice teachers didn't have a clear idea on the purpose of these observations held and had not received an effective feedback.

On the other hand, seven principals and seven head of departments and head of divisions confirmed when organizing workshops at the beginning of the year they try to introduce topics useful to novice teachers such as "classroom management", "assessment tools" etc. Moreover, they organize workshops that introduce topics that address specific needs that were detected during demo lessons and classroom observations. Data collected revealed that the workshop topics do not necessarily target the novice teachers' needs or interests but they tackle more general topics relevant to a diverse audience.

In brief the novice teachers' superiors, though perceiving themselves as playing the role of mentor, seem to offer limited support when their practices targeting professional development of teachers and their efficiency of the practices are compared with what is documented in the literature under providing support for novice teachers.

Collegial support of peers. Twelve of the novice teachers confirmed the importance and value of the collegial support that they receive from colleagues on both academic and non-academic issues. Based on literature, according to Fantilli and McDougall, (2009) the presence of cooperative and experienced colleagues who teach the same grade level and with whom novice teachers have informal mentorship relations constitutes helpful source of support for novice teachers. However, there was a remarkable disagreement in the views between principals, superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) and novice teachers regarding the collegial support that takes place at schools. Surprisingly, all the principals and superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) seem to overlook the collegial support novice teachers receive from their peers.

Based on the data collected superiors (head of departments) don't regard collegial support provided by peers as one form of mentoring support provided at their schools. However, seven (head of departments) out of the fifteen mentor participants mentioned their input in designating parallel teachers and coaches to novice teachers. Moreover, data collected show that superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) who are overloaded by work, depend highly on the contribution that colleagues bring to the mentoring process of the novice. Superiors' (mainly head of departments') responses show that they rely on the peers' mentoring support in both academic and non-academic aspects of mentoring. This aspect is very unique finding to the Lebanese context where although superiors (mainly head of departments') rely highly on peer mentoring support yet don't

admit of its importance and its being one form of mentoring support when asked explicitly.

Structural arrangements of the mentoring practices. Due to the absence of documented and formalized procedures that govern the mentoring process, the researcher realized an ambiguity and lack of clarity in the participants' responses related to the structural arrangement governing the mentoring process. Based on the data collected there are some efforts made by some principals and superiors (head of departments) to provide some practices that are structural in nature which enhance the implementation of mentoring practices. Structural arrangement related to mentors' (peers) workload, criteria of mentor selection, offered incentives, and collegial relationships were brought forward by the participants.

Based on the literature reviewed, the presence of specific characteristics such as: adopting clear criteria for selecting mentors; providing incentives to mentors; matching mentors with mentees and training of mentors enhance the success and effective implementation of mentoring programs.

Criteria for selecting mentors. The reviewed literature includes in details aspects related to "criteria for selecting mentors". According to Moir and Gless (2001), a mentor has to have an experience of three or more years of effective and successful teaching practice. A mentor has to have good interpersonal and communication skills (Costa & Garmston, 2002). Besides, it is very important for a mentor to have a reflective approach on her own teaching practices (Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007) and have a grip on subject content knowledge and subject-based pedagogy (Moir, 2003). Based on the data collected, only one superior (head of department) participating in the study confirmed that the practice of assigning a colleague mentor based on specific criteria is implemented at her

school. P5 shared a school document with the researcher (to maintain confidentiality, the document was not included as appendix). However, a thorough look at the presented document reveal the point that the assigned colleague mentor's job is restricted to: the support rendered in introducing a novice to supportive departments and services rendered by those departments and; very limited professional support to the novice teachers in carrying out their teaching tasks and employing teaching methodologies.

Incentives offered to mentors. The reviewed literature shows that monetary incentives lead to increased systematic involvement of mentors with novice teachers Youngs (2007). Another form of incentive could be giving mentors less teaching hours. Hence, according to Villani, (2002) and Feiman-Nemser, (2001) to compensate for their mentoring time, mentors are given less teaching hours and more monetary stipends.

Here as well and in the absence of documented and formalized procedures of the mentoring process, school superiors offer some incentives to the peers (coaches, parallel teachers) that are designated to provide mentoring support to novices. The data collected show that these acts of offering incentives and the kind of incentive given are sporadic and don't follow a structured procedure. Participating principals recognize the effective contribution of supporting colleagues (mentor teachers, coaches and parallel teachers) and acknowledge their hard work by offering some incentives. The given incentives might take the form of monetary compensation, an acknowledging message sent to the supporting teacher or a pat on the shoulder of the supportive teacher. Only three principals out of the seven interviewed, give monetary incentives to mentors (mentor teachers, coaches, parallel teachers). On the other hand, according to the participating head of departments and head of divisions the incentives given to mentor teachers are not very often materialistic in nature but rather are revealed as encouraging words and pats on the shoulders.

Workload of mentor. Based on the reviewed literature, to compensate for their mentoring time, mentors are given less teaching hours. Feiman-Nemser, (2001).

Based on the collected data, principals for the purpose of enhancing the effective contribution of the mentor-teachers, coaches and parallel teachers to the process of mentoring support, give “unannounced” lower workload to supporting colleagues. Three principals’ responses show that supporting colleagues are given some exemptions from recess duties, morning duties and standby sessions but never lesser workload in teaching hours. Here as well there are no clear policies and criteria that principals abide by when deciding on the persons and the means by which they reduce some mentors’ duties.

On the other hand, participating head of departments had a different point of view related to workload of mentors. Seven of the participating head of departments found that mentors (coaches, parallel teachers) are overloaded with work. While another mentor who is a head of department, referring to mentor’s (head of department’s) workload, had concerns about being overloaded with work. Hence, besides holding the responsibility of coordination, she was assigned a number of teaching hours.

The participating superiors (head of departments) shared their worries about excessive workload of the head of departments and peers who support the head of departments in mentoring the novices and were concerned about not being able to contribute adequately to the implementation of mentoring practices.

Supportive mentoring practices. Based on the collected data, the participants are engaged in set of supportive practices that enhance the enculturation of novice teachers, and help their professional and emotional growth and development.

Engaging in practices that enhance enculturation. The first set of practices depicted in the schools under study is the bunch of practices that help in the integration of

the novice teacher into the school culture. Based on the reviewed literature, mentors introduce novice teachers to prevailing school culture, rules and regulations and staff. The concept of mentoring as an enculturation process suggests that mentoring is about helping the socialization of novice teachers into the organization and culture of a particular school community (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). Seven principals, twelve mentors and fourteen novice teachers find the activities that take place during the orientation days such as: the novice teachers being introduced to school mission statement, rules and regulations, to other staff and key departments as supportive and helpful practices. According to O'Brien and Christie (2005), effective mentors have to encourage the novice teachers to socialize and be a part of the school community. While Lofstrom and Eisenschmidt (2009) and Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) report that novice teachers were appreciative of their mentors when the latter helped them socialize into school community.

Moreover, according to the participants the school principal is the one who introduces novice teachers to the school philosophy, rules and regulations, staff and other departments during the activities that take place during orientation days. Here in this context the supportive practice is rendered by the principal of the school and hence in this context takes the role of "mentor". Seven principals, twelve superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) and fourteen novice teachers find the practices held on the orientation days as helpful.

Providing ongoing academic support. In addition to engaging in activities that enhance novice teachers' integration into the new school culture, superiors (mainly head of departments) engage in activities that provide novice teachers a good opportunity to professional growth. Activities such as lesson planning, assessing learners' work, differentiating instruction, encouraging communication with parents, teaching a lesson in

the presence of mentor, attending a model lesson given by the mentor, observing other colleagues teaching, giving feedback/ reflecting on observation sessions, modeling effective techniques for classroom management, encouraging self-assessment etc. (Glickman et al., 2004; Kelley, 2004; Moir, 2009; Armstrong 2009). Some of the academically supportive practices mentioned in the literature were suggested by participants as helpful.

Planning and delivering of instruction. Based on the collected data, six principals and thirteen novice teachers emphasize the helpful aspect of head of departments' guidance in helping them in planning delivering of instruction. However, a closer look and analysis of participants' responses reveal the directive approach the head of departments follow when offering help in lesson planning. In almost all cases the head of departments almost impose their teaching strategies and the activities to be introduced in class by the novice teacher. Moreover, a number of novice teachers informed the researcher that they are provided with readymade lesson plans. Although the attainment of a ready lesson plan by novice teachers is appealing, however it raises a big question on the efficacy of the practice in the enhancement of novice teacher's professional development.

Encouraging and monitoring the progress of novice teacher by observing and reflecting on observations. In the data collected both principals and superiors confirm that school superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) observe novice teachers' classroom throughout of the year to monitor progress, reflect on the observations, and guide the novice teachers to improved performance. Principals and mentors engage in a similar practice when they require presentation of demo lesson from novice teachers. In this context as well the purpose behind this practice is enhancing novice teacher's instructional capacity.

It's worth mentioning here that the majority of novice teachers when talking about the superiors' observation of their classrooms refer mainly to the observation and evaluation that takes place during the demo lessons presented by the novice teachers prior to being hired. Moreover, novice teachers seem to be not aware of the importance of the practice of being observed by superiors followed by effective feedback and suggestions for improvement in the process of professional development of teachers. The novice teachers' experiences with the mentioned practice show that the evaluation taking place is not formative.

Providing ongoing non-academic support. As reviewed in the literature, the emotional support and instruction related support are considered the most important aspects of any well-established mentoring practices (Huling & Resta, 2007). Emotional support, according to Stansbury and Zimmerman (2000), addresses the personal and emotional needs of novice teachers. Moreover, the role of the mentor is mainly to help the new teachers grow professionally and that is by supporting them in several areas such as classroom management (Armstrong, 2009). The data collected show that novice teachers are emotionally supported by superiors (head of divisions and head of departments) and by peers. The novice teachers are supported by their superiors mainly in classroom management and how to deal with learners with special needs. Moreover, the responses of novice teachers reveal a very important aspect which is being emotionally supported by their peers as well. Two aspects of non-academic support: providing support in classroom management and providing support in dealing with learners with special needs and are going to be detailed below.

Providing support in classroom management. Based on the reviewed literature, according to Brock and Grady, (1997) novice teachers face challenges in managing their

classroom and maintaining discipline. Providing support in classroom management is considered a very helpful practice school superiors might get engaged in to support novice teachers in their early teaching experiences. The data collected show that 4 principals and 7 school superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) believe that their schools provide support to their novice teachers. On the other hand 9 novice teachers reported that they had been supported in classroom management. These numbers are quite appealing and give the impression that at least half of the participating novice teachers are somehow provided with support in classroom management. However, a closer and detailed look at the novice teachers' responses reveals that most of them receive suggestions and tips on how to deal with misbehaving students when they encounter problems in the classroom. Moreover, a considerable number of novice teachers regarded the support that they got from their superiors as not so helpful. The mentioned novice teachers were not given any hints in how to deal with disruptive behaviors and were told that it was their responsibility to handle the classroom.

Providing support in dealing with learners with special needs. Based on the literature, novice teachers face challenges in classroom management when dealing with students with special needs as well as in applying differentiating instruction to cater for the specific needs of those students (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). The data collected show that three out of the seven participating principals and six of the fifteen head of departments report that they support their novice teachers in dealing with learners with special needs. It is worth mentioning that almost all of the participating schools don't have specialized departments to support the novice teachers systematically. Moreover, according to seven out of the eighteen participant novice teachers, the support rendered is

restricted to the introduction of novice teachers to the cases of the learners' and some recommendations coming from external specialists on how to deal with the cases.

On the other hand, there were a remarkable number of novice teachers who were even not informed about the presence of students with special needs in the classroom. This means they were even not introduced to the cases of these learners and didn't have any clue on how to deal with them. The novice teachers' emphasis on the challenges they face brings to the front the issue of the lack of in-service teacher training employed at these schools.

These schools lack special education departments and specialists who provide the professional support on how to deal with learners with special needs. Despite the fact that principals seem to be aware of the challenges novices face in dealing with learners with special needs, they do not make the least effort to offer these teachers the support they need.

In short, many of the elements of the well-established mentoring practices mentioned in the reviewed literature align with the ones reported in this study especially when it comes to the definition of mentoring, forms of mentoring support, and some practices that are regarded as helpful mentoring practices. However, there's a clear discrepancy in some of the types of support provided by the superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) such as conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback, helping novices in classroom management, providing support in dealing with learners with special needs.

There is also a clear discrepancy that appears when comparing the aspects of mentoring practices described in the literature with those described in this study. Although

the aspect of mentoring could be depicted in one of the schools, it seems it's still done in an incomplete way.

Conclusion

The results indicate that the implemented mentoring practices, in some cases, are not regarded as supportive as intended to be in the schools under study. There are several factors that hinder the implementation of well-established practices. These include: lack of mentoring programs; regarding superiors as mentors; under preparation of teachers; and directive approach to supervision. This section will provide a description of each of these findings.

Lack of mentoring programs. Based on the findings of the study, several supportive mentoring practices could be depicted in the schools under study. A cluster of these practices is done prior to the start of the academic year such as introducing novice teachers to the school culture; rules and regulations; and to other staff and departments at school. Another group of supportive practices takes place after the start of the academic year. This includes the mentoring support provided by the school superiors (head of department and head of division) whose roles include guiding novice teachers in both academic and non-academic aspects, conducting formative evaluation and giving feedback.

Based on the reviewed literature well-established mentoring practices encompass the following elements and practices: adopting clear criteria for mentor selection, providing incentives to mentors, matching mentors with mentees, training of mentors, collegial relationships, mutual understanding of roles and expectations, engaging in instructionally supportive practices, engaging emotionally supportive practices, engaging in practices that enhance the novice teacher's professional development, engaging in

practices that enhance enculturation and engaging in practices that enhance the mentor's professional development. These elements were discussed in details in the previous section.

However, according to the findings, none of the schools under study had a fully established mentoring program. There were no policies found in any of the schools that formalize practices directed at providing mentoring support to novice teachers. Moreover, the data collected revealed participant principals' satisfaction with the current mentoring practices employed at their schools. Hence, participant principals were unable to pinpoint the "not so helpful" mentoring practices implemented at their schools which hindered the effective implementation of well-established mentoring practices. The participant principals' satisfaction with and the positive viewpoints held towards the current mentoring practices employed at their schools and principals themselves being the main decision makers in any changes in school policies, would make the introduction of well-established mentoring programs, in the near future, a far-fetched reality.

Regarding superiors as mentors. All the participants regarded their school superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) and named them as their mentors when replying to the research questions. As discussed in the previous section, participants tend to see mentoring as part of the tasks of those (head of departments and head of divisions) assigned formal supervisory roles at schools. For the participants, in the absence of formalized mentoring practices, mentoring is strongly associated with formal positions held by superiors at schools. The dual responsibility of holding supervisory and mentoring responsibilities put mainly the head of departments in a state of overload.

Moreover, the analysis of data collected reveal some running themes presented in form of recommendations and in form of "not so helpful practices". "Giving lesser

workload to mentors” is one of the themes that were recommended by three different groups of participants. Besides, giving head of departments the responsibility of teaching in addition to running the supervisory and mentoring roles was considered by one head of department participating in the study as not so helpful practice which hinders the effective performance of the head of department. The data collected showed that the process of clinical supervision was not employed as designed and novice teachers were neither evaluated formatively nor guided effectively to develop professionally. Moreover, one of the head of departments had recommended that formative evaluation with effective feedback to be conducted more frequently. This shows an honest self-evaluation of a decent head of department who aims at performing professionally. At another note, one of the novice teachers considered mentor colleagues more effective in delivering the mentoring support and recommended that mentor colleagues be assigned as mentors for novices instead of head of departments.

All of the above urge schools to implement formalized mentoring practices where each and every party clearly knows the job description, expectations held, and the process of well-established mentoring practices. Hence, this way a head of department would have more time to run his/her supervisory position effectively, the formally assigned mentor colleague would render his/her mentoring support properly, and in the end the novice teacher would benefit highly.

Novice Teachers’ under preparation. Results of the current study align with the findings of a research study conducted by Hashem (2013). Hashem’s study and the current study show that a remarkable number of the novice teachers in private schools in Beirut embark their teaching profession unprepared to deal with the tasks and responsibilities their job requires. The majority of the novice teachers revealed that they still need more

effective support in specific areas that seem to call for skills that they should have acquired prior to commencing their role as teachers. Novice teachers who participated in the current study considered that they needed more efficient support in classroom management, dealing with learners with special needs and, planning and delivery of instruction. This leads us to question the quality of pre-service training these novice teachers received as well as that of the in-service training that is made available to them in their schools.

Lack of adequate pre-service training. Based on the results of this study, a good number of the participating novice teachers described the mentoring support they had been provided with as being not sufficient enough to help them in performing many of their teaching responsibilities such as managing their classes, dealing with learners with special needs, lesson planning and delivering.

Hence, it can be concluded that the pre-service training offered to soon-to-be teachers in the undergraduate university programs seem to be insufficient. It is worth mentioning that while the courses offered by these programs are rich in theoretical content which offers specialized and general knowledge, they are lacking in practical and field-based courses (Al-Amin, 2007). The fact that quite good number of novice teachers employed in private schools has not received any pedagogical training might explain the reasons behind the stressful conditions novice teachers face on the onset of their teaching career. Based on the mentioned above, adopting well-established mentoring practices by schools are extremely needed to help novice teachers' smooth entrance to the teaching profession and to enhance novice teachers' performance.

Lack of in-service training. The findings of this study clearly show that the majority of schools despite being aware of the fact that their novice teachers are

inadequately trained and face challenging situations in their early teaching experiences have not yet taken responsibility to establishing mentoring programs that can offer novice teachers the training they lack. The concept of well-established mentoring practices/ programs are rarely present in the participating private schools.

Directive approach to supervision. The findings of this study show that when superiors (head of departments and head of divisions) are engaged in supportive practices, they usually follow the directive approach. According to Oliva (1993), in the directive approach to supervision, supervisors tend to prescribe content, materials, and techniques for teachers to follow and incline to use their authority figures to make the teachers obey their instructions. The collected data showed similar practices when head of departments almost imposed their ways, methodologies, and techniques when helping novice teachers in lesson planning, delivery of lesson and construction of assessments. Moreover, a remarkable number of head of departments had considered providing the teachers with readymade lesson plans as an act of providing support. This kind of approach to supervision hinders opportunities of professional development at the novice teachers' side and nurtures dependency.

Schools aiming at the professional development of their staff, as reviewed in the literature, have to employ Glickman's "Developmental approach to supervision" (2004) where a high attention is given to the collaboration between supervisors and teachers, engagement of teachers in the teaching task, respect for teachers' perspectives and providing opportunities for teachers' optimal development.

Recommendations for Practice

The research findings had shown that all participating schools lack formalized and documented mentoring programs. Private schools need to take drastic measures aimed at

providing the professional and emotional support to novice teachers on the onset of their career. By providing the needed support, novice teachers' performance would be enhanced and consequently the quality of teaching and learning would be improved. However, the desired drastic changes in the current mentoring practices cannot be realized unless the school principals become aware of the need for modification and introduce changes in school policies.

Mentoring programs. The first measure that needs to be taken is adopting structured and well-designed mentoring programs that can facilitate the transition of novice teachers into the teaching profession. To build a successful mentoring program, schools are required to go through two essential stages: institutionalizing mentoring and designing and planning the activities included in the program.

Institutionalizing mentoring. For them to be institutionalized, mentoring practices need to be offered as part of a planned program that constitutes a fundamental part of the school organizational arrangements. The program's activities need to become part of the school's plan and task assignments among those that will contribute to this program (principals, supervisor, human resource personnel, mentor, and mentees).

Structure of mentoring. School principals or human resource department's personnel have to assign a mentor for each and every novice teacher they have. They have to set specific times for the mentor/mentee meetings on their schedules. The preparatory work has to be done prior to the start of the academic year. Hence, on the first day of school novice teacher (mentee) and mentor have to be introduced to each other, and responsibilities and expectation set for each party have to be clarified.

School principals or human resources personnel have to decide on:

- 1- Criteria for mentor selection. A mentor has to be an experienced teacher with minimum of three years of effective teaching experience. A mentor has to have: good interpersonal and communication skills; reflective approach on her own teaching practices; grip on subject content knowledge and subject-based pedagogy, and to show commitment to the process of mentoring, ongoing personal and professional growth.
- 2- Matching mentors with mentees. It is preferable that a mentor teaches the same grade level and subject matter as his/her mentee (novice teacher). Hence, when a mentor is familiar to the curriculum and to specific methodologies and teaching techniques suitable for a given grade level, he/she would be of a greater help for the mentee.
- 3- Lower workload for mentor. For the purpose of having an effective contribution to the mentoring support that a mentor has to provide to a mentee (novice teacher), he has to have lower workload. Hence, he/she has to have ample of time to meet with mentee, discuss lesson plan, observe a novice's classroom, reflect on the observed feature, plan for assignments etc.
- 4- Lower workload for mentee (novice teacher). Novice teachers should be assigned lower workload to: feel less stressed of task requirements, have time to meet with mentor, time to observe mentor's classroom, time to reflect on observations, time to plan for lesson and assignments etc.
- 5- Training of mentors. Schools have to enroll their mentors in mentor preparation programs. To provide a better support for the novice teachers, mentors have to be trained to: be aware of novice teachers' needs and characteristics, have knowledgeable of strategies for trusting relationships, be knowledgeable about

- student age characteristics, learning modes and effective teaching, trained to acquire observational skills which would help them give objective feedback of novice teachers' classroom observations.
- 6- Offering incentives to mentors. Mentors have to be given incentives in the form of monetary incentives or encouraging acknowledgement of their work. However, monetary incentives would enhance the mentors' positive and effective contribution to the mentoring process more.
- 7- Assessing the mentoring program. Both mentor's and mentee's perspectives are to be taken on the implementation of the mentoring practices: areas of strengths, areas of weaknesses, recommendations to improve, and actualization of the objectives set for the program. The assessments are to be made on several intervals: two months from the start of the program, mid-year assessment and final assessment of the program. The purpose is to adjust to any need for improvement in the interaction and cooperation between mentor and mentee and to monitor progress towards achieving the set objectives.

Supportive mentoring practices. All the mentoring practices that were depicted in the current study as helpful and were provided mainly by the head of department can be practiced by the assigned mentor. Except for the practices that are supervisory in nature such as organization of workshops and clinical supervision.

Assigned mentors have to provide professional and emotional support for the novice teachers. Mentors can help the novice teachers professionally in: enhancing novice teacher's enculturation, helping in planning and delivering instruction, observing the novice teacher's classroom and reflecting on observation, helping in constructing Assessments, helping in checking on and evaluating students' academic performance and

suggest intervention when needed, and introducing to applications and software used at school.

Moreover, assigned mentors can provide novice teachers with the emotional support by: providing emotional support when needed especially in enhancement of classroom management skills and on dealing with students with special needs.

Recommendations for Research

Given the scarcity of the research on mentoring practices implemented in the Lebanese context this study constitutes a humble contribution to research in this area. It adds to the literature and provides a base line of information that can perhaps guide future research in this area. Further research can help provide additional results to be compared with those of the current study and hence generalized to a more diverse and broader sector of Lebanese schools. The findings of this study trigger similar studies that explore mentoring practices in new contexts: private schools outside Beirut area; private schools that are affiliated with foreign educational institutions; private schools that have French as the main language of instruction: small sized and large sized private schools; and schools of various different socio-economical levels. It could also be worthwhile to investigate mentoring practices employed in public schools and conduct comparative studies that compare the mentoring practices followed in private schools with the ones followed in public schools. The findings of the current study revealed a tension between the concepts supervision and mentoring and the interchangeable usage of these terms by research participants. Hence, further research studies are advisable to shed some light on the terms used and the job description and expectation held for various personnel in charge of supervision, coordination and mentoring.

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APPENDIX A

Initial Contact Letter

Study Title: Novice Teachers', Mentors' and Principals' Perspectives towards Mentoring Practices

Dear _____,

Date:

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education at Haigazian University, I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that I am conducting, entitled "Novice teachers', mentors' and Principal's perspectives towards mentoring practices". Novice teachers according to this study are defined as beginning teachers with no more than three years' of teaching experience. Mentors are defined as experienced teachers who have the knowledge and skills that enable them to be a source of professional and emotional support for the novice teacher.

The purpose of the research study is (1) to describe mentoring practices as defined by novice teachers, mentors and principals at a number of private schools in Beirut, Lebanon, (2) to explore their perspectives towards the implementation and employment of mentoring practices at their schools, and (3) to identify the aspects of mentoring practices that they find to be helpful or not so helpful.

You are expected to participate in two interviews which will be recorded. The first interview will take about 60 minutes; and the second interview will take about 20-30 minutes.

Kindly note that your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you are not obliged to answer any specific questions even if you had given initial consent of participation. You may choose to withdraw from participation and may request any collected data to be withdrawn from the data base and not included in the study. The latest you could withdraw from the study is within one week after being interviewed. You should request that in writing.

I also ensure you that all data collected will be used only for academic purposes and will be treated confidentially. Your name, school name and contact information will be masked in the final report. If you have any further questions or clarifications about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at XX-XXXXXXX or e-mail at XXXXXXXXX. You may also contact my thesis advisor, Dr. Hagop Yacoubian, at XX-XXXXXXX.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Respectfully,

Rita Nourian
MA candidate

APPENDIX B

Consent Form

I, the undersigned, have read the information letter and I agree to participate in this study.

Participant Signature

Date

Name of Participant

APPENDIX C

Focus Group Interview Protocol

My name is Rita Nourian and I am currently pursuing my MA in Educational Administration and Supervision Haigazian University. I am conducting this study to explore principals', mentors' and novice teachers' perspectives towards the implementation and employment of mentoring practices at their schools. Then, based on the data collected, I will construct a grounded model of mentoring practices implemented at private schools in Beirut. As such, I am interested in exploring your perspectives towards the mentoring practices implemented at private schools. I will ask you a set of questions. I ensure you that your confidentiality will be maintained and your names will not be disclosed and I ask you to please respect the confidentiality of your colleagues. This interview will take between 45 to 60 minutes.

1- How do you define mentoring?

Probes:

- What does mentoring mean to you?
- How do you define mentoring based on your experience?

2- What forms of mentoring support do novice teachers receive at your school?

- Can you give me details about the structure of mentoring support given at your school?
- Who is responsible for providing that support?
- How is the support rendered?
- When does it take place?
- Can you give me some examples of mentoring practices implemented at your school?

3- Which aspects of the mentoring practices employed at your school do you find helpful?

- Can you give examples?

- 4- Which aspects of the mentoring practices employed at your school do you find to be not so helpful?
 - Can you give examples?

- 5- What are your recommendations to improve the quality of the mentoring practices employed at your school?
 - What do you suggest to change in the mentoring practices implemented at your school?
 - Can you elaborate? Give details.

- 6- Do you want to clarify or add anything?

APPENDIX D

Individual Interview Protocol for the Mentor

The following set of questions will guide the interview:

1. How do you define mentoring?
2. Describe your mentoring experience.
3. Describe your role?
 - a. What are your major responsibilities? Examples.
 - b. How do you support novice teachers? Give examples of your practices and describe your approaches.
 - c. Which aspects of the mentoring practices at your school do you find helpful and not so helpful?
4. What recommendations do you have to improve the quality of the mentoring practices employed at your school?
5. Is there anything else you would like to add?

APPENDIX E

Individual Interview Protocol for the Principals

The following list of questions will guide the interview:

1. How do you define mentoring?
2. Which aspects of the mentoring practices employed at your school do you find helpful or not so helpful for the novice teachers and their mentors?
3. What forms of mentoring support [in terms of structure/design, approach and content] do novice teachers receive at your school?
 - a. What are the criteria that you follow in mentor selection? Elaborate.
 - b. Based on what factors the novice teacher and mentor matching is made? Explain.
 - c. What are the benefits mentors get from their engagement in mentoring practices?
4. What are your recommendations to improve the quality of the mentoring practices employed at your school?

APPENDIX F

Individual Interview Protocol for the Novice Teacher

1. How do you define mentoring?
2. What forms of mentoring support [in terms of structure/design, approach and content] do you receive?
3. Describe and evaluate your mentoring experience. Elaborate.
4. Which aspects of the mentoring practices employed at your school do you find helpful or not so helpful?
5. What are your recommendations to improve the quality of the mentoring practices employed at your school?
6. Is there anything else you would like to add?

APPENDIX G

Table of Codes

Codes for Features of Mentoring and Supportive Mentoring Practices

Code	Feature
As	academic support
ac-s-pr	academically supportive practice
class-sup	classroom management support
con-ass	construction of assessment
em-sup	emotional support
for-m-sup	formal mentoring support
Inc	Incentives
inf-m-sup	informal mentoring support
int-mis-philo	introduction to school mission philosophy
Ms	mentoring support
ment-sel	mentor selection
mod-less	modeling lessons
non-ac-sup	nonacademic support
nov-eval	novice teacher evaluation
Obs	Observation
ori-pro	orientation program
pl-del-less	planning delivering lesson
pr-obs	peer observation
sp-nds	special needs
wkl-ment	workload of mentor
wkl-nov	workload of novice

APPENDIX H

Extract from Researcher's Journal

- 30-10-'15 / Overall observation of the school (Interactions)
 School 9 (S9) / meeting with NT18
- * Met the English coordinator in the teachers' lounge. Although I had contacted her on the phone a few days ago to check the availability of her novice teacher, she had not talked with her (NT) to check her schedule for the appointment.
 - * Then the English coordinator informed the NT18 in my presence about the research study. I felt the novice teacher was surprised and anxious about the interview.
 - * Waited in the coordinator's office till the NT18 was done with her class. The English coordinator seemed to be friendly and helpful. A number of teachers came in asking the coordinator about various issues.
 - * Observation / During a meeting with a teacher, the coordinator checked the test prepared by the teacher. She (the coordinator) discussed the items with the teacher and recommended changes. The teacher was given the coordinator's seat to introduce the suggested changes in the presence of the coordinator.
 - * When NT18 came to the coordinator's office. The latter suggested having the interview in an empty corner of the office. But I asked about an empty available office or classroom to conduct the interview (to maintain confidentiality).

- * NT 18 looked confused and seemed anxious all over the idea of having the interview.
- * NT 18 wanted to ~~the~~ know the questions that she was going to reply to. She asked about the questions and wanted to be prepare written replies.
- * I calmed her down and told her the purpose of the study, that it's confidential and the data collected will remain anonymous. No need to panic.
- * I felt the NT 18 had felt that or thought that the questions were to evaluate her knowledge on specific educational concepts and her fluency in replying in English. That's why maybe she was anxious from the beginning.
- * when the interview was held in an empty /available classroom, things got much better. However, with every research question asked, NT 18 had concerns about whether she had answered right.
- * I explained to her that there is no right or wrong answers. I'm only after her perspective on the topic of discussion.
- * The NT 18 behavior in the presence of the coordinator and her anxiety might hide a tense relationship between the NT 18 and the coordinator.