INVESTIGATING CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRE-SERVICE TEACHER MENTORING PROGRAMME AT TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES IN MALAWI÷

By

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STUDENT DECLARATION

I, **Paul Kambewa Kapipira Solomon Mkandawire** declare that this work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

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Dedication

To my beloved wife, Annie Kaira, my only son, Emmanuel, and three daughters, Omega Lyness,

Martina and Sarah.

ABSTRACT

The Initial Primary Teacher Education (IPTE) in Malawi has gone under review. Previously, the programme used the head teacher and one teacher as a mentor for the student teachers placed at a particular school for teaching practice. In the revised IPTE programme, there is an inclusion of class teacher mentors. With the support of the three categories of mentors the mentees are expected to produce good quality teaching; however, this is not the case. This study was aimed at investigating the challenges of mentorship in IPTE. It also looked at the possible causes of challenges affecting the quality of IPTE. Possible solutions to the challenges of mentorship were also solicited from the participants.

A qualitative approach was employed and data was collected and analyzed using face-to-face interviews and document analysis. The interviews engaged the college lecturers, school mentors and class teacher mentors. Document analysis of the schemes and records of work, lesson plans and school experience journals used by the mentees were used to enrich the findings. The main themes were identified and triangulated to make meaning of the data collected.

The study found out that mentorship faces a number of challenges. Some of the challenges included: lack of or inadequate knowledge, bad behavior of both the mentors and mentees, inadequate support by all stakeholders. Lack of adequate funding, training, and strict rules and regulations to govern mentorship also impact on the quality of mentorship.

The study recommends that the mentorship teacher education programme should be rolled out after adequate training of the implementers to avoid challenges in carrying out their tasks to achieve the curriculum goals. Researcher recommends that mentorship should be maintained in

IPTE with adequate resources and funding as it promotes team work and lifelong learning of the

teacher.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

IPTE   Initial Primary Teacher Education

TPSs   Teaching Primary Schools

SEJ   School Experience Journal

TTC   Teacher Training College

UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

GIZ   German Corporation for International Cooperation

MIE   Malawi Institute of Education

MoEST   Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

SL   Situated Learning

CoP   Community of Practice

HT   Head Teacher

M   Mentor

SPR   Student Performance Report

SoP   Summary of Performance.

MANEB   Malawi National Examinations Board.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. 1 Background to the study

There are different models of training teachers in the world to balance theory and practice (Allen and Wright 2014; Trent 2013). Currently, Malawi has adopted a Two- In, Two- Out, and Two – In model. In this model, trainees are in college for two terms, then the next two terms they go into teaching practice in different primary schools and finally they come back to college for the last two terms to complete their training. In the first two-in session, trainees are prepared for teaching practice. During the two-out terms, the trainees put into practice the skills and knowledge acquired during the first two-in sessions. During the last two-in terms, the trainees reflect on their experiences in the field during teaching practice and sit for MANEB final examinations. The model of training teachers has been adopted in order to improve the quality of teachers after the introduction of free primary education (Kunje, 2002).

Previously, the IPTE program used the One – In – One – Out mode (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), 2014), which has now been reviewed by bringing in a number of changes. Firstly, the curriculum is now delivered through a modular approach. The modular approach is designed in such a way that the mentees cover a module in a term per learning area. Secondly, more focus is placed on how to teach than on transmitting a content-based curriculum. Lastly, during teaching practice, students are paired with class teachers to give the student-teachers more exposure to learn from the more experienced teachers (MOEST, 2019; M. I. E., 2018). This is in addition to the mentorship support which is rendered by the school mentor and the head

teacher, the administrative mentor. It was hoped that the changes made could help to eradicate some of the challenges which mentorship was encountering.

The first two – In phase is done in college within the first two terms of the training where much of the coursework involves theory of teaching. Students learn limited subject content in respective syllabi as the modules being used carry a lot of pedagogical content with scanty subject content (MOEST, 2014). They are also expected to observe and practice teaching in a nearby demonstration school. In practising teaching, student-teachers carefully prepare a lesson with the help of a college lecturer, present a lesson and then take action on the sandwich feedback given by peers and lecturers after observation (MEOST, 2014). The phase prepares student-teachers for teaching practice which comes in the second phase (M. I. E., 2018).

The Two – Out is the second phase done in teaching practice in schools within the second two terms of the course period where the trainees are supposed to put their theoretical knowledge and preliminary teaching experience acquired in college into practice under the expected guidance of the three categories of mentors: the head teacher, the school mentor and the class teacher mentor. According to Daresh (2003), a mentor is a person who is ready and willing to pass down his or her wisdom and provides all the answers to those who are on training. Mentoring is an important part of teacher education (Akçamete, Aslan and Dinçer, 2010; Sundli, 2007). World over, teacher training institutions have made it a policy that no student-teacher graduates without having a feel of the classroom under the watchful eye of a trained mentor or teacher (Kerry and Mayes, 2008; Benton, 1990). Mapolisa, (2013) argues that the teaching practice period helps the trainee to polish and improve on the presentation of lessons which would make them relatively better teachers. Producing better teachers suits best with the expectations of the revised IPTE curriculum to

improve the quality of teachers in Malawi (M. I. E., 2018). Maguire (2010) observes that mentoring at its best could be a life-altering relationship that inspires the development of both the mentor and mentee. Similarly, Cox (2005) states that mentorship programmes could transform novice teachers quite significantly in their professional career. This means that mentoring is supposed to occur after all preliminary work to prepare the novice teachers has been done.

Therefore, primary teacher training college lecturers expect well-presented lessons, high standard schemes and records of work, and correctly laid out file work when they visit the student-teachers. This expectation is based on the fact that the student teachers are given theory work and preliminary teaching practice on the same while in college. In addition, they are given a week to observe the mentors on how best they present their lessons. Whenever a student-teacher has been observed, a feedback session using the 'Feedback Sandwich' structure is provided soon after observation (MOEST, 2014; M.I.E., 2015). In the sandwich structure discussion, the student-teacher is given a chance to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson, then the mentor discusses together with the student-teacher what has been observed, then map the way forward on the areas of improvement (M. I. E., 2018).

However, from my experience as a teacher educator and shared information during teaching practice evaluation, students' weaknesses have been noted. It has been observed that students present poor schemes and records of work, sketchy lesson plans and disorganized file work. Furthermore, student-teachers struggle with lesson presentation while they have mentors. Documents worked on by teacher trainees also contain mistakes which could have been rectified by the same mentors. This shows that there is need to assess if the mentorship programme is done according to the expectations of the curriculum.

When student teachers are asked by primary teacher training college lecturers why they present poorly constructed work, they complain of lack of support from mentors. On the other hand, when the mentors are asked, they claim to be helping the trainees with necessary support, but student-teachers do not abide. Other mentors claim that college lecturers do not do a good job in preparing student-teachers for teaching practice and to work cooperatively with them. The blame game is a sign that there could be some challenges affecting the implementation of mentorship programme in initial primary teacher education.

1. 2 Statement of the problem

Much as student teachers go through training in college by the lecturers and get support from the mentors, they still present sub-standard work. The work presented by the mentees shows a lot of short falls yet the introduction of mentorship programme was meant to improve the quality of teacher education in Malawi. So far no-one has carried out a study on the challenges of mentorship in Malawi. Literature shows only a study on the criteria used on the choice of mentors in IPTE by Mwanza et al (2015). The study sought to investigate the challenges affecting the current mentoring practices in the revised IPTE programme in teaching practice schools (TPSs) in Malawi.

1. 3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate common challenges of mentorship in pre-service primary teacher education in Malawi.

1. 4   Research objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1. identify the common challenges associated with the implementation of the revised IPTE mentorship program in teaching practice schools.

2. describe the possible causes of the common challenges affecting the implementation of mentorship in initial primary teacher education.

3. assess how tutors think the challenges of mentorship implementation in primary teacher education in the teaching practice schools can be resolved.

1. 5 Significance of the study

This study has identified challenges associated with the mentorship program in initial primary school teacher training and the possible solutions to those challenges. These findings could help teacher training college lecturers to have a better understanding of the mentorship. Such understanding would guide them on the best ways of implementing mentorship. This study also contributes to the existing corpus of knowledge on the concept of mentoring which primary schools and primary teacher training colleges could use to enhance the process of mentoring.

Furthermore, colleges involved in training teacher educators would also be helped by incorporating some of the challenges and possible solutions in the course outlines offered to them as a forewarning to them before they start their initial training of teachers in T. T. Cs. In addition, the research could be an influence to other researchers to conduct bigger research whose results could be generalized.

1. 6 Delimitation of the study

The study was confined to one teacher training college which was in the Central Region of Malawi. It was concerned with challenges affecting the current mentoring practices in the Malawian initial primary teacher education schools identified for teaching practice. The respondents were class teachers as mentors (CT), school mentors (M) of teaching practice schools, Mentees (Me) and college Lecturers (CL) in Social Studies Department.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 1 Brief overview

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the origin of mentorship, followed by philosophical underpinnings of mentorship in teacher education. Thirdly, looks at challenges faced in the implementation of mentorship programme, possible causes and possible solutions of the challenges. The presentation of the challenges is straight away followed by possible causes then possible solutions.

2. 2 The origin of mentorship

Mentorship is a learning and development partnership between someone with vast experience and someone who wants to learn (Rogoff, 1990). The origin of the word 'mentor' dates back to the Greek epic poem 'The Odyssey' by Homer. (Wallace and Gravels, 2007, Derrick and Dicks, 2005, Bartell, 2005). In the myth, Odysseus's old friend named Mentor, agreed to take care of his son, Telemachus, while the king was out in Trojan War. The mentor is sometimes known as Athena, the goddess of wisdom (Wallace and Gravels, 2007), and refer to the support given to the learners as they develop their identity be it in personal or professional lives under the guidance of someone very knowledgeable and experienced (Bartell, 2005).

2. 3 Mentorship as applied in teacher education

According to Bartell (2005: 73), it is only in the last two decades that mentoring has gradually found a more formal role in the teacher-development continuum. The government of Malawi has promoted mentoring (DFES, 2004: 4), not only as an effective method of advice and support for the novice teachers, but as the cornerstone for the development of subject pedagogy in teacher training colleges. Mentors now are the assistants to the mentees outside the academic classroom (DFES, 2004; OFSTED, 2003) and their role is to induct them into a community of practice and to encourage them to forge a new identity as a teacher in their professional career. This is executed during teaching practice. According to Derrick and Dicks (2005: 9), teaching practice involves trainees working in learning environment with real children alongside fully-qualified professional teachers. During teaching practice, student-teachers have hands-on experience of teaching. It involves teacher trainees observing lessons taught by their mentors and later teaching their own lessons. The teaching practice gives students the opportunity to relate the theories, assumptions, and practices examined in college to their own classrooms and to implement the goals and objectives established during their studies in college (Mtika, 2008). During this field experience, student-teachers assess their own strengths and weaknesses and determine appropriate approaches to varying contexts (Derrick and Dicks, 2005). The trainees are experiencing the teaching profession under the guidance of the mentors who are usually older or more experienced colleagues who provide support to watch over the progress of the younger or less experienced individuals (Bartell, 2005).

Today, mentorship involves the mentor using his/her knowledge, skills and status to assist the mentee develop his/her career (Clutterbuck, 1999). Mentorship experience and relationship

structure affect the "amount of psychosocial support, career guidance, role modeling, and communication that occurs in the mentoring relationships in which the protégés and mentors are engaged" (Fagenson-Eland et al 1997). In teacher education, mentorship is specifically adopted to educate teachers (Bartell, 2005). Baffour-Awauah, (2011) supports that as part of its expenditure, different governments invest significantly in designing and implementing curricula and policies, including the training of teachers, in order to improve the quality of instruction and the achievement of students. He further argues that the quality of education partly depends on how well teachers are trained since they are some of the key inputs to education delivery.

Involvement of mentors in teacher education is ideal. Much as college based sessions aim at helping mentees put their teaching in context (among other things), school experience in a community of practice affects their development much more significantly (Adam, 2007; Collanus, et al., 2012). However, implementation of mentorship is facing a lot of challenges. In the context of IPTE program, where it is proposed to be 'school led' (Philpott, et al, 2014), there is need to re-examine the mentorship concept so as to make necessary changes to improve teacher education.

2. 4 Styles of mentorship and duties of the mentors

Malawi, as a country, has ever used a number of mentoring styles. For example, some programmes had involved one mentor teacher to a group of teacher trainees supported by the head teacher as an administrative mentor (MOEST, 2014). The revised curriculum has again taken on board qualified class teachers as mentors to the trainees (MIE, 2018). By increasing the number of mentors to assist the trainee, it might mean that the program is experiencing some challenges which are expected to be sorted out by the large number of mentors.

The mentors' roles include working with trainees in the development of schemes of work, lesson planning, observing trainees' lessons and giving feedback and assessing trainees' professional qualities at the end of the two terms of teaching practice (Jay, 2005; MIE, 2015). The evidence of mentorship being carried out is expected to manifest in high quality schemes and records of work, detailed lesson plans, good layout of file work, well-presented lessons and well-presented school experience journals (SEJ) (M. I. E., 2018).

Previous studies indicate that mentorship programmes relied heavily on support from school mentors (Mwanza et al. 2015). It is argued that the key challenge which made Malawi to shift from one model of mentorship to another is the low quality of teachers graduating from the programmes (Mwanza et al, 2015). The pre-service teacher education programmes compromised quality over quantity (Kunje 2002) as they focused on reducing pupil-teacher ratio rather than their performance. It can be argued that the former mentorship program was implicitly ineffective hence the introduction of qualified teachers as mentors. This is so because if the mentors previously engaged were doing a good job, the new programme would not have engaged class teachers as mentors. However, the mentorship programmes seem to be struggling to reach an optimum balance between theory and practice.

2. 5. 0 Challenges of mentorship programme

2. 5. 1 Role conflict of the mentor as supporter and assessor

According to Philpott et al (2014), one of the challenges is how a mentor can take on double roles of supporter and assessor. Mentoring is a form of teaching and needs to be planned in the same way of teaching of the pupils. Mentors will at times be friends, counselors and assessors. However, they are only starting points from which a sound mentoring relationship can develop (Edwards and

Collison, 1996). At one time, mentors apply a lot of emotional energy in their mentees through their actions while at other times mentors need to hide their emotional deposits from the mentees, which is difficult (Bullough and Draper, 2004). Mentors are supposed to perceive, assimilate, understand and manage emotions accurately and efficiently (Mayer and Cobb, 2000). Suleman, Gebreab and David (2008) also argue that changing roles has not been easy. If the mentees or mentors create a bad relationship, the mentorship does not work. If the relationship is too cordial, pointing out the weaknesses of each other becomes a challenge.

The success of most programmes is contingent upon the articulation of the goals and roles that are to be performed by teachers in that program; mentoring programs are no exception. Tovey (1998) suggests that a set of programme rules be developed to govern goals and roles of formal mentoring programmes. Goals will help to chart the way forward. Awareness of roles helps to avoid conflicts while lack of goals misleads the mentorship programme and in the end, it fails. This is because every stakeholder carries out the roles and responsibilities as he/she feels it at that particular time and situation.

Ground rules developed by mentoring pairs are ideal for the success of the mentorship. The ground rules should cater for interaction, each partner's responsibilities to the other and how they will work together toward their stated goals (https://www.td.org/insights/5-tips-for-successful-mentoring-program-implementationTop). Clear ground rules help to prevent misunderstandings, as both the mentors and the mentees know what is expected of them.

2. 5. 2 Mentor's shortfalls

Another challenge is the pressure mentors feel that they have to have 'all the answers' to the problems that the mentees can face. However, they may also meet problems that they have never

met before and cannot offer handy and easy solutions (Philpott et al, 2014). This becomes worse when mentors feel that they are excellent teachers in the profession. In such cases, when they face challenges which they cannot handle, it may cause anxiety. In reality no matter what, every human being has shortfalls in life. In certain situations student-teachers' have done better in the profession than their mentors. In such circumstances, the mentors feel challenged by the mentees in their professionalism hence mentorship does yield good results. It has been reported that primarily, mentoring offers the classroom-based teacher an opportunity to critically reflect on their own practice as well as revitalize their teaching practices (Walkington, 2004). As such, mentoring a pre-service teacher provides the mentor with opportunities for professional learning (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011).There are a few mentors who may learn from the mentees due to inferiority complex.

When the school members of staff are unwilling to be engaged in the mentorship of the mentees it becomes a challenge to assist the mentees accordingly especially when those engaged in mentorship lack some knowledge and skills to assist the mentees (Piggot-Irvine et al., 2009). Working in isolation makes mentorship to leave a gap which makes the mentees fail to seek assistance from those outside mentorship (Barrerra et al., 2010).

Much as research has shown that formal mentoring programmes are important, but Piggott-Irvine et al. (2009) identifies that the biggest sign of success at schools with effective mentoring programmes was availability of a culture of support across the school, unlike a scenario where that culture of support is limited to one formal mentor. This calls for collaborative work with the rest of the teachers in a school setting. Where qualified teachers work as a team, they don't feel shy or ashamed to ask their colleagues in the school who have the skills and competencies to share with

others (Suleman et al, 2008). The culture of working together promotes partnership with each other. This increases their sense of mutual support and responsibility for the effectiveness of instruction. According to Wenger (1988), this promotes a sense of community of practice. In this situation, student-teachers seek advice from both inside and outside of the mentoring relationship. It is very important to have a school climate that encourages this environment of assistance-seeking (Barrerra et al., 2010).

2. 5. 3 Mentor-mentee mismatch

'Forced pairing' or 'matching mentors with mentees' is another challenge of mentorship (Darling-Hammond, 2005, Hale, 2000). This is a situation in which one never knows who he/she is going to be mentoring or mentored by. The mentees and mentors have differences in their own personalities, expectations and abilities. It is not enough to simply assign a student-teacher to an experienced teacher and expect mentoring to occur (Carter and Francis, 2001); and it is important to note that not all effective teachers are effective mentors (McDonald and Flint, 2011; Tang, 2003; Ruajan, 2010). Some of the qualified teachers, however good they may be, cannot be role models and offer guidance to the mentee. It requires special skills and dedication to carry out mentorship effectively. Suleman et al (2008) observed that poor mentorship was as a result of the inability or unwillingness of most head teachers to organize support systematically and lack of obligation on the part of class teachers to stay on in classroom while the mentee was teaching and vice versa.

Incompatibility between the mentor and mentee can also negatively affect the mentoring process. Successful mentoring relationships are more likely to occur when mentors and mentees are carefully matched in terms of professional expertise and personality. According to MacCallum and Baltiman (1999: 1) 'unsuccessful matches can be worse than no mentoring at all'. That is why

some mentoring programmes will call upon voluntary participation as a way of avoiding crushing matching outcomes.

Furthermore, problems of individualism and isolation in the way teachers carry out their duties in most schools. Mtika, (2006) noted that one of the most important features of the teachers' professional performance is its individual nature where school work organized in this manner does not promote team communication nor co-responsibility for the results. The style of operation forces teachers to find solutions to the problems they face in the teaching and learning activities in private (Mtika, 2006).

The most important aspect of the mentoring process is the relationship between the mentor and the mentee (Garvey and Alred, 2010). The ability of the mentor to quickly build a trusting relationship is important since successful relationships are built on trust (Pitton, 2006). It is not enough to simply assign a student-teacher to an experienced teacher and expect mentoring to occur. Not all effective teachers are effective mentors (Hobson et al., 2009). "The most important element of any mentoring programme is the quality of the mentor" (Moir et al., 2009: 23). Mentor selection and the matching of mentor to mentee are the two biggest problems with mentoring programmes (Sweeny, 2008). When those involved in the process are able to choose who they are paired with there is more chance of a successful mentoring relationship and many programmes have failed simply because this has not happened (Long, 2009).

2. 5. 4 Lack of remuneration and recognition

According to Derrrick and Dicks, (2005), the mentors also complain of lack of recognition or compensation for the mentoring work they do in form of training, career development, extra pay or remission from teaching. For example, in Zimbabwe, mentors and lecturers noted that

mentoring was extra and thankless work for the mentors as well as schools as they get no financial rewards out of it (The Zimbabwe Bulletin of Teacher Education, 2006). This is even worse in the Malawian context where there are very few teachers in schools (World Bank Working Paper No. 182). Teachers in Malawi handle large classes, something which makes them feel over-worked. Getting an additional responsibility of mentorship means an extra burden on their workload with no extra pay for that. This is made worse for the mentors since they receive meager salaries which do not match with the work they do (Kaluwa, 2015). Mentors under such conditions do their mentorship with some reservations as they are overburdened.

Mentoring programmes in any setting, including teaching contexts, seriously lack organizational support (Douglas, 1997). In this way, they will not be considered as valuable and integral to the operation of the organization. Mentors involved in the programme do not receive support and recognition for their contributions to such programmes from management (Burke &McKeen 1989). Such support which teachers miss are in form of resources, career development, certification, remission from teaching and many more. However, in many contexts such programmes have not considered the mentors in any way. Organizers of the programmes contribute heavily to its failure due to lack of support.

Furthermore, lack of funding to provide necessary support to mentors has also contributed to the failure of remunerating and recognizing the mentors. Schools and mentors got no financial and material benefit for being involved in the mentoring process (The Zimbabwe Bulletin Board, 2006). For example, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology yearly gets a large allocation in the national budget, but little or no allocation goes to the support and recognition of

the teachers for the commendable mentoring job that they are doing (Mtika, 2008; Malawi Government, 2001b).

The mentors are supposed to be recognized in a special way. The recognition can take the scale of certification, monetary or having reduced workload which they are supposed to carry on daily basis (Derrrick and Dicks, 2005). These considerations will make mentors work tirelessly for the benefit of the mentees to graduate into well qualified teachers as per the expectations of the programme. In the other schools where there is no mentees placement, qualified teachers do not do extra work apart from their usual job, hence cannot demand an extra pay or recognition. Teachers are already de-motivated with their low monthly salaries, yet those who are mentors carry a too demanding work that wears them out. Those in planning section should think seriously about the welfare of the mentors engaged in the teacher training program (Douglas, 1997).

Adequate funding will make the program run smoothly (The Zimbabwe Bulletin Board, 2006). The funds can enhance training of the mentors so that they can do their job thoroughly. Funding can also help in the buying of materials which can make the work to be done easily by all the stakeholders. Financial token to the mentors can motivate the qualified teachers as they carry out their daily work to help in the production of quality teachers (Burke and McKeen, 1989).

2. 5. 5 Inadequate training

Mentoring requires specific skills that need to be taught and should not be assumed. (Barrera, Braley and Slate, 2010). Without right training, mentors may make mentees learn the school culture, making them not to be innovative enough hence, reproducing the carbon copies of ineffective teachers (Britton et al., 2000; Long et al., 2012). If mentors are just producing clones of themselves, then the opportunity is lost. According to Evertson and Smithey (2000), trained

mentors produce mentees who become more effective professional teachers. However, in practice, most teacher educators report difficulties in providing the high-quality supported teaching practice opportunities for their trainees (Derrrick and Dicks, 2005). In the same way as reported by OFSTED (2003), in part, that is a consequence of the overall shortage of qualified teachers and a reflection of a relatively low level of professional development of many teachers working at present. Engaging qualified teachers who are not competent enough or those that were fully trained as teachers, bring in the weaknesses of mentorship in teacher education.

Tovey (1998) challenges that training of mentors is vital if mentors are to understand their role in facilitating the learning of mentees. The type and length of training designed has an impact on the mentorship. Some teacher education mentorship programs pay little attention to training of the mentors hence they give insufficient funding for the same. Mtika (2008), further argues that most teachers currently teaching in different schools hardly attend INSET to enhance their professionalism and pedagogical growth. The reason behind lack of INSET is inadequate funding towards professional development of teachers. As a result, the mentors do things at the mercy of chances (Suleman et al, 2008). This cannot take the program to the expected standards, hence the mentorship programme faces a lot of challenges.

Successful mentorship is influenced by adequate funding for training mentors and mentees on their roles and expectations, effective communication strategies, and relationship building techniques (https://www.td.org/insights/5-tips-for-successful-mentoringprogram implementation-Top; Mtika, 2008). Research has established that mentors need to undertake formal training in order for the mentoring process to be a success (Howe, 2006). To be effective, mentors need training that provides ongoing opportunities for thorough, quality professional development and

contexts in which to develop their mentoring skills (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). This helps to increase their expertise and enable educative mentoring to become a natural part of their practice (McDonald and Flint, 2011). The mentor has to be trained in the ways of talking to and building trust with mentees. Mentees, should also be trained in knowing how to ask the right questions and learn from their mentors (https://www.td.org/insights/5-tips-for-successful-mentoring-program-implementationTop). Enough college training of the mentees makes them feel confident to fit easily in a community of practice (MIE, 2018). Suleman et al, (2008), argue that mentor training is central to the success of a mentoring scheme but quality is being reduced as the scheme develops. However, due to inadequate funding, the quality of training is compromised. They further add that putting a new mentoring scheme into practice requires all participants to develop new approaches and take on extended roles. In most mentoring programs, the mentoring support for the mentees is not initially as great as hoped. This is in realization of the fact that all partners are not sufficiently knowledgeable on how best the existing school setting could be utilized to benefit the student due to lack of funding for training (Suleman et al, 2008).

2. 6 Theoretical framework

The Situated Learning Theory guided the study as it is the learning that takes place in the context of a community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Community of practice refers "to any collectivity or group of people who together contribute to shared or public practices in a particular sphere of life" (Kirk and Macdonald, 1998: 380). The Situated Learning Theory is emerging as a possible vehicle for revitalizing the understanding of, and prescriptions for, how knowledge is developed and organized within workplaces (Brown, Collins and Duguid, 1989; Motteram ed., 2013). Within a community of practice, group members jointly share and develop practices, learn

from their interactions with group members, and gain opportunities to develop personally, professionally, or intellectually (Mills, 2013). The theory has critical characteristics which are highly reflected in the mentorship program of training teachers. According to Herrington and Oliver (1995), outlined below are the critical characteristics and how they have been applied in the study:

I.   It preserves the full context of the situation without fragmentation and decomposition, which invites exploration and allows for the natural complexity of the real world. For example, in teacher education, mentees get trained with real learners in a school environment. As mentees go through teaching practice, they learn steps, procedures, hints, suggestions, clues and facts which neatly add up to the correct solution under the guidance of mentors. In this study, the theory helps to see how mentees develop their professional career in a real context.

II.   Situated learning environments provide access to expert performances and the modeling of processes, allowing mentees to observe the task before it is attempted. In teacher education, the mentees have the mentors at their disposal to learn from all the tactics of a qualified teacher during teaching practice. Therefore, the situated learning theory guides the study as to how mentees gain professional skills through modelling of their mentors.

III.   A situated learning environment provides for mentorship at critical times, and scaffolding of support, where the mentor provides the skills, strategies and links that the mentees are unable to provide to complete the task. Gradually, the support is removed until the mentee is able to stand alone. Therefore, the theory guides the study

that mentors observe the mentees and give necessary feedback which will lead to expected improvements in the mentees' weaknesses. This is to ensure that mentees have the opportunity to articulate, negotiate and defend their knowledge to show ownership.

IV. A situated learning environment provides for integrated assessment of learning within the tasks. Assessment must become an integrated, ongoing, and seamless part of the learning. This calls for both self and mentor's assessment to ensure that the mentees are using personal reflections and guidance of the mentor to develop into professional teachers.

The researcher assumed that the student-teachers and mentors aimed at constructing realities of challenges of mentorship in their community of practice individually and through mentorship within the context of the profession. This means immersing in the daily life of the community of practice. The researcher entered into the respondents' world and through continuous interactions, sought the respondents' perspectives and meaning (Creswell, 2002). Due to that, the challenges of mentorship were understood better.

The research used the interpretivist paradigm. Interpretivism refers to the approaches which emphasizes on people's character and participation in both social and cultural life (Elster, 2007; Walsham, 1995). It denotes the methods of the research which adopts the position that people's knowledge of reality is a social construction by human actors (Eliaeson, 2002; McIntosh, 1997). Interpretivism was chosen because data collected through interpretivism methods are associated with high level validity as it tends to be trustworthy and honest. In addition, analysis of factors impacting mentorship can be studied in great level depth (Myer, 2008).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3. 1 Overview

In this chapter, the first section looks at the research design while the second part describes the participant sampling and selection procedures. Furthermore, the chapter describes data collection instruments and administration procedures in detail. Last but not least, the section, describes the methods of data analysis used and concludes with limitations of the study.

3. 2 Research Design

This study was a qualitative case study that explored the challenges of mentoring student teachers in teaching practice schools' context. Its goal was to explore the behavior, processes of interaction, and the meanings, values and experiences of purposefully sampled individuals and groups in their "natural" contexts (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005; Malterud, 2001). Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations. Therefore, as the study gathered challenges, possible causes and possible solutions of mentorship in teacher education, it was underpinned by a constructivist paradigm. According to Driscoll (2000), in constructivism, learners constantly try to derive their own personal mental model of the real world from their perceptions of that world. Olusegun (2015), adds that constructivism promotes social and communication skills by creating a classroom environment that emphasizes collaboration and exchange of ideas. This is very relevant in teacher education employing mentorship in a community of practice.

In qualitative case study, research multiple realities are socially constructed through individual and collective definitions of a situation (Schumacher and McMillan, 1993). In qualitative study, non numeric data is collected and analyzed through observations, interviews (Gray, & Airasian, 2000: 9) and document analysis (Kitto, Chesters and Grbich, 2008). According to Ndengu, (2012), several methods of data collection necessitate triangulation of data generation. The scholars referenced above further describe triangulation as the act of collecting data in as many different ways and from different sources as possible with the aim of helping the researcher to have a better understanding of the phenomenon under study from as many angles as possible.

The use of the qualitative case study research design helped to bring a full understanding of the research problem (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009). In addition, the design helped the study to make inferences from the findings. The use of qualitative research methods provides data with greater depth and greater width respectively (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

3. 3 Research paradigm

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), qualitative research is described as an interpretive and naturalistic approach to the world whereby meaning is situated in a particular perspective or context such as a community of practice (also see Fraenkel, and Wallen, 2009). This matches well with the topic under study: Investigating challenges associated with the pre-service teacher mentoring program at teacher training colleges in Malawi. Different people and groups often have different perspectives and contexts. There are many different meanings in the world, none of which is necessarily more valid or true than another (Gray and Airasian, 2000: 9). Therefore, data was collected in the natural setting of the teaching practice schools as a community of practice. According to Creswell (2002), this type of approach to the study that does not have the known

variables to be studied, is needed. Creswell (2002), cites examples of the topic being new, the topic being never addressed with a certain sample, or existing theories not applying with a particular sample under study.

Furthermore, the research used concurrent approach in which two or more tools are used to collect data within the same time frame. Both forms of data from face-to-face interviews and document analysis were collected at the same time and then integrated into an interpretation of the overall study results (Creswell, 2002).

The lenses of this paradigm enabled me to interact with the participants. Such a participatory approach brought to the fore participants' understanding, their experiences and the meaning they attach to the challenges of mentorship affecting the quality of teachers. Such active and cooperative interactions were ideal to generate required data and helped greatly to get a better understanding into the phenomena and therefore, ably interpret the findings, and answer the question under study.

3. 4 Research Site

The study was conducted in schools which are used by Kasungu Teacher Training College for teaching practice. The area covered four zones which are Kasungu North, Mzimba South, Dowa-Ntchisi, and Kasungu South. Mzimba South zone is in Northern region while the rest of the zones are in Central region of Malawi. The zones cover five districts: Kasungu, Mzimba South, Dowa, Ntchisi, and Mchinji. Kasungu T. T. C. was a chosen compass to collect data from lecturers in the Social Studies Department. The site had been chosen because of some factors that could make the research possible. Firstly, the site had been chosen because no-one so far from the college had

taken an initiative to conduct a study on the challenges of mentorship being experienced in the teaching practice schools. Secondly, the researcher targeted the zones which had been created by Kasungu T. T. C. for teaching practice because there were several problems being experienced in relation to mentorship in the identified schools. Lastly, the researcher resides in Kasungu which made it easy to travel to the identified schools making it cost effective during data collection.

3. 5. 0 Study population

3. 5. 1 Study population

The study population was taken from teaching practice schools which are carefully and purposefully selected to provide the best possible environment for mentees to develop their teaching skills, professional qualities and relationships by teaching practice coordinator (MIE, 2018). For example, the schools should have enough qualified teachers and these teachers should be willing to work with mentees as mentors (MIE, 2018). Jay (2005: 9) defines teaching practice as an activity that "involves trainees working in real classes with real learners alongside fully-qualified professional teachers" to act as mentors (MOEST, 2014; MIE, 2018). Mentoring is a socialization process of student teachers into the teaching profession by experienced teachers with a primary objective of enhancing the student teachers' competences (Mwanza, Moyo and Maphosa, 2015).

A study population is a bigger group from which a sample is selected to become the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group (Kumar, 2011). The study population included all mentor teachers, class teachers, and mentees/student teachers in TPSs and TTC lecturers who are involved in the mentorship program as supervisors of the programme.

A sample of fourteen respondents was used for this study. In a qualitative research, a small distinct group of participants is investigated to understand the problem in depth (Merriam, 2000). More importantly, the aim of the researcher was not to generalize the research findings but rather to have a deeper understanding of the challenges of mentorship in IPTE program despite the sandwich feedback sessions of mentorship in the selected schools during teaching practice as a community of practice.

Four mentees were identified to form part of the participants of which two were females from two zones and the other two were males from the other two zones. This was done to accommodate the gender difference. The class teacher mentors paired with mentees in each school sampled were also taken on board. The class teacher mentors were taken on board as participants because the mentees paired with them, hence they were sampled for the study. The three categories of the participants were considered to be key participants. With experience from the pilot school, the identified sample was expected to provide enough data for the study. Two College lecturers were also involved in the study, especially those from the Social Studies Department because the study looked at challenges of mentorship in Social Studies. The sample helped qualitative inquiry either to explore or describe the diversity in a situation, phenomenon or issue in detail (Kumar, 2005: 165). (Refer to table 3. 1).

3. 5. 2 Biographical details

An analysis of the biographical details of the participants provided some important insights into the study findings. In the schools identified for the study, there was no female teacher paired with the mentee as a class teacher mentor and only two female mentors participated (refer to Table 3.1)**.** Again, it was also found out that many of the participants were not fully trained to mentor the

mentees in teaching practice schools. Such revelations were critical as they helped in the analysis and subsequent interpretation of the study findings**.**

There are few female teachers in most primary schools. Out of the four mentors and four class teacher mentors, only two were engaged in the mentorship programme of IPTE in four teaching practice schools. Mentorship works better with total commitment and engagement. According to Zachary, (2000), "Commitment by and engagement of mentoring partners is necessary for establishing, maintaining, and experiencing successful mentoring relationships". Therefore, programme implementers with a divided commitment and engagement, refused to utilize the opportunity and the head teachers could not force them to take part in the mentorship programme.

Table 3. 1: Details of the participants

Type Of Participant	Fully Trained		Partially Trained		Not Trained		Institutions		**Total**
Sex	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
Mentors	0	1	2	1	0	0	School B and D	School A and C	4
Class Teacher Mentors	0	0	0	2	0	2		School A, B, C and D	4
Mentees	0	0	2	2	0	0	School A and B	School C and D	4
Lecturers	0	0	1	1	0	0	college	college	2
Total	0	1	5	6	0	2			14

Table, 3. 1**,** shows that some of the teachers engaged in the mentorship programme were not or partially trained. This could be one of the possible reasons why most women did not take part. These mentors must demonstrate proficiency within a mentoring model as well as undergo training in peer coaching and collaborative reflection (Pepper, 2014: 4). Also, eleven out of fourteen teachers engaged in mentorship in teaching practice schools were partially trained and two were not trained. Even the one who accepted to have been fully trained, it was some five years ago when he got trained and not in line with the revised IPTE curriculum. Hence, he demanded for a fresh training as the curriculum has been revised.

3. 5. 3 Sampling techniques

With the help of the teaching practice coordinators, the stratified sampling was used to select schools by gender of the mentees because allocation of the mentees to schools was based on sex (Kumar, 2011). This was to give a chance of gender balance. Stratified sampling was followed by random sampling of the schools to be used for data collection. This was to give an equal chance to all the stratified schools based on sex of the mentees to be sampled for the study (Kumar, 2011).

Furthermore, purposive sampling of participants was opted as the study targeted the challenges of mentorship in Social Studies, hence, those students teaching social studies at that particular time were taken on board. Class teacher mentors paired with identified mentees were also purposively sampled to triangulate data collected from the mentees. College lecturers were also selected based on purposive sampling because the study was targeting assessing the mentorship in social studies. Purposive sampling was chosen, as the name suggests, for a specific purpose of investigating challenges of mentorship in Social Studies (Teddie and Yu, 2007). School and class teacher mentors were no exception as they were the ones mentoring the mentees in TPSs.

3. 5. 4   Methods of data collection

Data collection tools were pilot tested at K Full Primary School using one mentor teacher, class teacher mentor and student teacher to ascertain their effectiveness in collecting data for the study. K Primary School was chosen because it's one of the schools hosting student-teachers on teaching practice. The pilot tested sample went through face-to-face interviews using an interview guide. The document analysis was also carried out to trace elements of mentorship in them. The documents were compared to the checklists of the teaching practice framework to check the expected standards. One lecturer was also interviewed on the challenges of mentorship.

The data collected from the pilot sample was analyzed and showed that the collected data would really produce the expected results for the study.

In the collection of initial data for the study, prior arrangements were made so as to collect data without causing inconvenience to respective participants. The researcher paid visits to the concerned schools to make arrangements with school management on the date and time of data collection. A day prior to the agreed date and time, the researcher confirmed his visit through phone calls. Thereafter, the researcher visited the schools on the agreed dates and time.

Data was collected using face-to-face interviews and document analysis. The face-to-face interviews had an interview guide **(See Appendix F)**. The face-to-face interviews were employed because they have the ability to provide insight into how participants experienced and thought about the challenges of mentorship in IPTE programme (Sewell, (n. d), Kvale 1996). The benefit was to probe further for explanation of the data that would be difficult to capture using other methods of data collection. Furthermore, face-to-face interviews offer a chance to interpret non-verbal cues through observations of body language, facial expressions, and eye contact. This

enhances the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon under study (Ryan, Coughlan, and Cronin, 2009).

The interview guide was used to gather in-depth information concerning the implementation of sandwich feedback sessions between the mentors and the mentees in coming up with challenges, causes and possible solutions to the challenges (Terre-Blanche, 2006). **(Refer to appendix E)**.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted involving one selected mentee, mentor and one class teacher mentor per school and two T. T. C. lecturers as participants. The interviews were audio-recorded and backed up with field notes. This allowed more accurate picture of the questions and answers to achieve validity. With the student-teachers, the interviews lasted between ten to twenty minutes, those with the class teachers lasted fifteen to twenty minutes and those with lecturers and school mentors were from twenty to forty minutes. The time variation was wide due to the experiences of the participants on mentorship as some were more experienced than the others.

In addition to face-to-face interviews, the researcher also employed document analysis method to collect and analyse data (Bowen, 2009) **(Refer to Appendix E)**. Documents analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material (Mayring, 2002; Bowen, 2009). Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007). As result, Mayring (2002), argues that documents should be well outlined and the process should bear externalization of the authors in mind. Documents contain text (words) and images that have been recorded without a researcher's intervention (Bowen, 2009). The researcher read through school experience journals (SEJ), lesson

plans, schemes and records of work to gather data which was used together with data collected through face-to-face interviews. These documents were used in the study considering the reasons why they are used by the mentees, to compare them with expected standards of the documents and check issues of mentorship as they were produced by the mentees and checked by the mentors for their quality (Mayring, 2002).

According to Denzin, (1970: 291), documents analysis is often used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulation in the study of the same phenomenon. Triangulation of data helps the researcher to provide 'a confluence of evidence that breeds research credibility' (Eisner, 1991: 110). By examining information collected through different methods, the researcher corroborated findings across data sets. This reduced the impact of potential biases that could exist in a single study. Patton (1990), argues that triangulation helps the researcher to guard against the accusation that a study's findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator's bias.

Documents analysis was done by comparing the documents with necessary characteristics of the identified document as stipulated in the revised IPTE curriculum. Documents analysis gave the real picture of mentorship on the ground. It revealed how the mentees carried out their work under mentorship. The data was collected using field notes.

The nature of this study required documents analyses. Essentially, the method demanded to find the right documents, read them and think about them (Gary, 2013). The identified documents were read and analyzed following the following steps:

i. Defining the documents that should be used to collect data. These included SEJ, Schemes and records of work, lesson plans and lesson evaluation forms.

ii. Formulating well defined questions to guide in understanding the documents. Some of the questions included: Are the success criteria well stated in a lesson plan? Are tasks demanding professional meetings in the SEJ done after the meetings? Do lesson evaluation forms show signs of improvement after the feedback from the mentors?

iii. Considering the relevance of the identified documents for the formulated questions, the formulated questions were asked based on the documents identified for analysis like lesson plans, schemes and records of work and SEJ.

iv. Interpreting the documents according to the defined questions (based on a checklist as presented in Table 2**,** which guided documents analysis. (**See Appendix E).**

According to Walliman, (2011), "a major aspect of using documents used and checked by mentors is making an assessment of the quality of the information or opinions provided". This was done by comparing it with expected standards in the IPTE programme. Bowen (2009), suggests that pre-defined codes are used especially if the document analysis is supplementary to other research methods employed in the study. The lesson plans, schemes and records of work, SEJ and lesson evaluation forms were studied to investigate 'traces of mentorship' in them as reflected in the interviews with the participants. The documents analyzed were to help in identifying whether the stakeholders were competent enough to work on their own or not, and what mentorship aspects could be observed from them. These gave a revelation if the mentorship sessions were taking place at school level and if it was bearing positive results. Some documents such as lesson plans and lesson evaluation forms revealed some challenges which could otherwise not be captured through interviews.

3. 6 Research rigour

Research should ensure to produce the findings which are trustworthy (Nunnally, 1978). This is achieved through triangulation. Triangulation is the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals (e.g., a principal and a student), types of data (e.g., observational field notes and interviews), or methods of data collection (e.g., documents analysis and interviews) in descriptions and themes in qualitative research (Creswell, 2012). Triangulation of the participants and the methods of data collection on the mentorship sandwich feedback sessions were used to ensure trustworthiness and credibility of the study (Krefting, 1991). Triangulation means looking at things from different angles and using different methods for looking at them (Gary, 2013). The triangulation involved the student teachers, mentors, class teachers and college lecturers as participants while, face-to-face interviews and documents interrogation were used as the methods of data collection.

According to Denzin, (1970: 291), documents analysis is often used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulation—'the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon.' Triangulation of data helps the researcher to provide 'a confluence of evidence that breeds research credibility' (Eisner, 1991: 110). By examining information collected through different methods, the researcher corroborated findings across data sets. This reduced the impact of potential biases that could exist in a single study. Patton (1990), argues that triangulation helps the researcher guard against the accusation that a study's findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator's bias. Triangulation provided more detailed understanding of the mentorship phenomenon and created a greater confidence in the conclusions that were generated (Johnson et. al, 2007).

Consistent and well-designed questions help to achieve research rigour (Tod, 2006), as it reflects the concepts of credibility, transferability and dependability (Koch, 2006; Ryan et al, 2009). A careful procedure to carry out interviews, selection of the interviewees, and how the interviewer influenced the interviewees were carefully managed to minimize biasness and increase research data rigour (Tod, 2006). This was used hand-in-hand with reflective diary of the researcher's experience and observations during the process (Ryan et al, 2009). Close scrutiny of the documents used in the mentorship process also added strength to rigour of the data gathered.

3. 7. 0 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of the data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

Data from qualitative research was analyzed using different approaches and through different steps (O'Leary, 2004). In addition to that, Ndengu (2012), argues that the steps used in qualitative data analysis are not linear but fluid. This means that it can be analyzed based on the understanding of the researcher. The main objective of data analysis was to bring order, structure and meaning out of the large volume of the gathered data (O'Leary, 2004; Cohen et al., 2005; Woods, 2006). In a Similar way, analysis of the generated data in the study went through four steps which were not linear but fluid.

3. 7. 1 Getting to know the data

According to O'Leary (2004), the first step in data analysis involved reading and re-reading the data in order to be familiar with it and to clearly understand it and make meaning out of it. This

step was important in order to be as close to the data as possible – from initial collection right through to the drawing of final conclusions (O'Leary, 2004). In this step, the audio recordings were re-played and listened to carefully before transcribing them. Many authors on qualitative research methodology have argued that analysis should be done on data which is in textual format. As a result, the recordings were transcribed. Then the transcripts were carefully compared with the recordings to ensure they were in line with each other. The field notes from document analysis were read diligently to have a clear understanding of the data.

3. 7. 2 Content analysis

After being acquainted with the data, the next step focused on content analysis (O'Leary, 2004). This involved identifying from, or in, the data consistencies and differences through comparing and contrasting responses of participants to the research objectives, and the field notes. All the data were subjected to the content analysis and as the consistencies and differences were being identified, it helped in developing codes and categories.

After the content analysis, there was coding of each data set. According to Cohen et al. (2005) and Ndengu (2012), coding, includes categorizing the raw data into descriptive categories. Thus, descriptive codes were provided to each data set. This was done by making sense of what the participant had said. Similar data sets were then grouped together to form data categories. To identify challenges, the interviews with participants were transcribed, read several times and

coded according to types of challenges, possible causes and solutions to mentorship challenges (Refer to Table 4. 2). The categories led to the emerging of the preliminary themes.

The research design and methodology have been summarized in Table 3. 2 below against the research questions.

Table 3. 2: A summary of the research design and methodology.

Research question	participants	Data collection method	Data analysis
What are the challenges of mentorship in TP Schools?	Mentors (4) Class teacher mentors (4) Mentees (4) College lecturers (2)	Face-to-face interviews Documents analysis	Qualitative (interview transcripts) Documents analysis (Documents analysis checklist.)
What are the possible causes of the challenges of mentorship in TP Schools?	Mentors (4) Class teacher mentors (4) Mentees (4) College lecturers (2)	Face to face interviews Documents analysis	Qualitative (interview transcripts) Documents analysis

			(Documents analysis checklist.)
What are the possible solutions to the challenges of mentorship in TP Schools?	Mentors (4) Class teacher mentors (4) Mentees (4) College lecturers (2)	Face to face interviews	Qualitative (interview transcripts)

3. 8 Ethical issues

Since the study was to deal with human beings, it was necessary to take ethical issues seriously. According to O'Leary (2004), researchers are responsible for the integrity of the research process. In respect of ethical issues, the researcher sought for permission from the office of the Academic Registrar of Mzuzu University to conduct this study **(refer to Appendix A).** The researcher also asked for permission from the Division Manager, Central East Division to conduct the research in his division **(refer Appendix B)** and head teachers/principal of the sampled schools/college respectively to conduct a research at their institutions **(refer Appendix C)**. Furthermore, the researcher also got informed consent from the participants. The informed consent was in written form, spelling out the title and the benefits of the study (Gary, 2013; Kumar, 2005) **(refer Appendix D).** In addition, the participants were allowed to exercise their liberty to take part in the research willingly and voluntarily. The researcher had to assure the respondents of their dignity and that the whole process of the research would be kept with confidentiality. The researcher also assured the participants that their participation would not be subjected to public debate.

3. 9 Limitations of the study

The study had covered a small number of schools which host student-teachers on teaching practice which made it not be feasible to generalize the results to the similar situations. The methods of data collection also brought in some limitations to the study as it employed the qualitative approach only. With qualitative data analysis it becomes difficult to generalize the findings since people construct knowledge of the phenomenon under study in different ways.

3. 10 Chapter summary

The chapter has described the research design in detail. It has also described the sampling and selection procedure as well as data collection instruments, administration procedures and methods used for data analysis. It has also looked at the aspects of ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4. 1 Introduction

The chapter presents the challenges followed by the causes and possible solutions to the challenges immediately in response to the objectives of the study. This has been done to show a good flow of information and a link between the challenges, causes and possible solutions to the challenges. A discussion of the findings comes soon after the presentation of the data.

4. 2. 0 An approach to data presentation

The common challenges were identified in order to address the first objective which was to investigate the common challenges associated with the implementation of the mentorship program in teaching practice schools. Soon after each challenge, follows the possible causes of the challenges in response to the second objective. Then after possible causes, comes the possible solutions to the challenges. This was in response to the third objective of the study that looks at the possible solutions to the challenges. (Refer to table 4. 2). The data presented was collected through face-to-face interviews with participants and documents analysis used by the mentees and checked by the programme implementers.

4. 3. 1 Inadequate knowledge on mentorship by programme implementers

One of the challenges identified through interviews and document analysis was inadequate knowledge on the part of mentors. Inadequate knowledge referred to pertains to how the

mentorship programme can be handled by the implementers. Transcription of interviews was read through and revealed that programme implementers were not adequately trained for the benefit of the mentees. When asked if they had been trained, the participants said that they had partial training and that they relied on experience to help the mentees. The other two participants had no training of any kind in mentorship and one claimed to have been trained five years ago before the curriculum review. Majoni, (2015) agrees that preparation for mentoring has not been a priority in many pre-service teacher education programmes.

Some of the responses to the question: "Were you trained for mentorship?" which showed that participants were not trained were expressed as below:

> **Lecturer M**: Due to lack of training, we use trial and error.
>
> **Lecturer F**: We follow what the mentoring guides tell participants to follow.
>
> **Mentor (school A)**: I use experience by identifying the weaknesses and strengths of the mentees and assist them in a way I can manage.

Furthermore, to show inadequate knowledge on the part of the mentors, documents analysis had a lot of evidence pertaining to inadequate knowledge. Mentors showed some weaknesses in one way or the other. For example, documents analysis showed inadequate knowledge on some of the documents used by the participants.

The researcher read diligently through the documents to see how mentorship implementers carried out their duties. The mentors were supposed to be trained in how to evaluate the mentees' work in the SEJ tasks, giving a summary of performance which should match with the grade and comments reflecting a good understanding of what the mentee had done. However, evaluation of the tasks showed contradictions. For example, in one of the tasks, the researcher expected to read how the

mentee had responded to the task after observing a fellow mentee and recorded the strengths and weaknesses of a fellow mentee. Thereafter, the mentor was supposed to assess the mentee's work. However, due to inadequate knowledge of what is expected of them in the task, it was the mentors answering the task and evaluating it themselves. If the mentors had been trained, they would not respond to the SEJ task and assess it themselves and would have not poorly evaluated the tasks done by the mentees. In addition, the mentors gave a summary of performance of "satisfactory" and grade 2 with a comment, "apply the same skills to next tasks" as if that was the best level of performance. The best level of performance was "excellent" and the best grade was 4. This evaluation of mentees' work by the mentors is contrary to a good evaluation system hence showed inadequate knowledge on the part of the mentors in doing their work.

Furthermore, much as the lecturers advised mentors and head teachers to use the mentoring guides as reference documents to guide the mentorship programme, it is not everyone who can read the documents with keen interest and understanding. MacJessie-Mbewe (2008: 47), argues that 'these documents are written in academic English and they are too long and most implementers find them difficult to read and understand'.

In addition, despite mentors used experience to handle mentorship' however, experience was not a good enough factor to consider as all of them had different level of experiences based on years of service in mentoring mentees. This lack of training renders mentors inept to cope with the dynamism of the revised IPTE curriculum and the new approaches advocated in it. The result was that the quality of revised IPTE curriculum delivery is compromised.

4. 3. 2 Possible causes of inadequate knowledge

Poor funding for training was well-articulated by the participants in the study as a cause of inadequate knowledge on the part of mentorship programme implementers. Training of mentors is vital if the mentors are to understand their roles in facilitating the learning of mentees (Tovey, 1998). Kunje, Lewin and Stuart (2002), argue that qualified teachers are the most vital training resource at a school and therefore, are expected to take a major role in the training process of teachers. However, these teachers do not carry out their duties as expected due to inadequate funding for training. Some of the partners were not sufficiently knowledgeable of their mentorship roles. The respective roles of the students and qualified teachers were not clear and that supportive trainer-student relationship arose by chance than by design. To this end, Rippon and Martin (2006: 86), suggest: "the best mentors are those who can negotiate their way through the shifting sands of support at the right time for each person". This can only be achieved through adequate funding for training of the mentorship implementers. The data was gathered through the interviews in response to the question: why do you think mentorship programme implementers inadequate knowledge in mentorship? The responses are reflected below:

> **Lecturer F:** The initiators of the programme probably had no money to train all the stakeholders
>
> **Mentor school A:** To me it seems the donors have no money to train all the stakeholders in the programme.
>
> **Class teacher mentor (School C):** May be the donors have no money.

Training of the implementers targets the real issues of the stakeholders in the programme. Mentors are supposed to have full funding so that they get adequate training which can help them to mentor

the trainees with adequate knowledge. During the training of the mentors, the available funding was K2500. 00 as lunch allowance per participant for only one day.

4. 3. 3 Possible solution to inadequate knowledge challenge

For a better implementation of the programme, the stakeholders ought to be trained so that they have a clear understanding of the programme. This can be achieved through adequate funding. Participants should be given full subsistence allowances and transport to various training centers. Lack of training means failure to communicate what the programme is all about. Studies have shown that without training of the implementers programmes have failed (Evans, 1996). Most of them accepted to have been oriented just for a day where a lot of work was compressed affecting their understanding of the programme. The training was compressed to meet the powers of the available funds. However, according to Everard, Morris, and Wilson (2004: 213), training should be seen as an investment with full funding.

For example, in an interview with some participants, this is how it was:

> **Researcher:** What could be a solution to the problem of inadequate knowledge in order for you to competently do the work of mentorship?
>
> **Mentor (school A):** We need adequate funding to be fully trained.
>
> **Class teacher mentor (school C):** We rarely have INSETS. It is necessary that we get enough funding for the training.

This was more serious since the programme had been revised. As a result, participants in the study proposed full funding for training of the implementers so that they are aware of what the programme was all about. Training would beef up the knowledge gained through reading of different documents which were meant to act as reference as suggested by college lecturers.

Therefore, participants identified adequate funding for training as a substantial facilitator to mentorship, and the lack of training a barrier (Allen, Eby, Lentz, 2006; Kram, 1998). Furthermore, during training, experiences of different mentors and class teacher mentors can enhance skills, attitudes and practices through interaction and sharing such experiences. This could create smooth mentorship.

4. 4. 1 Under performance of the mentees

The mentees also were described to be under-performing in their professional career. This was a major concern to participants in the study. According to the programme structure, mentees were supposed to be prepared for teaching practice in the first two terms (M. I. E., 2018). The period was supposed to equip them with enough content and pedagogical knowledge. Data gathered from the participants through interviews and documents analysis showed that the mentees lacked both content and pedagogical knowledge in Social Studies, hence their underperformance (refer to table 4. 1 below).They asked mentors a lot of questions about content and methods of teaching. Other participants even wondered as to who was supposed to train teachers these days.

Even the mentees themselves did not know what was expected of them in partnering them with the mentors and class teacher mentors. When asked if they were trained about the mentorship programme during their teaching practice preparation period, they seemed not to be sure of the programme. Their orientation took very few hours. Hadley (1982), argues that before student-teachers embark on their first visit, briefing is essential as most of them can have peculiar notions of what they will find out there in TPSs.

The programme implementers had the following observations through an interview to question: "When you observe the mentees in their lesson presentation, what are some of the challenges that you notice as regards the performance of the mentees?

Mentor (school A): They seem to have very little knowledge pertaining to teaching and learning.

Mentor (school C): They are always on my back when it comes to lesson preparation, lesson evaluation, and filling the records of work. They cannot do most of these things on their own.

Class teacher (school B): They fail to prepare enough teaching and learning resources and fail sometimes even using them in a classroom setting.

Lecturer M: Lesson plans are very sketchy, poor success criteria construction, use of learner-centered approaches are very rare and have poor time management.

Documents analysis also revealed a lot of underperformance of the mentees in their daily professional activities as a sign of inadequate preparation for teaching practice (Refer to table below).

Table 4. 1: Summary of incompetency of the mentees

Schemes and records of work	Quality of work planed	Suggested methods	Quality of work done	Quality of remarks
	Good work	Limited methods	Sketchy work with few or no examples.	Duplicate of work done.

Lesson plans	format	Quality of success criteria	Adequacy of activities for a lesson	Indication when to use resources
	Good	Used wrong verbs: discuss, know	Under or over planed	Resources were not scheduled when to use.
File Supervision form	strengths	challenges		
	- had complete schemes of work. - had resources. - had well updated file work.	- had poorly filed records of work. - had inadequate resources. - had poor time management. - Used limited strategies of teaching and learning.		

To begin with, lesson plans were read through and it was observed that they had poorly constructed success criteria. Student-teachers used wrong words like "By the end of the lesson, learners must be able to 'discuss, know' which are difficult words to assess. The lesson plans could not show when the resources could be used in the course of lesson presentation.

Going through their schemes of work, however, they were nicely done but the challenges appeared in filling the records of work. The outcome column carried statements like, learners are able to…with little examples of what the learners were able to do. The same content was being duplicated in the remarks column instead of stating why the lessons were a success or a failure and the way forward if need be.

Analysis of the supervision forms by the college lecturers, mentor teachers and head teachers also showed that the mentees were facing challenges of poor time management. They were also not varying methods of teaching and learning in their lesson presentation. The supervision forms further indicated that the mentees needed to evaluate the lessons on daily basis as a sign that most lessons were not evaluated soon after teaching. In addition, SEJ tasks were answered in a sketchy way with a lot of grammatical errors. Mentors and head teacher mentors had to make several grammatical corrections in the SEJ tasks.

With such evidence from the interviews and documents used by mentees, this was a sign that college preparation of teachers is inadequately done. However, according to Majoni (2015), mentorship programme during teaching practice was supposed to benefit the mentees to apply theory learnt in college into practice in a community of practice. Contrary to this, the mentors and class teacher mentors had observed that the mentees did not receive enough theory pertaining to their training while in college. Documents analysis showed incompetence of the mentees in doing their file work as part of their day-to-day duties.

4. 4. 2 Possible causes of under performance of the mentees

The challenge was attributed to a number of factors. Data was gathered through interviewing programme implementers. According to the respondents, the challenge was as a result of reduced

period for preparation for TP. Two terms were not enough. The previous curriculum provided a full one year for TP preparation for them to be engaged in mentorship.

Furthermore, Social Studies being an elective subject in secondary school made most trainees not to have subject content hence the challenges they faced to teach competently in their daily lessons during TP. The revised curriculum emphasizes on methodology rather than content as per the design of the modules being used by the mentees. By shortening the period, it was assumed that the mentees had content from their secondary school background. The modules just indicated mentees to use the internet to access content. However, the college lecturers said that the mentees had no access to college internet. Therefore, one cannot effectively apply the strategies if he/she lacks content as the two are inseparable. The excerpt of an interview below illustrates this challenge:

> **Researcher:** What do you think are the causes of the mentees underperformance that you mentors are complaining about?
>
> **Mentor (school A):** The period for training has been reduced to two terms which I feel is not enough to prepare them thoroughly for teaching practice where they are engaged in mentorship.
>
> **Lecturer F:** The modules being used are emphasizing more on methodologies with little content yet the Social Studies is an elective subject in secondary school.

The concerns of the mentees are a contradiction to the claims in the revised IPTE curriculum. The curriculum strongly states that the curriculum had been revised to help student-teachers to acquire the right knowledge, skills and competences to enable them to effectively teach the children (MIE,

2018). However, the challenges expressed by the participants were a sign that the expectations of the revised curriculum were not being achieved. For example, **one mentee** argued,

"The modules we are using lack content which we can use to teach the learners".

4. 4. 3 Possible solutions to the inadequate preparation for TP of the mentees

For the mentees' inadequate preparation for TP, they needed a longer period to be fully trained in both content and pedagogical skills. The college lecturers argued that this could be achieved through increasing the period for staying in college. They argued like that because the previous programme provided enough time of one year in college in preparation for teaching practice.

The college lecturers were also quick to say that content and methods of teaching should be balanced in the revised IPTE curriculum modules. Relying on internet for mentees to hunt for content was not possible as the college had few gadgets and mentees had no access to the same. Lecturers argued that it was difficult to compress the work into two terms and expect to produce competent teachers. The findings of the study also indicated that methodologies on their own mean nothing but should go together with content. The following excerpts from the participants revealed such data through face-to-face interviews as follows:

> **Researcher:** How best would the preparation for TP be improved so that the mentorship programme runs smoothly in TPSs?
>
> **Lecturer M:** Two terms are not enough as some of the mentees did not study Social Studies in secondary schools.
>
> **Lecturer F:** Subject content should also be taken on board in the curriculum emphasis. It is not possible for someone to be a competent teacher if one does not have the content to deliver to the learners…"Social Studies is an elective subject in secondary schools, as a

result, some students enrolled in T. T. Cs did not study it at that level, and hence they

struggle in mentorship programme.

From the researcher's personal experience, even the college sometimes experiences long periods

without access to the internet due to poor funding. Therefore, it was a far-fetched dream to have

mentees access the internet as some of these come from poor backgrounds to afford a smart phone

which could be used to access the internet.

4. 5. 1 Lack of support

Lack of support was a hot issue among all the participants. According to the participants, the

support which lacked in the revised IPTE mentorship programme began from the Ministry of

Education, Science and Technology to college through the teaching practice schools. Data has

been presented per stakeholder who deserved the support needed. The lack of support includes

financial and material resources.

Firstly, the college lacked support to the programme in form of adequate and consistent funding

from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Funding to the college affects the

planning and implementation of the college plans including mentoring of student-teachers.

For example, allowances were paid late to student-teachers and even the delivery of the resources

to TPSs and supervision by college lecturers was also delayed due to late and inadequate funding.

These negatively affected the performance of the mentees as there was accumulation of work to

be done after getting the resources. Respondents expressed their concerns as the researcher wanted

to know how the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology demonstrated lack of support to

the mentorship programme in the revised IPTE programme. In response, the participants said:

Lecturer M: Funding for the teaching practice is not steady. College plans are disturbed

because the ministry's funding is untimely and inadequate.

Lecturer F: Mentees' allowances are meant for their daily living in the field and to buy stationery yet they are not given timely.

Secondly**,** participants also observed that financial support of the mentees was very pathetic. The cost of living had gone up and it didn't make sense to pay the mentees such a little amount of money of K20, 000, (twenty thousand kwacha) per month, worse still, very untimely. The mentees came from different financial backgrounds which meant some solely depended on that allowance. This affected some mentors' family budget and welfare of community of practice members when they were asked to give support to the mentees. In some instances, mentees had to boycott classes or run away from teaching practice schools just because they had nothing with what to support themselves in their daily lives.

Thirdly, it was also noted that there was lack of support to the school mentors and class teacher mentors who were actually on the ground on daily basis assisting and monitoring how the mentorship was working. They worked even during odd hours just to ensure the production of quality teachers was being achieved. The researcher wanted to know if mentors were getting enough support for them to work effectively in the mentorship programme.

Researcher: As school and class teacher mentors do you get enough support for you to work effectively in the implementation of the mentorship programme?

Mentor from school D: No. They don't recognize us in a special way, in form of allowances or other incentives.

This was true as school and class teacher mentors assisted lecturers to produce quality teachers in Malawi. They complained of working outside the schedule because whenever the student-teacher fell ill, they were forced to take him or her to the hospital. They also said that sometimes they communicated with the college management using personal resources.

In addition to that, one college lecturer queried the logic of giving allowances during supervision and assessment of the same mentorship of mentees only to lecturers and not to school and class teacher mentors as well.

Much as there were such concerns from the stakeholders, the revised IPTE curriculum did not allow the payment of allowances to mentors or class teacher mentors. However, in my view, much as the concerns of the mentorship implementers about allowances are genuine, some mentors and class teacher mentors demanded allowances for selfish reasons. They lacked extended commitment and honesty but only to improve their economic status. Therefore, it was necessary that the allowances should be paid with a close scrutiny as to who should be engaged as a mentor or class teacher mentor.

Even documents analysis had shown that mentees had not finished writing the schemes of work in the sixth week when they were supposed to swap subjects with their class teacher mentors. They also had a lot of incomplete SEJ tasks since the SEJs were given to them late. All these situations were attributed to lack of or poor timing of the support needed. Therefore, if such mentees were visited for supervision, such supervision elements evoked a number of tensions among student-teachers (Mtika, 2008). For examples, the mentees observed that the college lecturers ended up condemning them for not being serious with their work without considering the root cause of the

problem. As a result, they were given poor grades. This was contrary to Blunden (1994) who commented that from a student teacher's viewpoint, good supervisors should be friendly, approachable, and supportive and have pedagogic knowledge and advice to give. Human face should be put into use when dealing with some of these issues.

4. 5. 2 Possible causes of the lack of support challenge

The participants blamed the government for implementing a policy which was to the disadvantage of the programme implementers. Abolition of a small amount as a token of appreciation to the TP school-based stakeholders was said to be a big mistake. The stakeholders at school level were engaged in a lot of work which saw them working tirelessly but for free. They could at times sacrifice personal resources out of the poor salaries that they get to make the programme seem to be working. When the researcher inquired about the cause of lack of support to the implementers of the mentorship programme in TPSs, one participant had this to say:

> **Lecturer M:** The government has introduced a policy of no allowance or no special recognition to the mentors, yet they are the people who do a lot of work in its implementation phase.

The participants further observed that sometimes governments danced to the tune of the donors who saw that it worked somewhere and they thought it would work likewise in Malawi.

Some participants suggested that possibly the revised IPTE programme was masterminded and initiated by the donor, GIZ. The donor observed that the programme had worked very well in other countries, like Botswana. As such it was assumed that it would work likewise in Malawi.

According to MacJessie-Mbewe, (2008), the only power the participants have on such programmes that are not closely monitored by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is to ignore them. As a researcher, this is very true in the absence of incentives in the implementation of the mentorship programme. Education programmes dependent on donor funding have tended to reflect donor priorities and interests, sometimes to the detriments of the needs of the country. The lack of support has demoralized the mentors and the class teacher mentors not to be seriously engaged in the implementation of the revised IPTE mentorship programme.

The problem of delay in payment of allowances was attributed to failure of college administration. The management was fully aware of the challenge, yet couldn't make a follow-up at the Ministry headquarters. They processed the mentees' allowances as business as usual despite experiencing challenges. Even the mentees were doubtful if college administration was doing something about the problem. They even suspected that there was corruption in the manner the college management was handling their allowances.

> **Mentee from school A:** The college management does not give convincing answers when asked why our allowances are not paid timely.
>
> **Mentee from school C:** I suspect that college management is using our money for corruption practices.
>
> **Mentee from D:** Management does not have our welfare at heart that is why they do business as usual.

From the finding about the cause of delays in processing our allowances, it showed that management was contributing to the problem. Management could hardly take the Ministry to task

and no follow-ups were made. However, it was the hub of mentees' survival and quality work in their files. The delay in the payment of allowances affected the social and professional life of the mentees. Socially, the mentees had gone into love affairs or were made beggars as a means of raising money for their survival. Professionally, the mentees failed to buy materials for preparation of their daily lessons.

4. 5. 3 Possible solutions to the challenge of lack of support

The government should give adequate funding which will see the re-introduction of allowances to the stakeholders. Some stakeholders expressed the following sentiments on whether they deserved to be paid for the support they gave the mentees or not:

> **Mentor (school D):** Why not? We are working and sometimes even during odd hours.
>
> **Lecturer M:** Yes, if lecturers get supervision allowances during supervision, why not a little amount of duty allowance to those who work with mentees on daily basis?

Furthermore, to show support of the programme, the Ministry of Education has to fund mentees' allowances timely and consistently on monthly basis as a solution. This was suggested by all the respondents in this study. Timely and consistent funding was suggested to be a solution because they argued that it meant that allowances and other material resources for mentees would be delivered in time by the college. Even the mentees would work with ease with their allowances paid timely as some of them come from poor backgrounds. Some of them solely depended on these allowances. Besides, their professional performance demanded a lot of preparation which required a lot of stationery. The allowances were to help in such issues. One of the participants expressed his concern on the issue of mentees' allowances by saying that,

"If mentees have allowances they have no excuse to give if they don't prepare for their work" **(lecturer M).**

The other way of showing support to the programme is by scaling up resources which are needed by the mentees in the community of practice. The materials included those to do with their professional preparation like reams of paper, markers, flip chart and glue. The materials that they were given were not enough as reflected in the mentees' complaints in an interview with the researcher. The researcher asked if mentees were given enough material resources for the training.

> **Mentee from school A:** The materials we are given are not enough. One ream of paper, one pen. They are not enough at all.

Fullan (2007), argues that insufficiency of the resources limits educators' implementation of the new or revised curriculum. Therefore, for proper implementation of the revise curriculum, the participants said that government should provide enough resources for the mentees, mentors, and supervisors of the programme. However, since the inception of FPE in 1994, it has become a tradition in Malawi to allocate more financial resources to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) as compared to other key ministries (RIPPLE Africa, 2013). Availability of resources plays a crucial role in whether the management of educational policy process will be a success or not.

4. 6. 1 Lack of role models in professional qualities

One of the changes in the revised IPTE curriculum is to develop professional qualities in the mentees as stipulated in the mentoring guide (MIE, 2018). Professional qualities could be

inculcated in the mentees through advice from and observation of the role models. In teacher education, modelling is a practice of the intentionally displaying certain behaviors with the aim of promoting student-teachers' professional learning (Gallimore and Tharp, 1992). The role models included all the qualified teachers in the school. They were to act as role models so that the mentees could learn some professional qualities from them.

In this study, it was observed by mentors and mentees that some of the challenges affecting mentorship in TPSs originated from how the head teachers and other qualified teachers in the schools carried out their duties. For example, two participants observed that the head teachers were operating from outside the schools. Such schools saw absenteeism of the head teachers not to be an issue. Class teachers were most of the times not available in class to observe their lessons due to absenteeism like most head teachers did. In relation to the revised IPTE curriculum, there were several changes which had to be taken on board by the school administration if it were to be achieved. Dean (2002: 89) argues that whatever the changes coming for the teaching practice schools, any head teacher and staff are likely to change their own programme which is particular to the school. Therefore, the success of the mentorship programme in IPTE depended on the head teacher's administrative and other qualified teachers' role modelling. In response to how the mentees developed their professionalism, some participants argued in the following words:

> **Mentor from school C:** Somehow good, but the challenge is that we are failing to role model to them as managers of the school or qualified teachers.

Mentor from school D cited that the head teacher lived away from the school for personal reasons, as such, could absent himself from work at will as an example of bad role modelling.

However, with reference to mentorship, such conduct had negative impact on the mentees who could easily conclude that once one earned the headship position or becomes a qualified teacher, he/she could do anything in a school, like absenting oneself from work.

Furthermore, other members of staff in some schools observed that qualified teachers did not behave exemplary for the mentees to learn from them. For example,

Class teacher mentor from school B said: "Punctuality at our school is developing into an uncontrollable problem more especially with us as qualified teachers".

However, this was four weeks into the term to the extent that the school was not organized for smooth running. Furthermore, the class teacher mentors could change the class timetable at will and most of the times they were busy with personal issues. The researcher wanted to know why the class teachers were doing that and the responses were very disappointing for such a local arrangement at classroom level.

Mentee from school D said: "Yes, they want to be relaxing, especially these days with technology; they will be busy chatting on WhatsApp or Face book".

It was worrisome to the goals of the mentorship programme that qualified teachers neglected their teaching responsibilities prioritizing technology. Sometimes female teachers too had spent time knitting at the expense of the learning time of the pupils. Such cases showed poor role modelling

especially to those who were just learning the profession in a community of practice. This was contrary to the slogan: 'Teach as you preach, Walk the Talk' and teachers teach as they are taught (Blume, 1971).' which was popular among the teacher educators who seemed to agree that they should be good examples of the views they were trying to promote in the mentees

From the scenarios above, it has been proved that school administration had an effect on the implementation of the revised IPTE mentorship programme in TPSs. This is because some of the professional qualities to be inculcated in the mentees are to avoid absenteeism and observe punctuality, and if any, they had to report to the management (MIE, 2018: 17). However, "Some teachers would go on "sabbatical leave" and leave all the work to the student-teacher. With the daily observations of what the school managers and mentor teachers were doing in a community of practice, the mentees were likely to be a replica of the same quality of teachers who failed their duties. It seems the TPSs were failing to put their professional skills into action, because their practical knowledge was part and parcel of their teaching.

4. 6. 2 Possible causes to lack of proper modelling

Modelling calls for serious consciousness and sense of humour. The people who behave as role models have to conduct themselves in an orderly manner all the time. Sometimes people fail to be role models due the situations on the ground or the context itself. In this study, a number of factors came up affecting the role modelling in a community of practice. In an interview with participants, they gave a number of reasons which made stakeholders in mentorship not to be role models in their work.

Firstly, some cited lack of job satisfaction as the cause of poor role modelling. Some participants paid little attention to professional issues because they were not satisfied with the teaching profession. For instance, **when Mentor from school A** was asked why he thought the head teachers and mentors failed to be role models to the mentees in observing punctuality and avoiding absenteeism, he said,

> "They seem not to be satisfied with their job, as a result, they engage themselves in other activities to improve their economic status".

For example, some teachers were business persons, so most of the times they went buying items for their businesses neglecting their professional obligations. In addition, one class teacher was studying at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources. So, he concentrated on the assignments that he was doing for his studies because he argued that he was not satisfied with the teaching profession.

Secondly, privileges given to teachers in a school had an effect on the role modelling by the qualified teachers. For example, accommodation was a source of motivation for some teachers to work dedicatedly. Poor accommodation made teachers to work with reservations.

> **Mentor from school C** said, "The head teacher has refused to move to this school because he says that he cannot stay here where there is no electricity yet he has a good house in town".

By insisting to reside outside the school, absenteeism and lack of punctuality could not be avoided. The other school and class teacher mentors argued,

"If the head teacher and others came to school late, there was no reason why I should be present all the time or punctual for duties".

'Like father like son' was regarded as a means of poor modelling. This has a negative impact on the mentees.

4. 6. 3 Possible solutions to poor modelling

Selection of the school administrators with exemplary professional qualities who can display them for the benefit of the mentees can benefit mentorship. If administrators set good examples, other teachers in the community of practice will follow suit. Mentees in such a community will be a replica of the practices. Tobin and Begley, (2004), argue that, "If the leadership doesn't create that culture of modelling and doesn't make it as normal part of the job and encourage it, then people get lost in their own life. Modelling is an important element of training. Administrative modelling support and commitment is a primary component of an effective mentoring programme. Without authentic modelling from administration and other qualified teachers, mentoring programmes are likely to fail. Therefore, such head teachers and mentors who set bad models are not needed in the implementation of the mentorship programme. People responsible for the appointment of school administrators should always bear in mind their competencies. This was in line with what other participants had said in response to a question on how modelling could be enhanced in a community of practice. For example, **mentor from school B** said:

"The school managers should be chosen on merit of their professional qualities".

People of good conduct display what they value and believe in. They display such characters without presence.

The participants also said that motivating factors in the education systems can make people to be fully committed to their work and portray themselves as good models. Through interview with the researcher, many respondents identified some ways of motivating teachers that could develop into good models as the excerpts below show:

Mentor from school D: Schools should provide good accommodation to its teachers so that they can be operating from the school surroundings and easily supervise what is happening around the school.

Mentor from school B: The mentors engaged in personal activities should be strongly advised to plan their time properly so that working hours should not suffer because of personal affairs.

From the foregoing, it is emphasized that good school administration could make mentorship programme implementers work as good role models. Furthermore, role modelling was possible if the role models were satisfied with their job. Job satisfaction makes the employee feel contented and happy hence the display of one's love for the job. It is advisable that the government should take serious measures to sort out the challenges teachers are facing in the communities of practice like the provision of good accommodation. Where need be, parental involvement in self-help projects to construct teachers' houses could help create a conducive environment for the teachers.

4. 7. 1 Bad behavior

Bad behavior was strongly observed by some of the respondents in the study. Under this theme, the mentors and class teachers bitterly expressed their concerns based on what they experienced

with the mentees. On the other hand, mentees also observed that the mentors and class teacher mentors showed some bad behaviors which affected the mentorship. All groups of the respondents were able to cite examples of bad conduct which affected the mentorship in the community of practice. Through interaction in an interview, the data was gathered in response to the following questions: What challenges do you experience as you relate with each other in a community of practice in trying to enhance mentorship in the TPSs? Responses from the mentors and class teacher mentors were as follows:

Mentor from school D: Sometimes we receive difficult teachers who are very rude. Advising them to do this and that, they will say college lecturers told us to do this and that. So who are you to tell us your stories? So it's a challenge.

The mentor from school A added that,

"Most of the times, some of these are skirt-chasers".

Mentor from school B concurred with the other mentors saying:

"For example, some female student-teachers (mentees) were going out with some male teachers which brought some conflicts in our community".

Furthermore, from the two schools allocated with female mentees, they had their own sides of the story: They experienced romantic advancements from their mentors in the school. The researcher wanted to know how the mentors in the school were behaving towards the mentees. In response to

the question, "How do mentors (qualified teachers) in the school relate with you?" The mentees were able to tell that they were treated badly as highlighted below:

> **Mentee from school C:** Some are good, but one day, I did not like the comment from the school mentor who said that I had a good figure that can work better in bed.

> **Mentee from school D:** The mentor refused to check my work because I did not accept his love proposal.

With reference to the differences or conflicts that may exist between the mentees and mentors, the objectives of mentorship may not be achieved. According to Lindhard (2008), one of the primary responsibilities of trained teachers in the mentorship of student-teachers was to give guidance on immediate challenges faced by the mentee. However, it was found out that in most cases mentors failed to reach out to their mentees effectively because most mentees were misbehaving. As a result, most mentors found the mentoring task too involving. In addition to that, the teachers who choose to act like students' "friend" often undermine their own credibility and lose the respect of their students. Bad behavior blocks support from the other stakeholders and leads to underperformance. The mentors with bad behaviors will be feared by the mentees and this affects the effectiveness of the programme. Likewise, mentees with bad behavior are neglected by the mentors.

4. 7. 2 Possible causes of bad behavior

Several factors were mentioned to be at play as the causes of bad behavior. The major factors mentioned were: lack of strong advice from college, personal differences, late payment of allowances, and lack of resources.

In the first place, lack of strong advice from college was strongly articulated by mentors in all the schools. In response to the question, "Why do you think the mentees misbehave in the field here according to your experience? One participant had the following to say:

> **Mentor from school A**: They just release them without any strong word, or without strong advice. So they take it for granted that we are trainees and we can also do this and that as if they are in the college campus.

From the researcher's viewpoint, there was an understanding by the schools that college did not advise the mentees on how they should conduct themselves while out there in the field. But in reality, there is no parent who can fail to properly advise a child on good conduct. The problem is with student-teachers themselves as some authors argue that a professional has to sustain his own self-confidence and respect if his claim to authority is to be recognized by the community (Marsh, 1973; Hudson, 2016). Mentees are called to self-guard their respect by displaying exemplary behaviour. From my experience as a teacher educator, the mentees who had misbehaved and the issue was brought to the college management were withdrawn from the course to show that the college did not condone bad behavior in TPSs.

Late payment of allowances and lack of resources were also a strong cause of misconduct in the community of practice. The two factors promoted immoral behavior among female mentees as a way of raising money. The data was gathered through interviews as presented below:

Researcher: Why do you think female mentees engage in immoral behavior during teaching practice?

Mentor from school C: …as a way of getting money for their survival.

Lack of or inadequate material and financial support to the mentees was a root cause of bad behavior because it was not treated with seriousness. According to Bartell (2005: 98), mentees become disillusioned and discouraged by the conditions under which they work. Poor working conditions make mentees to work as they feel. They put aside all the professional ethics and try to promote personal interests for their survival. When the mentees in a community of practice start serving personal interests, it means the community is collapsing and the goal of producing quality teachers cannot be achieved.

4. 7. 3 Possible solutions to bad behavior

Due to the multi-faceted nature of the behaviors, multi-sectoral approach is required to sort them out. Firstly, bad behavior can be avoided by strong advice from college and strict rules and regulations to be applied at all times on the offenders to adhere to the norms of the teaching profession. The solution was suggested by two mentors. The following are responses to the enquiry on how to reduce incidents of misconduct in the mentorship programme in TPSs. In response to the question on this matter, the mentors said that strict rules and regulations should be applied to all stakeholders in the mentorship programme. For example,

Mentor from school B said, "The College should put in place strict rules and regulations which if violated should lead to disqualification as a teacher".

The findings to this study are consistent with the principle that teaching, in general, and mentoring in particular has a moral dimension (Cummings et al., 2007; Hunink et al., 2007; Johnson, 2003). Mentoring of student-teachers is equally concerned with moral development hence, it must be hinged on advancing moral reasoning among stakeholders so that mentees become teachers of high quality. Therefore, the mentees who misbehave do not deserve to become teachers and, likewise, mentors who misbehave do not deserve to be entrusted with mentorship responsibilities. This can only be achieved if those who misbehave while still on training are not condoned. Orange (2000), also supports that all those who cannot control their sexual desires towards the learners or mentees do not deserve to be teachers. Therefore, tough rules and regulations on the mentees and mentors can deter them from any kind of misbehavior. This agrees with what the **mentor from school A suggested:**

> "But with our regulations here, it is difficult for them to go out with school girls. But in other schools where there are no such regulations, it is obvious they go out with school girls.

Mentees experienced a period of shortage of professional and upkeep resources due to late payment of allowances. When this was experienced, boycotting of classes was the result and rude remarks were uttered to other stakeholders in the school. It even affected the mentees to have a little desire for the job as O'Connor et al. (2011), posit that the primary reason why teachers quit their job was lack of support. Therefore, timely and consistent funding was suggested as a good solution to reduce bad behavior amongst the mentees in a community of practice. This would make them at least have the necessary resources for their daily survival and professional development. One **mentee from school C** said,

"If we can be given enough resources and if we receive them timely, some misbehaviors can be reduced or avoided"

I argue that the mentors were tempted to make romantic advances towards the mentees by observing how desperate for resources the mentees were. Therefore, twenty thousand kwacha should be scaled up as suggested by participants in the study, bearing in mind that economically the cost of living has gone up. Furthermore, provision of enough resources can separate those who misbehave due to lack of resources from those who do it as part of their behavior. Bartell (2005: 55), concurs that classrooms are equally not well equipped and that teachers often end up having to purchase many materials from their own funds. Start-up funds and material resources have failed to meet the mentees' demands. Resource allocation helps to determine the level and intensity of support for mentoring activities.

Table 4. 2: Common themes from the collected data

COMMON CHALLENGES OF MENTORSHIP	POSSIBLE CAUSES	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
Inadequate knowle dge of the mentors	Unavailability of funds for training of the programme implementers	Training of the implementers

Under performance of the mentees	• Reduced training period • Elective subject in secondary school being offered as compulsory subject in T. T. C: Social Studies	• Adequate training period for the mentees • Balancing subject content with pedagogical skills
Lack of support	• Donor influence • Implementing a programme to the disadvantage of the implementers • Lack of follow-up on the delay by the college • Poor planning by the college	• Re-introduction of the allowances to the mentors • Funding timely, adequately and consistently • Scale up allowances to the mentees • College planning well in advance
Lack of role models in professional qualities	Lack of job satisfaction	Lack of modelling culture
Bad behavior	• Lack of strong advice from college. • Personal differences • Late payment of allowances. • Inadequate resources	• Strong advice from college and strict rules and regulations • Good choice of mentors • Good school administration • Timely funding • Scaling up resources.

4. 7. Chapter summary

The analysis has brought to light some of the challenges, possible causes and solutions to the challenges affecting the implementation of mentorship programme in teaching practice schools of the revised IPTE curriculum. Face-to-face interviews with school mentors, class teacher mentors and mentees and documents analysis both point to the fact that mentorship is implemented with several challenges. The general picture that this analysis has given is that many stakeholders in the teacher education mentorship know the concept and appreciate the contribution of the same to the quality teacher education in general. However, there are a few challenges like inadequate of training of the implementers, lack of support and bad behavior of the implementers that need to be closely scrutinized and harmonized if the revised IPTE curriculum is to yield expected teacher quality in Malawi education sector.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5. 1 Introduction

The chapter presents a summary of findings, recommendations, areas for further study and conclusion based on the study's findings with reference to participants' conceptions, perceptions and experiences about mentorship in the revised IPTE curriculum.

5. 2 Summary of findings

5. 2.1 Inadequate knowledge of the mentorship programme implementers

Inadequate knowledge in mentorship was one of the challenges which was in response to the first objective which was: identifying the challenges of mentorship in TPSs. Implementation of the mentorship is a far-fetched dream because the implementers are not trained in what is expected of them in the process. Without training in mentorship in teacher education, the mentors are left incompetent and they are not effectively helping the mentees as they were not knowledgeable of their responsibilities.

Inadequate knowledge in teacher education mentorship was attributed to lack of adequate funding for training of the stakeholders. This was in response to the second objective which was looking at describing the possible causes of the challenges facing the mentorship programme. What had been revised in the IPTE curriculum was supposed to be communicated in detail to the implementers, otherwise, there were a lot of challenges experienced due to lack of training. Mentoring guides and experiences are not enough to make someone a good mentor. Challenges in

teaching profession are contextual therefore, skills which can be acquired through training can help programme implementers assist mentees accordingly. This is possible with adequate funding. For example, the issues to do with the removal of allowances, pairing mentees with class teacher mentors and late payment of allowances were to be part of the communication during such trainings.

The value of the training should not only be monetary, but also how the knowledge gained will be used. If the mentors were trained on the value of assisting the student-teachers, it were to be good because that could help in producing high quality of teachers who were to have positive impact on the primary school learners. This helps to achieve the significance of the study. Therefore, adequate funding for training was to prepare mentors professionally and psychologically to have a positive attitude to mentor student-teachers to improve the quality of teachers in Malawi. Effective mentoring requires skills that need to be taught, and it cannot be assumed that an effective teacher is an effective mentor. Moir et al. (2009: 34), highlight the fact that mentoring requires

> "entirely new skills, and it takes time, sophisticated training, and ongoing coaching and reflection to develop them".

So being a good teacher in a particular school is not a warrant that someone can make a good mentor. Adequate funding for training should also be done frequently to keep mentors abreast with latest changes and solve problems encountered through such trainings.

Training should begin with the college lecturers first as they can easily assess challenges faced in mentorship and help the implementers in the community of practice accordingly. This would help to achieve the third objective of the study which looks at assessing possible solutions

to the challenges of mentorship. Due to lack of clear understanding of the revised curriculum, some lecturers were still using the old mode of training teachers which made mentees to go out for teaching practice half prepared. Some lecturers were not even competent in helping the mentors to do their work effectively. They needed enough training which calls for adequate funding for the same. If they are adequately trained in mentorship, they can easily figure out possible solutions to the challenges experienced in mentorship.

4. 2. 2 Underperformance of the mentees

The second challenge in response to the first objective was underperformance of the mentees. The mentees underperformed in doing the file work and delivery of lesson in classrooms. The quality of their work in SEJ tasks, lesson planning and filling the records of work were also not well done. A mentee cannot qualify into a teacher if he or she fails to prepare for teaching and worse still if fails to present good lessons.

The underperformance of mentees was attributed to a number of factors which were in response to a second objective of the study. Firstly, reduced training duration has an impact on the quality of teachers. The previous curriculum allowed the mentees to be trained for three terms. The revised IPTE curriculum gave two terms to train teachers in readiness for teaching practice. This has seen the removal of content from the curriculum but emphasizing on pedagogical skills. However, one of the respondents had this to say:

> "It would be better if lecturers demonstrated the use of pedagogical skills using the content learnt in Social Studies".

However, the reduced period made mentees not to be fully equipped in theoretical work to be applied in teaching practice. Besides, lecturers do not have enough time for practical lessons as they require a lot of time.

Secondly, Social Studies, being an elective subject at secondary school but compulsory in T. T. Cs, posed a big challenge to the mentees. This was because they lacked content to marry its content with pedagogical skills to effectively teach. This made mentors to complain by saying,

"Mentees are always at our backs asking for what to teach since they lack content".

Therefore, in such circumstances, it was necessary that mentees should be given enough subject content in readiness for TP. Day, Griffiths and Gu (2011), argue that,

"They should be given an awareness and armed with indispensable knowledge, and competencies to not only survive but also thrive".

Furthermore, content should be made handy in the modules used by mentees as they are being prepared for TP. This will make mentees balance content with pedagogical skills. The two are inseparable, as no one can be a good teacher in methodologies without content or vice versa. Vavrus et al, (2011), have also observed that,

"Pedagogical content alone cannot make a teacher because student learning depends to a larger extent on the teacher ability to transform their subject content into lessons that their learners can comprehend".

Therefore, pedagogical skills only cannot lead to the production of quality teachers. The revised IPTE curriculum should therefore, not only emphasize on pedagogical skills disregarding the sand-witching of the subject content with pedagogical knowledge.

Lastly, the emphasis of the revised curriculum is on the mentees accessing the internet for the content should also be revisited. The colleges have few internet gadgets and struggle to run them on daily basis. Therefore, the revised IPTE curriculum should consider the issue of access to the internet.

In response to the third objective with reference to underperformance of the mentees, college lecturers should advise curriculum developers to consider time factor in training teachers. Two terms are not enough. Furthermore, content should go together with pedagogical skills in teacher education as the two are inseparable in a well-qualified teacher.

5. 2. 3 Lack of support to the programme

Lack of support was also identified as a challenge in response to the first objective which was looking at identifying the challenges of mentorship in TPSs. The study found out that the implementation lacked both material and financial support for its effectiveness. For a proper implementation of any educational programme, support is paramount. Initiators of the programme should be able to support members throughout the implementation phase of the programme. The support should be both materially and financially. It will be right and proper for the implementers to monitor and supervise the implementation phase to easily isolate challenges encountered then give proper guidance.

When the implementers are given enough material and financial support, it is easy for the initiators to identify where the problem lies during the implementation phase. This should begin with the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, through college to all members at school level.

Participants associated lack of support to a number of factors. This was in response to the second objective which was describing the possible causes of the challenge. One of the factors is dancing to the tune of donors. It seemed the programme had worked well somewhere else in the absence of incentives and limited resources, so they thought it would work likewise here in Malawi.

Secondly, poor planning and lack of follow-up by colleges on the delayed support from the Ministry was another cause of lack of support. The colleges had a duty to plan in advance and make a follow up for the delayed support from the Ministry.

In response to the third objective, participants gave a number of solutions to solve the challenges. In the first place, the Ministry should be able to fund timely and adequately for the implementation of all college activities. When the college has received the support from the Ministry, it should support the TPSs timely and adequately for the smooth implementation of the mentorship. In the presence of enough material and financial support, implementers of the programme have no excuse to give for the lack of active participation.

Furthermore, there is need to scale up financial support for the mentees as the standards of life have gone up. Twenty thousand kwacha per month per mentee is not enough to be used for daily social and professional needs. **One mentor** said,

> "The allowance given to mentees was not even enough for pocket money to a student in school".

The mentors on the ground should also be considered in a special way as they are working tirelessly for the benefit of the mentees in terms of allowances or special recognition. **One mentor** argued that,

> "We deserve to be paid an allowance since we are working".

They even worked during odd hours of the day during times when the mentee was sick. This is in line with the arguments of Suleman, Gebreab and David (2008: 35), who state that,

> "Mentors should be provided with incentives and rewards as mentoring requires extra work with extended commitment".

Resources for programme implementation should also be scaled up. It shouldn't be just a tradition to allocate a lot of financial support to MoEST yet not achieving its intended purpose (RIPPLE Africa, 2013). Enough resources are crucial for the implementation of the mentorship teacher education programme.

5. 2. 4 Lack of role modelling in professional abilities

Some qualified teachers in TPSs, beginning with the head teacher to mere teachers were not exemplary in their conduct. It was noted that some teachers were absent from or late for duties without proper cause. All qualified teachers in a community of practice were supposed to be role models in the teaching profession abilities. By being exemplary, it meant that mentees were to copy from them and come out of TPSs and display the same wherever they go as qualified teachers. For example, **one class teacher mentor** challenged by saying,

> "Why should I come early for duties while the head teacher is most of the times absent from duties or comes late?

Furthermore, qualified teachers lacked dedication and commitment to their profession. They neglected their daily duties as professionals. They prioritized enjoying life with technology or doing the knitting at the expense of the teaching. Such conducts of the professionals would likely produce the mentees as a replica of the community of practice. This argues contrary to Vavrus et al. (2011),

> "That student teachers begin learning how to become teachers through an apprenticeship of the observation which goes all along their school life when they observe and admire their mentors".

Respondents held that role modelling was a challenge because some qualified teachers were not satisfied with the teaching profession hence their conduct of prioritizing what satisfied them like pursuing studies in other fields or doing business.

Furthermore, lack of incentives made qualified teachers not to be serious with modelling of good conduct. For example, poor accommodation made school managers to stay away from school which resulted into absenteeism or late reporting for duties.

As a solution to the challenge which was in response to the third objective respondents argued that selection of head teachers should be done carefully by considering people who do not pretend before their bosses. If leaders in an institution behave like role models, other members of the community will behave likewise. In addition, implementers of the programme must be motivated. Usually, motivated workers are ready to display good conduct as role models. The education system should provide conducive environment which will make the teachers to be satisfied with their profession.

5. 2. 5 Bad behaviour

Bad behaviour was another challenge experienced by both the mentees and mentors. The aspect had grave impact on mentorship. It was observed by mentors that the mentees were rude, engaged in love affairs with school girls or male teachers. Such poor relationships with the members in a community of practice affected mentorship. Mentors could neglect the mentees with bad behaviours while mentees feared to interact with mentors with bad behaviour. Likewise, mentors could use bad language against the mentees.

In reaction to a second objective which looked at the possible causes of poor mentorship, bad behaviour was mentioned and it was attributed to lack of strong rules and regulations to guide mentorship. Other causes were: personal differences, late payment of allowances and inadequate resources. For example, **one mentor** said,

> "Female mentees engage in love affairs with qualified teachers as a way of getting money and other resources for their survival during TP".

As a solution to this challenge, respondents suggested that strong rules and regulations should be put in place to deter such bad behaviours among partners in mentorship. The rules should be applied at all times of the mentorship period.

In addition, consistent, timely and adequate funding should be paid. This would make mentees to have resources at all times during the TP period.

5. 3. RECOMMEDATIONS

5. 3. 1 Training of the stakeholders

It has been a common practice that new innovations introduced into the education system take it for granted that qualified teachers are competent to carry out such innovations. Introduction of mentorship into teacher education was hoped to improve the quality of primary school teachers, but due to lack of knowledge on the part of the teachers it is failing to produce high quality teachers. This defeats the concept of situated learning in a community of practice as propounded by Lave and Wenger through mentorship where mentors need to be well oriented on how to mentor student-teachers to improve the quality of teachers.

The researcher, therefore, recommends that revision in the IPTE curriculum should be followed by in-service training to train the old teachers so that they can effectively play their role as mentors to the mentees. This could be done by college lecturers, Primary Education Advisors and Education Methods Advisory Services after being well trained themselves.

5. 3. 2 Adequate preparation of the mentees for teaching practice

Mentees need to be trained for an adequate period to master both content and pedagogical skills. Therefore, the first two school terms are not adequate to prepare mentees for teaching practice. They require a full academic year in college to master both subject content and pedagogical skills since Social Studies in an elective subject in secondary school but compulsory in primary teacher education. In addition, the modules should be balanced in both subject content and pedagogical skills instead of only emphasizing on pedagogical skills.

5. 3. 3 Support and incentives

Mentors need to be given incentives on the work they are doing in teacher development as co-trainers in teacher education. These members in a community of practice work closely with the mentees around the clock. However, their efforts are not recognized and appreciated. It will be a source of motivation no matter how little it may be if they can be given special support and incentives in form of allowances.

In addition, the financial support in form of Teaching Practice allowances to the student-teachers should be paid timely for their livelihood. Student-teachers become a problem to the other members in a community of practice if they start begging for material resources whether for professional reasons or social support. This creates a bad picture about teaching as a profession, hence many are not attracted to it. The researcher further recommends that the amount should be scaled up. Twenty thousand kwacha is not enough considering the rising economic demands of today.

5. 3. 4 Role models of quality teachers

Role models are an important aspect in teacher education mentorship programme. Qualified teachers who can model mentees in all aspects of the teaching profession should at all times be engaged in mentoring the teacher trainees. The mentees can copy from the role models and come out of TPSs as a replica of them and display the same behaviours wherever they go. Therefore, the researcher recommends that those schools with a lot of teachers who can be good role models and are willing to mentor teacher trainees should be allocated with students for teaching practice.

5. 3. 5 Bad behaviour

In a community of practice, bad behaviour limits the performance of members in the profession. It creates an avoidance of working with each other. To control bad behaviour amongst the participants in the mentorship programme, strong rules have to be applied at all times to deter those who would engage themselves in bad behaviours like having love affairs with learners or the mentees in a community of practice. Healthy personal relationships promote good working relationships in a society. Therefore, it is recommended that all those engaging themselves in bad behaviour in a community of practice should be punished according to the rules and regulations guiding the teaching profession.

5. 4. Areas for further research

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology needs to issue more specific directions on how to design the mentorship programme and provide the necessary support for it to be successful. There are some areas which the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should consider seriously if mentorship in the revised IPTE curriculum is to achieve its intended goal of improving the quality of teacher education in Malawi. It can be achieved after collecting enough evidence through research to make necessary mentorship programmes to improve the quality of teacher education in Malawi. The following areas are felt to be very critical, therefore, calling for an in-depth study in as far as mentorship issues are concerned:

- Lecturers' roles as supervisors and assessors of the student-teachers under mentorship programme.

- Benefits and demerits of the inclusion of many stakeholders as mentors in the mentorship programme.

- Investigating the non-monetary incentives to be used to motivate participants in the mentorship programme.

- Evaluating the impacts of the Two–In, Two–Out, Two– In mode of training teachers to improve the quality of teachers in Malawi with engagement of mentors.

- Assessing the revision of an IPTE programme coupled with the assessment of the availability of the resources to support the implementation with involvement of mentors.

5. 5 CONCLUSION

Much as the country is struggling to narrow the gap of pupil-teacher ratio, quality should not be compromised at the expense of quantity. The engagement of mentors in teacher education is aimed at producing high quality teachers. However, this could be a far-fetched dream if the programme is not well handled. Being a qualified teacher does not mean being a mentor. And having good qualities of a mentor is not enough to become one in the absence of other factors. Mentors need to be thoroughly trained and supported with necessary resources so that their work runs smoothly. The mentors need to be communicated explicitly of their roles and responsibilities towards the mentees in a community of practice.

The college should also give necessary support to the mentees in the community of practice during teaching practice. In the absence of the support in forms of allowances and other material resources which can be used by the mentees to buy the necessary resources for their training and upkeep respectively, mentors have nothing to do. They will have nothing which they can base on to support the mentees. Their mentorship depends on the preparations and the duties carried out by the

mentees. When mentees do not work due to lack of support from college, they can be a source of problems in a school community. Mentors also cannot identify the problems mentees have for their professional development on which to base their support. Mentees can easily grow professionally if they are given the necessary support by the mentors.

In a school setting, all qualified members should be ready to support the mentees in all aspects of life as per the requirement of the programme. The support can be two fold. The first area of support should be in the preparation and delivery of their duties in the school. Secondly, they need support from role models from whom mentees can emulate. Role modelling is more ideal than communicating to the mentees what the mentors themselves cannot do. It should begin from school management to the rest of the teachers behaving morally and ethically as demanded by the teaching profession.

The behaviour of mentees has to be monitored closely. If the system allows those who are not worthy to join the profession, they are the ones who make the teaching profession lose its value and status amongst all the professions and make others shun it. The very mentees who misbehave while on training are the ones who cannot contribute positively to the quality of teachers later in their career. Those with good morals will make a good pool of mentors in teacher education by being role models.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Paul k. K. K. S. Mkandawire,

Mzuzu University,

P. O. Box 280,

Luwinga,

Mzuzu 2.

14th March, 2019.

The Director of Research

Mzuzu University,

P. O. Box 280,

Luwinga,

Mzuzu

Re: Application for conducting research in the schools used by one of the teacher training colleges in the Central Region of Malawi.

Dear Sir,

I hereby apply for permission to conduct research in schools used by one the teacher training colleges in the Central Region of Malawi. The focus of this study is to investigate challenges of

mentorship in initial primary teacher education in one of the teacher training colleges in Central region and identify possible causes of the challenges. It will further seek the views of the college lecturers on how the challenges of mentorship implementation can be resolved.

These student teachers are being mentored by qualified teachers who are regarded as skilled mentors who are believed to have been trained by college lecturers.

I request your permission to perform focused group interviews and documents analysis with:

• Class Teachers who participated in the mentorship training program.

• Head teachers who are trained administrative mentors in teaching practice schools.

• One school mentor identified by the school administration.

• College lecturers as supervisors of the whole program of teacher training in IPTE.

The normal school programme will not be interrupted as I will only be doing research during arranged meetings by the mentor, head teacher and their group of mentees, college lecturers. It is expected and hoped that this study will contribute to scholarly literature on mentorship as an effective tool for training teachers in the Social Studies subject area.

Thank you for the consideration and kind cooperation.

Your favourable response will be highly appreciated.

Kind Regards

Paul. K. K. S. Mkandawire

MEd candidate (Mzuzu University)

Contact details:

Cell number: 0999710688/ 0881437432

E-mail address: paulkambewa1970@gmail.com.

Signature of approval

The Director of Research: Mzuzu University

APPENDIX B: REQUEST FROM THE EDM TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

Mzuzu University

P/Bag 201,

Luwinga.

Mzuzu

Tel. 0999710688/ 0881437432

Email: paulkambewa1970@gmail.com

The Education Division Manager,

Central East Education Division,

Private Bag 233,

Kasungu.

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS USED FOR TEACHING PRACTICE BY KASUNGU TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGE.

I am a post-graduate student at Mzuzu University pursuing a Master of Education in Teacher Education. I am carrying out a study in which I am investigating challenges affecting mentorship program in Initial Primary Teacher Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the award of the Master's Degree. I am therefore writing to for permission to carry out this study in some of the schools within your division.

Attached is an introduction letter from Mzuzu University

Yours faithfully,

Paul K. K. S. Mkandawire.

APPENDIX C: REQUEST TO CARRYOUT A RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

Mzuzu University

P/Bag 201,

Luwinga.

Mzuzu

Tel. 0999710688/ 0881437432.

Email:paulkambewa1970@gmail.com

The Head teacher,

_____ Primary School.

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO CARRYOUT A RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I am a postgraduate student at Mzuzu University pursuing a Master of Education in Teacher Education. I am carrying out a study in which I am investigating challenges affecting mentorship program in Initial Primary Teacher Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the award of the Master's Degree.

I am therefore writing to request permission to carry out this study in your school. Attached is an introduction letter from Mzuzu University

Yours faithfully,

Paul K. K. S. Mkandawire.

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Sir/Madam

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to invite you to participate in a research project. This research involves IPTE mentorship programme in which you are already involved as one of the participants.

The research I want to conduct forms part of a Master of Education in Teacher Education. The study is entitled: **INVESTIGATING CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRE-SERVICE TEACHER MENTORING PROGRAMME AT TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES IN MALAWI** "aimed at identifying common challenges; describing possible causes of the challenges and assessing ways tutors can employ to sort out the challenges.

Your participation in this research project is voluntary and I would like to assure you that all the information collected will be treated with strict confidentiality. You will not be asked to reveal any information that will allow your identity to be established. If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter as a declaration of your consent i.e. that you participate in this project willingly and that you understand that you may withdraw from the research project at any time. Under no circumstances will your identity as a participant be made known to others except to me and my supervisor.

Your permission is further requested for me to audio-tape and use digital voice recorders as part of the interviews during our interactions.

I appreciate your cooperation and time you have put aside to support me in this important project.

Yours sincerely,

PAUL K. K. S. MKANDAWIRE

Participant's signature.. Date......................................

Researcher's signature.. Date.....................................

Appendix E: Table 1: Document analysis checklist

Research question	Are SEJ tasks checked as stipulated in the mentoring guide?	Are the signs of checking the mistakes indicated in the tasks?	Do tasks demanding the professional meetings reflect meetings to have taken place?	Do scores match the comments indicated by the mentor or head teacher?
School experience journal				
Research question	Are the success criteria showing SMART?	Do lesson plans have enough activities for a period?	Do activities match with the time allocation?	Are lesson plans evaluated on daily basis?
Lesson plan				
Research question	Are the schemes of work completed before the opening of the term?	Do schemes of work have enough work for a lesson?	Are records of work filled on weekly basis?	Are the records of work filled in a proper manner?

Schemes and records of work				
Research question	Is the observation of lessons by the mentor/head teacher taking place?	What are the common challenges observed during lesson observation?	What are the common strengths observed during the lesson observations?	Are there signs of improvement on the identified challenges of the mentees?
Lesson observation form				

APPENDIX F. INSTRUMENTS FOR COLLECTING DATA

A.   INTERVIEW GUIDE

I.   MAIN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER TRAINEES

1. As a teacher trainee, what needs and concerns did you have as you began your professional career?

2. What is your relationship with your mentor? Do you feel that you have a conducive learning atmosphere or do you feel as if you are being directed in a particular way on how to teach?

3. Do you feel as if you and your mentor make good use of the system mandated time? Do you wish you had more time together or less? Why?

4. What has been the most positive aspect of the mentoring programme? The least?

5. If you could change one thing about the mentoring program what would it be?

6. What are the major challenges that you face as mentee in the mentorship programme? What do you think is the cause of the problem(s) you have mentioned? Can the problems you mentioned be solved? How?

II. MAIN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CLASS TEACHERS AS MENTORS

1. For how long have you been teaching? (Probes: What about mentorship experiences? As a mentor, what needs and concerns did you have as new teachers begin their professional career?

2. Were you trained for the mentorship programme? (Probes: For how long was the training? Who trained you? Were you satisfied with the training? Why?

3. What is your relationship with your mentee? (Probes: Do you feel as if you have a true learning atmosphere? Do you feel as if you allowed the mentee to develop their own teaching style or did you feel more directive?

4. Do you feel as if you and your mentee make good use of the system mandated time? Do you wish you had more time together or less?

5. What have been the most common challenges that you have experienced as a mentor? I need your explanation on the problems experienced.

6. What could be the possible causes of the challenges that you have experienced? I also need your explanation on the possible causes of the challenges.

7. If you could change one thing about the mentoring program what would it be to make it very good for as you do your work?

III. MAIN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR SCHOOL MENTOR

1. For how long have you been teaching? (Probes: What about mentorship experiences? As a mentor, what needs and concerns did you have as new teachers begin their professional career?

2. Were you trained for the mentorship program? (Probes: For how long was the training? Who trained you? Were you satisfied with the training? Why?

3. What is your relationship with your mentee? (Probes: Do you feel as if you have a true learning atmosphere? Do you feel as if you allowed the mentee to develop their own teaching style or did you feel more directive?

4. Do you feel as if you and your mentee make good use of the system mandated time? Do you wish you had more time together or less?

5. What have been the most common challenges that you have experienced as a mentor? I need your explanation on the problems experienced.

6. What could be the possible causes of the challenges that you have experienced? I also need your explanation on the possible causes of the challenges.

7. If you could change one thing about the mentoring program what would it be to make it very good for as you do your work?

IV. MAIN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR COLLEGE LECTURERS AS SUPERVISORS OF THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

1. For how long have you been teaching as teacher trainer? (Probes: For how long have you been a teacher trainer? As a supervisor of mentorship, what needs and concerns did you have as teacher trainees begin their professional career?

2. Were you trained as a supervisor for the mentorship programme? (Probes: For how long was the supervising mentorship? Who trained you? Were you satisfied with the training? Why do you say so?

3. What is your relationship with all the people involved in the mentorship programme in teaching practice schools? (Probes: Do you feel as if you have a true learning atmosphere for the people involved in the mentorship programme? Do you feel as if you allow the mentee to develop their own teaching style or did you feel more directive?

4. What have been the most common challenges that you have experienced as a mentorship programme supervisor? I need your explanation on the problems experienced.

5. What could be the possible causes of the challenges that you have experienced? I also need your explanation on the possible causes of the challenges.

6. If you could change one thing about the mentoring programme what would it be to make it very good as you do your work as a supervisor?

7. How do think the challenges can be sorted out so that mentorship programme can bear positive fruits?

APPENDIX G: HOW TO ASSESS THE SEJ TASKS

INSTRUCTION: It is not enough to check if student has completed a task. You must thoroughly assess the quality of what has been produced.

Each of the SEJ tasks will be awarded 4, 3, 2, 1 or 0 marks.

 4 marks = Excellent

 3 marks = Good

 2 marks = Satisfactory

 1 mark = Needs improvement

 0 marks = Fail.

You should award four marks if the student has fully achieved all of the following criteria:

i.   Demonstrated a clear understanding of the task.

ii.   Shown creative and critical thinking.

iii.   Recorded realistic suggestions.

iv.   Recorded work independently.

v.   Given detailed responses.

vi.   Used written language, which is legible and easy to read.

vii.   Completed all the activities in the task.

viii. Demonstrated clear evidence of the implementation as described for each task.

You should award 3 marks if the student has achieved 6 out of 7 criteria listed above, one of which must be number viii, the additional element specific to each task.

You should award 2 marks if the student-teacher has achieved 4 out of 5 criteria listed one of which must be number viii, the additional element specific to each task.

You should award 1 mark if the student teacher has achieved 2 out of 3 criteria listed above.

You should award 0 marks if the student teacher has achieved fewer than 2 criteria listed or has

- Failed to do the task without good reason.
- Copied from another student.

NB. Two comments for each task must be written in Summary of Performance box at the end of each task in the SEJ.

The first comment must justify the assessment (Excellent, Good, Satisfactory, Needs improvement, or Fail) and the second comment should tell the student how s/he could improve in the future.

IF YOU HAVE ASSESSED A STUDENT'S WORK EXCELLENT, APROPRIATE COMMENTS MIGHT BE:

- You have produced interesting … (responses, ideas, opinions, reflections) and explained them clearly.
- The detail in your work shows commitment.
- You have covered each point completely and have obviously given the task a lot of thought.
- You have shown excellent skills in …. Observation, creativity, reflection, preparation).
- Your attention to detail is impressive; many ideas could be shared with other teachers.
- Your learners could benefit from the effort you have demonstrated in this task.

- It was a pleasure to read such interesting and well-presented comments.

- Your .. (Creativity, reflections, planning, etc.) is a strength.

- Your work shows originality.

- The written language is very good; all aspects are explained simply and clearly.

- Your personal … (reflections, thoughts) about how to improve are courageous and should help you.

- All responses are comprehensive.

- You have shown that you work well as a member of a team.

- Your contribution during the meeting was impressive.

Appropriate developmental comments might be:

- Try to maintain this level of detail in all the tasks.

- See if you can develop your vocabulary even further.

- I would like you to discuss your responses with a few other students. Arrange to discuss this with me.

- See if you can implement even more of your ideas.

- Keep generating your own ideas; they will help to develop your teaching skills.

- Your contribution during the meeting was very good, but make sure that everyone has an opportunity to speak.

- How could you encourage parents to become involved in supporting their children?

IF YOU HAVE ASSESSED A STUDENT'S WORK GOOD OR SATISFACTORY, APROPRIATE COMMENTS MIGHT BE:

- You have been thoughtful and have made many good points.

- You have shown some creativity in your work.

- Some of your … (ideas, plans, and actions) will be helpful to your learners.

- Your learners should benefit from this work, if implementation in maintained.

- You have … recorded, assessed) competently.

- You listened relatively well during the meeting and have written an accurate record of the discussion.

- The comments in this task are generally well-balanced.

- You have focused on the task and expressed your ideas clearly.

- Your contribution to the meeting was quite interesting and useful.

- Some original … (thoughts, ideas, reflections, comments) have been expressed.

- The language used is clear and simple.

- Your personal …. (reflections, thoughts) about how to improve are helpful.

- You have shown that you work as amber of the team.

Appropriate developmental comments might be:

- You have shown some evidence of creativity; try to extend this to other tasks.

- You have satisfactory range of written vocabulary but it could be extended further.

- Encourage your fellow students to reflect honestly.

- Be prepared to offer more opinions during meetings.

- During the meetings you should try to participate in major discussions.

- You worked well with fellow students in English; this should help to improve your grammar.

IF YOU HAVE ASSESSED A STUDENT'S WORK AS NEEDS IMPROVEMENT OR FAIL, APROPRIATE COMMENTS MIGHT BE:

- This work does not show commitment.

- If you consistently fail to complete your SEJ tasks, without good reason, it could result in failure to qualify. (If you feel you have to write such a comment you must speak with the student, discuss his/her reasons for failing to complete the tasks and decide on a way forward).

- All the activities must be completed in each task.

- The responses lack thought and is therefore not as interesting as I had expected.

- This work lacks originality.

- More detailed information is necessary.

- The information is not detailed enough, therefore the responses lack quality.

- Skills of observations have not been applied in this task.

- Your learners will not benefit appropriately due to your lack of effort in this task.

- The written language is below the standard for a student teacher.

- The grammar/spelling is of low standard.

- You seem to have misunderstood the focus of the task. Meet with me so we can discuss the task together.

- You must always record in your own words, even if it has been a shared task. Your responses seem to be copied.

- More preparation for group work and meetings is required

  Appropriate developmental comments might be:

- If you have a problem completing your SEJ, come and discuss the challenges with me.

- Take more care when completing your work; it will be easier to read.

- You must include more details in your responses if you wish to progress.

- Think about what you want to say before writing, this will help you to clarify your thoughts.

- These ideas lack interest; I would like to see you being more creative in the future.

- If you concentrate on …. You will begin to progress further.

- You need to concentrate on your sentence construction.

- Remember to edit your work before handing in the SEJ.

- If you frequently speak and read English it could help to improve your grammar.

- If you are to develop you must improve ….

- You need to more…. (observant, reflective, creative, committed etc.).

- You should allocate more time to completing your SEJ. Let us meet and discuss this issue.

- Try to prepare more thoroughly for meetings; it will give you more confidence to contribute.