

THE PRAXIS OF MENTORING FROM A SOCIAL LEARNING PERSPECTIVE: THE CASE OF PRACTISING TRAINEE TEACHERS AT A TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE IN MIDLANDS

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Abstract

Teaching practice (TP) is one of the major components of any teacher training programme. During this period, the trainee teachers are attached to a mentor at a practising school. The mentoring process facilitates contextual and operational transfer of skills and knowledge between the trainee teacher and the mentor. The two are involved in a behaviour modelling and teaching skills relationship. Social learning theory plays a very important role at this stage. This study aimed at assessing the application of the social learning theory as a form of learning during teaching practice. The study was a descriptive survey which used quantitative and qualitative data gathering techniques to explore how mentor-mentee relationship models a social learning theory. Twenty randomly sampled trainee teachers responded to questionnaires to elicit their views on what they learnt during their attachment to a mentor. Five mentors and five trainee teachers were interviewed to explore their views on mentor-mentee transfer of knowledge and skills. The results showed that the existing mentor-mentees scenarios were not the ideal. Trainee teachers revealed that the mentor teachers, who were supposed to mentor them, were the ones who had a lot to learn from them. Most of the trainee teachers were given more teaching loads than mentors and were regarded as teaching load relievers by mentor teachers. The study concluded that trainee teachers were not benefiting much from the mentor-mentee relationships. The study recommended that teacher training colleges should staff-develop mentors, ensure that students are attached to good mentors and incentivise mentors since they are part of their training officers.

Keywords: *Social learning theory, mentor, trainee teacher, mentoring.*
