

Assuring the Quality of Mentoring in Malawi's 1+1 Model of Initial Primary Teacher Education Programme: Implications for Teacher Development

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ABSTRACT This study assessed the structures and processes of quality monitoring of mentoring in the 1+1 Initial Primary Teacher Education model in Malawi. Data was collected from a sequential mixed methods design comprising a survey followed by a case study which employed document analysis and face to face interviews. 666 respondents (94% response rate) consisting 579 student teachers, 92 mentors, 91 headteachers and 4 lecturers at teacher training college participated in a drop-and-pick census survey. The Cronbach's Reliability Coefficient (α) for the student teachers', school mentors' and headteachers' questionnaires were 0.971, 0.827, and 0.858 respectively. In the case study phase, 6 purposively sampled participants from two case schools participated in the face to face interviews. Descriptive analysis, anchored in Statistical Package for Social Science, 20.0, was employed on the quantitative data; and qualitative data was analysed by using content analysis. The results revealed that mentoring schools had no structures, policies, practice codes and standards for monitoring mentoring practices and depended on bureaucratic-management or bureaucratic-technicist approach with more emphasis on accountability to the teacher training college than self improvement. Schools also had inadequate scope of what was monitored; lacked uniformity in the frequency of monitoring activities; and lacked collegial approach to monitoring quality of mentoring. The results show a shortfall in the monitoring of the quality of mentoring in primary schools. Hence, recommendations aimed at conceptualising the policies, structures and processes of internal monitoring in primary schools in the 1+1 IPTE model are made.