Assessing the Norms and Standards of School Mentors' Competences in the 1+1 Model of Initial Primary Teacher Education in Malawi: Implications for Mentor Development

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ABSTRACT The aim of this comparative cross-sectional study was to assess the competences of school mentors in the Initial Primary Teacher Education (IPTE) mode from the perspective of student teachers and headteachers. The study set out to find answers to the following research questions: (1) what are the competences of school mentors as perceived by student teachers? (2) What are the competences of school mentors as perceived by headteachers? (3) Is there a significant difference in the mean competence scores for student teachers and headteachers? (4) What are the implications of the findings for school mentor development? Ninety-two primary schools and 670 participants comprising 579 student teachers and 91 headteachers participated in a mixed methods research design in which a census survey was followed by a case study of two schools to observe the practices of mentoring for purposes of triangulation and complementarity. Data was analysed by employing descriptive analysis and calculating independent-sample t-test. The results revealed that at student teacher respondents generally confirmed that school mentors demonstrated competency in most of the mentoring aspects under investigation. Very few respondents indicated that mentors did not demonstrate the investigated competencies. The same results were revealed by headteachers about their school mentors. An independent-sample t-test revealed that there was no statistical significant difference in 28 of the 30 competence scores of assessment by the student teachers and headteachers. Significant difference was found in only two competences.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher education has been a subject of debate over a century. The contestations have resulted into polarised models of teacher education (Moyo 2014). The unresolved issue surrounds the structure of a model that best balances theory and practice (Korthagen 2010; Day 2004; Allen and Wright 2014). The debates centre on the type of a model that produces quality teachers. As such, at one end of the continuum, there are models whose structure begin with theory and end with practices; while at the opposite end, there are those models in which practice precedes theory. The former is known as a technical rationalist model and the latter is the Apprentice-Expert model (Day 2004). However the constant element in any model is the mentoring of student teachers by the school mentors. That is, mentoring is indispensable to student teacher quality (Badenhorst and Badenhorst 2011; Tomlinson 1995; Robinson 2001). It is critical that school mentors should possess the requisite competences in order to meaningfully bridge the theory-practice gap in teacher education programmes (Johnson 2003; Fish 2013). The importance of norms and standards for school mentor competences, therefore, cannot be overemphasized in this endeavour.

Initial Primary Teacher Education in Malawi is provided through two modes of delivery. These are the Open and Distance Learning and the 1+1 modes. The 1+1 mode entails a programme comprising one year of course work and one year of supervised teaching practice (MIE 2006). During the one year of teaching practicum, student teachers are attached to school teachers who serve as mentors. The 1+1 mode was introduced in 2005 as a response to overcome the poor quality of teachers graduating from its predecessor (Steiner-Khamsi and Kunje 2011). It was also regarded as a fast track model of reducing the teacher shortage in primary schools.

The 1+1 mode is operating in national and international policy and legal environments which demand the provision of quality and relevant teacher education. At international level, the Millennium Development Goals (UN 2000), Education For All goals (UNESCO 2000) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Education and Training (SADC 1997) member countries such as Malawi to improve the quality of education at all levels. Nationally in Malawi, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II), its Constitution and the Education Policy documents have also exerted demands for quality education in

general and teacher education in particular in order to reduce poverty through economic growth and sustainable infrastructure development (GoM 2011, 1994; MoEST 2013a, 2008a, 2008b). It is therefore imperative that the 1+1 mode meets both sets of multidimensional demands for quality and relevant teacher education.

Headteachers of primary schools are the custodian of mentoring practices during a practicum. According to MIE (2006) and MoEST (2013b), Headteachers' responsibilities include monitoring of performance of student teachers and mentors which culminates with writing of progress reports to the Teacher Training College on a regular basis. As such, Headteachers in the 1+1 IPTE mode attend the same training on mentoring together with their school mentors to equip them with knowledge, skills and attitudes for their role. Their participation in the mentoring programme signals a collaborative approach to mentoring. The fundamental unresolved issue, however, is whether or not their reports accurately reflect the actual competences of the mentors as experienced by student teachers.

Government reports (MoEST 2011) indicate that the 1+1 mode is meeting its objective of training more teachers within a short time. Over 10,000 teachers have since 2005 been trained through this mode (MoEST 2011). However, the mode is experiencing quality related challenges (Destafano 2010; Ndalama and Chidalengwa 2010; MoEST 2014). The key challenges include high school mentor turn over, inadequate time for college lecturers to monitor mentoring in schools; inadequate support to student teachers from mentors, heavy workload for school mentors, high attrition rate (41%) of student teachers after certification (DeStefano 2012; MoEST 2014; Chidalengwa and Ndalama 2010). They conclude that these challenges have raised concerns over the quality of mentoring provided by mentors to student teachers and the quality of school-based component of the 1+1 IPTE mode. In this context, a need to assess the mentor competences was conceived in order to identify the mentors' developmental needs.

Theory and Practice of Mentoring

Literature indicates that formal mentoring is used as a tool to enhance the quality of human capacity development in many disciplines. For instance, mentoring is used in such disciplines as medicine, business, management and education (Hansford et al. 2004; Eby et al. 2007). In the education sector, mentoring has been prominent as a critical component of teacher education and development since 1980s (Hobson et al. 2009; Makura and Zireva 2013; Hobson 2002; Pungur 2007).

Mentoring is defined differently by different stakeholders and in different disciplines. A literature review by Eby et al. (2007) revealed 15 definitions of mentoring. This suggests that definitions of mentoring are contextual. The most quoted definition, however, is that mentoring is a process whereby a more knowledgeable and experienced person (mentor) facilitates the growth of the less knowledgeable person (mentee) (Kram 1985; Makura and Zireva 2013; Scandura 2009). The dimensions of mentee's growth encompass such areas as knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes (Lawal 2011). Thus, in its simplest form, mentoring refers to a hierarchical process of providing developmental support to individuals. In the context of preservice teacher education, as well as in this article, mentoring is 'the process of assisting student-teachers to learn how to teach in school-based settings' (Tomlinson 1995:7). Sergiovanni and Starrat (2002:265) concur that preservice teacher mentoring refers to 'a process that is intended to help new teachers successfully learn their roles, establish the self-images as teachers, figure out the school and its culture, understand how teaching unfolds in real classroom and achieve other goals that are important to the teachers being mentored'. It is therefore a developmental process (Clutterbuck 2005) through which student teachers are cultured into the teaching profession. It involves learning how to balance theory and practice in real school based contexts under the guidance of an experienced teacher.

Literature consistently reveals that there are three main categories of purposes of mentoring (Kram 1985; Scandura 2009; Castro et al. 2004). These are the career, psychosocial and role modelling. The career functions include providing challenging work, coaching, exposure, protection and sponsorship (Parise and Forret 2008: 226). The psychosocial functions take such forms as encouragement, friendship, counselling, advice and feedback on performance (Parise and Forret

2008; Kram 1985; Scandura 2009). Role modelling encompasses modelling behaviours, skills, attitudes and admiring and abilities (Scandura 2009).

Conceptual Framework

School mentors are responsible for the acquisition of career, psychosocial and career related aptitudes by student teachers. It can be argued, using Vygotsky's (1978) Social Development theory that they serve as the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) in the social development process. The competences of the mentors in performing this work are therefore critical to the quality of the mentoring programme and student teachers (Allen and Eby 2004). In this study, mentor competence refers to the management of an integrated set of micro skills, abilities and virtues for the achievement of intended outcomes (Johnson 2003; Clutterbuck and Lane 2005; Clutterbuck 2005). Clutterbuck (2005: 4) identified five categories of mentor competence: building rapport (active listing, empathising, giving positive regard etc); setting direction: goal identification, project planning, testing mentee's level of commitment and reality testing); progression (sustaining commitment, managing mentoring relationship, available to mentees and helping mentees to cope with obstacles); winding down (managing the end of the relationship); and professional friendship (ability to redefine the relationship). Clutterbuck and Lane (2005) added conceptual modelling, self awareness, communication, interest to help others to learn and behavioural awareness to the list of mentor competences. It can also be argued that the origin of mentoring describes a mentor as a wise and sensitive person (Eby et al. 2006). According to Olowu (2011), the terms wise and sensitive are the essential ingredients of a quality mentoring. The term marginal mentor is therefore used to describe a mentor with inadequate competences (Ragins et al. 2000).

A study by Heeralal (2014) revealed that student teachers perceived the following competences (in order of preferences) in good mentors: knowledgeable, respectful, experienced, flexible, fair, honesty, accommodating, and sympathetic. Bamford and Sweet (2004) cited in Bamford (2011) reported four dimensions of mentor competences in e-mentoring: inter personal (establishing rapport, empathy and empowering); intra-personal (learning, self-awareness and motivation); flexibility (diversity, communicating, and influence); and cognitive (judgement, creativity and political awareness). Findings by Mc Kimm et al. (2003) cited in Heeralal (2014) and Maphalala (2013) were also consistent with these qualities of mentors. A study by Cothran et al. (2008) on teacher preferences (qualified and student teachers) of competences of mentors revealed that the key competences were contextualized subject knowledge and communication skills. Despite a plethora of competences of effective mentors, a study by Hobson (2002) revealed that mentors do not always demonstrate all their competences in a mentoring programme. The manner in which mentors are prepared is critical to the competences that the mentors can demonstrate (Tang and Choi 2005). In their study Shumba et al. (2012) also found some of the mentors did not demonstrate some competences such as demonstrating lessons and discussing taught lessons. These varieties of competences for mentors simply demonstrate the complexity which is associated mentoring role.

Theoretical Framework

Johnson (2003) provides a theoretical model of mentor competences known as the Triangular model of mentor competences. The model comprises three main dimensions: competencies, abilities and virtues. It can be argued from the understanding of mentor competences that the demands on mentors are not only complex and diverse but also challenging. This emphasizes the importance of mentor preparation and regular training to equip the mentors with the appropriate competences for mentoring. Ulvik and Sunde (2013) point out that mentor education and training is the main conduit through which to develop and consolidate mentor competences. In addition, it is also argued that mentor training equips the mentors with the appropriate language, skills, knowledge and attitudes (Rajuan et al. 2011). This, therefore, suggests that mentoring competences gaps could be circumvented through mentor training.

Mentoring practices are contextual (Wang 2001; Jones 2001). As such mentoring competences could also be regarded contextual, thus, depending on the nature and contexts of the mentoring programme. Several studies have been conducted to assess preferences of stu-

dent teachers on the qualities of their mentors (Heeralal 2014; Rose 2003; Clutterbuck 2005). Fewer studies assessed the actual competences of the mentors from the perspective of student teachers and headteachers separately; while even fewer comparative studies exist on student teachers and headteachers assessment of the competences of their mentors. This study, therefore, sought to assess the Malawi mentors' competences as perceived by student teachers and headteachers and compare their mean scores in the 1+1 IPTE mode. This assessment was carried out as a quality assurance instrument (Martin and Stella 2007; Harvey 2004). As claimed by Hobson et al. (2009), it is the quality of mentoring that is more significant than the mentoring itself. This stance is also advanced by Ragins et al. (2000) who posit that poor mentoring is more destructive than no mentoring at all. It was therefore important that a study be carried out to assess the competences of mentors in order to look for solutions regarding the concerns on the quality of mentoring in the Malawi's 1+1 IPTE mode.

The Problem

Student teachers in preservice teacher education programmes grapple with how to balance theory and practice during a teaching practice (Makura and Zireva 2013; Korthagen 2010; Day 2004). The adoption of a mentoring programme which relies heavily a mentor is central to the challenge of connecting theory with practice. Research studies consistently reveal that the quality of the mentor is a key determinant of the quality of the mentoring programme (Rose 2003, Heeralal 2014; Allen and Eby 2004). Studies conducted on the 1+1 IPTE mode reveal that its mentoring programme is plagued by inadequate mentoring support (Destefano 2012; Ndalama and Chidalengwa 2012; MoEST 2014). This shortfall in mentoring support raises concerns over the quantity and quality of competences of the mentors in the programme.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the competences of school mentors from perspectives of student teachers and headteachers against Johnson's (2003) theoretical model of mentor competences.

Research Questions

The study, therefore, sought answers to fours questions:
- What are the competences of mentors in the 1+1 IPTE as perceived by student teachers?
- What are the competences of mentors in the 1+1 IPTE as perceived by Headteachers?
- Is there a significant difference in the assessment of mentors' competences by student teachers and headteachers?
- What are the implications of the findings for school mentor development?

Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H_o)

There is no significant difference in the assessment of mentors' competences by student teachers and Headteachers.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)

There is a significant difference in the assessment of mentors' competences by student teachers and Headteachers.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

A quantitative survey design was employed in this study. Data were collected from a census survey of 92 mentoring primary schools and 707 respondents comprising 91 school headteachers and 616 student teachers in the one of the education divisions. Response rates of 99 percent and 94 percent were obtained from the headteachers and student teachers participation. The fully structured questionnaire was pilot tested and its Cronbach Coefficient of Reliability coefficients (α) was 0.967. According to George and Mallery (2003), a reliability coefficient greater than 0.9 indicates an excellent instrument.

Student teachers and their Headteachers were asked to indicate the frequency with which mentors demonstrated or performed on a set of 30 competences a three point Likert Scale in which 3 = Always; 2 = Sometimes and 1 = Never. The competences were derived from Johnson's (2003) theoretical model of mentor competences grouped into three dimensions of mentor abilities, mentor virtues and mentor competencies based on Johnson (2003) framework.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data were edited, coded, entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0 software, and cleaned. Descriptive analysis was employed to get the percentage of student teachers and Headteachers whose mentors demonstrated the competence. The scores on these responses of *Always* and *Sometimes* were added together as they indicated that the mentors demonstrated the competence. For this study, competences with 10 percent or more on Never demonstrated indicated a strong need for mentor training in those competences as at least 50 student teachers indicated that their mentors did not demonstrate the competence. An independent sample t-test was calculated using the SPSS to compare the mean assessment scores of student teachers and headteachers on each of the competence.

RESULTS

(a) Characteristics of Respondents

The total number of student teacher respondents was 579, forty-seven percent (male) and fifty-three percent (female). There was also a total of 91 school head teachers, eighty-two percent (male) and eighteen percent (female). Thus, both male and females student teachers and head teachers participated in the study. The participation by both genders in this study was needed for balanced assessment of school mentors' competences. Of school head teacher and student teacher participants, over ninety percent possessed the official highest qualification required for a primary school teacher. This suggests that they had appropriate content for level and had the aptitude to complete the questionnaires individually. It came out in the head teacher sample that 68 percent of them had served as mentoring school head teachers for at least a year. This indicates that the majority of the head teachers were therefore experienced enough in their mentoring responsibilities including assessing the performance of school mentors; hence gave objective responses to the open and closed ended questions.

(b) Student Teachers' Assessment of School Mentors' Competences

Table 1 depicts the perceptions of student teachers regarding the competences of their

Table 1: Student teachers' assessment of the school mentors' competences (n=579)

Dimension of competence	% of respondent whose mentors demonstrated	% of respondents whose mentors demonstrated
Disciplined	96	4
Respectful	96	4
Honest	95	5
Mentor Virtues		
Trustworthy	93	7
Planful	92	8
Good judgements	92	8
Cautious	90	10
Sensitive to student teachers' needs	87	13
Intelligent	97	3
Knowledgeable in the field	95	5
Approachable	95	5
Supportive	94	6
Mentor Abilities		
Sense of humour	94	6
Empathetic	93	7
Dedicated to mentoring duties	93	7
Interested in student teachers	86	14
Patient	83	17
Creates professional relationship	94	6
Demonstrate self-awareness	93	7
Skilful in student teacher development	93	7
Respect autonomy	92	8
Knowledgeable in subject matter	92	8
Mentor Competencies		
Manages mentoring relationship (knowledge and skills)	92	8
Skilful in cross gender mentoring	89	11
Recognises dysfunctional relationship	89	11
Gives career advancement support	88	12
Role modeller	86	14
Uses variety of communication strategies	86	14
Gives emotional support	84	16
Creates intimacy	80	20

mentors ranked in order of decreasing percentages for each dimension.

It can be seen from Table 1 that the range of student teachers who indicated that their mentors demonstrated competency the 30 items ranged from eighty percent to ninety-seven per-

Table 2: Headteachers' assessment of the school mentors' competences (n=91)

Dimension of competence	% of respondent whose mentors demonstrated	% of respondents whose mentors demonstrated
Respectful	99	1
Planful	99	1
Good judgements	99	1
Cautious	98	2
Mentor Virtues		
Disciplined	93	7
Trustworthy	90	10
Honest	88	12
Sensitive to student teachers' needs	87	13
Knowledgeable in the field	99	1
Sense of humour	99	1
Dedicated to mentoring duties	99	1
Interested in student teachers	99	1
Mentor Abilities		
Patient	99	1
Empathetic	98	2
Approachable	92	8
Supportive	89	11
Intelligent	76	24
Skilful in student teacher development	99	1
Respect autonomy	99	1
Gives career advancement support	99	1
Role modeller	99	1
Uses variety of communication strategies	99	1
Mentor Competencies		
Gives emotional support (knowledge and skills)	99	1
Manages mentoring relationship	98	2
Creates professional relationship	98	2
Demonstrate self-awareness	98	2
Skilful in cross gender mentoring	96	4
Knowledgeable in subject matter	88	12
Creates intimacy	76	14
Recognises dysfunctional relationship	85	15

cent. This suggests that the majority of school mentors demonstrated competency in the said items. The results further show that student teachers whose mentors never demonstrated the competency in the 30 items ranged from three percent to twenty percent. The majority of the items that this group never demonstrated com-petency were in the dimension of mentor competencies (knowledge and skills). Using the cut-off point of ninety percent or below, it can be seen that there were 11 competences (italized in Table 1) in which at least 50 student teachers indicated that their mentors never demonstrated the competence. This suggests that some of the school mentors were incompetence in those areas.

(c) Headteachers' Assessment of School Mentors' Competences

Table 2 depicts the assessment by head-teachers regarding the perceived competences of mentors ranked in order of decreasing percentages for each dimension.

Table 2 shows that the range of percentage of headteachers whose mentors demonstrated the competence was from seventy-six to ninety-nine percent across the three dimensions. This indicates that the majority of the headteachers had mentors who were generally competent to mentor student teachers. However, data in the table also shows that there were few mentors who were not competent in some of the items. Although such items were in all the three dimensions of mentor competence, most of these were in mentor virtues and competencies.

Finding 3: Comparison of Student Teachers' and Headteachers' Assessment of School Mentors' Competences

Table 3 gives a comparison of perceived competence scores as indicated by headteachers and student teachers.

It can be seen in Table 3 that the p values for the items were less than 0.05 in all but two items. This suggests that there is not a statistically significant difference in the mean competence scores for student teachers and headteachers in all items except in two of them: respectful ($p = 0.067$) and good judgement ($p = 0.078$).

DISCUSSION

The results indicate that the majority of the mentors in the 1+1 IPTE mode possessed and demonstrated a variety of competences. The mentors' competences in the 1+1 IPTE mode were consistent with the key competences of

Table 3: Comparison of student teachers and head-teachers' assessment of the mentors' competences

Dimension of elements of competence	p values	Rating of the difference in means
Good judgement	0.078	Significant
Respectful	0.067	Significant
Planful	0.000	Not significant
Cautious	0.000	Not significant
Mentor virtues		
Disciplined	0.000	Not significant
Trustworthy	0.000	Not significant
Honest	0.000	Not significant
Sensitive to student teachers' needs	0.000	Not significant
Patient	0.036	Not significant
Intelligent	0.020	Not significant
Empathetic	0.002	Not significant
Knowledgeable in the field	0.001	Not significant
Mentor abilities		
Sense of humour	0.000	Not significant
Dedicated to mentoring duties	0.000	Not significant
Interested in student teachers	0.000	Not significant
Approachable	0.000	Not significant
Supportive	0.000	Not significant
Recognises dysfunctional relationship	0.035	Not significant
Demonstrate self-awareness	0.007	Not significant
Knowledgeable in subject matter	0.007	Not significant
Skilful in student teacher development	0.003	Not significant
Skilful in cross gender mentoring	0.001	Not significant
Mentor competencies Respect autonomy (knowledge and skills)	0.000	Not significant
Gives career advancement support	0.000	Not significant
Role modeller	0.000	Not significant
Uses variety of communication strategies	0.000	Not significant
Gives emotional support	0.000	Not significant
Manages mentoring relationship	0.000	Not significant
Creates professional relationship	0.000	Not significant
Creates intimacy	0.000	Not significant

mentors suggested by the literature (Johnson 2003; Heeralal 2014; Bamford 2011; Clutterbuck 2005; Clutterbuck and Lane 2005). It can be argued that the IPTE mode had therefore the basic ingredients of a quality mentoring programme.

As claimed by Allen and Eby (2004) mentor type was a key determinant of the quality of a mentoring programme.

The results have also indicated that not all mentors in the 1+1 IPTE mode possessed and demonstrated all the competences as given by Johnson's (2003) Triangular Model of mentor competences. Fifty percent (50%) of the competences not demonstrated by mentors were in the knowledge and skills dimension of mentor competences. This suggests that some of the mentors could be described as marginal mentors characterized by having limited mentoring competences (Shumba et al. 2012). The results are consistent with earlier studies which revealed that not all teacher mentors demonstrate competency as required by a mentoring program by Hobson (2002) as well as Shumba et al. (2012). It can however be argued that inadequacy in mentoring competences among mentors is detrimental to the quality of the mentoring programme and growth of the student teachers in that it perpetuates the problems mentoring was meant to solve. As pointed out by Tshuma and Shumba (2014) some mentors may be incompetent or lack confidence in mentoring and this can be disastrous to mentoring. That is, the career, psychosocial and role modeling functions associated with mentoring (Kram 1985; Scandura 2009) could also become distant. Perhaps, this suggests that the few mentors were not trained or received inadequate training for their mentorship role. Tang and Choi (2005) point out that the manner in which mentors are prepared determines their quality and that of the overall mentoring programme. The results, therefore, confirm a rationale for continuous training of mentors rather than a once off training (Tirivanhu 2014)

The primary beneficiaries of a mentoring programme are the mentees. In this study, these were student teachers. They were therefore in a better position to objectively assess the competences demonstrated by their mentors. However, the design of the mentoring programme in the 1+1 IPTE mode created strong monitoring relationships among the mentor, student teachers and the headteachers. This gave the headteachers a pivotal role in routinely assessing mentors' performance. As such, their assessment could also be regarded objective. It was evident from the results in Table 4 that the assessment of mentors' competences by student teachers

and headteachers were not statistically different in 93 percent (28 out of the 30 competences). Perhaps this may be due to a closer participation of headteachers in the mentoring programme. This finding implies that in a mentoring programme as it could mean that mentors' competences in the 1+1 IPTE mode could be assessed from either the student teachers' or headteachers' perspectives with a greater accuracy.

Significant difference was however noted in two of the 30 competences: respectful and good judgment. Using Johnson's (2003) Conceptual Model of mentor competences, both competences fall under the main category of mentor virtues. Specifically, they relate to the broader competences of caring and prudence (Johnson 2003). Thus, while 99 percent of headteachers indicated that their school mentors demonstrated the competences, only 86 percent or less indicated that the mentors did not demonstrate the competence. Perhaps the two competences demand close and continuous interaction for anyone to measure them.

Mentoring is the socialisation process of the Less Knowledgeable Other (LKO) by the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) (Maphalala 2013; Castro et al. 2004; Kram 1985). In teacher education programme, the MKO refers to especially selected, trained, qualified and experienced teachers (Olowu 2011; Tomlinson 1995; Sergiovanni and Starrat 2002). The purpose of the training is to equip the MKO with the competences which will facilitate the development of the mentor's competencies (knowledge and skills), abilities and virtues (Mutemeri and Tirivanhu 2014; Lawal 2011). Thus, training improves the quality of the mentor. As such quality mentors possess and demonstrate effective mentoring competences (Lawal 2011).

CONCLUSION

The mentoring of student teachers during a practicum is a rite of passage to the teaching profession. It is instrumental in developing student teachers competences as budding teachers. It also equips them with competences for future responsibilities and roles as mentors. As such, it is important that all student teachers' mentors, who serve as gatekeepers, possess and demonstrate effective mentoring competences. The norms and standards of mentor competences must therefore be comprehensive enough to assure the quality of the mentoring programme. The results in this study revealed that most student teachers and Headteachers indicated that their mentors demonstrated all the 30 competences; and some of them indicated that their mentors never demonstrated the expected competences. This indicate that not all the mentor competences derived from theoretical model of mentor competences were demonstrated by all mentors in the 1+1 IPTE mode. In conclusion, the assessments of mentors' competences by student teachers and headteachers have given useful informing on the status of the quality of the mentors in the 1+1 IPTE mode. The challenge, however, is on how to design and implement mentor programmes that provide and sustain the mentors' competences.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS ON MENTOR DEVELOPMENT

There is need for regular assessment of competence levels of mentors from the perspectives of student teachers and headteachers in order to identify mentors' developmental needs. Mentors should also be provided with regular and focused mentor training sessions. Further comparative research needs to be conducted to assess whether or not there would be any significant difference between mentor teachers' and student teachers' assessments. Research on how to sustain competences of mentors in this mentoring programme is also needed.

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