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Effect of Mentoring on Effectiveness of Primary School Teachers in Plateau State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

With the growing emphasis on mentoring in educational systems, mentoring is viewed as a critical support mechanism for enhancing teaching practices, especially for novice teachers. This study examines the effect of mentoring in enhancing teachers 'effectiveness, especially focusing on pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management skills, and professional development and growth among primary school teachers in Plateau State, Nigeria. The research adopts a descriptive survey design to assess the impact of mentoring programme on primary school teachers in Plateau State. The population consisted of 15,790 teachers across various primary schools in Plateau State and was selected using stratified random sampling techniques to ensure representation across different educational authorities. Data were collected through structured questionnaires designed to measure the impact of mentoring on the identified dependent variables. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, including mean scores and standard deviation; regression analysis was used to test the research hypotheses. The finding revealed that mentoring significantly improves teachers understanding of subject content, classroom management strategies, and their engagement in professional growth activities. The study concludes that effective mentoring programs are essential for improving teacher quality and student outcomes. The implications of the research suggest that formalised mentoring programmes should be integrated into teacher development frameworks to foster long-term growth and classroom success. It recommended that educational authorities implement structured mentoring programmes to provide continuous professional support, with a focus on both instructional practices and classroom management.

Keywords: Mentoring, pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management skills, professional development and growth; teacher effectiveness

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INTRODUCTION

Teachers hold a significant position in the progress of the nation by nurturing the upcoming labour force, fostering critical analytical skills, and reinforcing societal values (Oner & Aggal, 2022). They serve as catalysts for transformation, not solely transmitting knowledge but also bringing about educational reforms that are imperative for both economic development and social advancement (Datnow, 2022). In numerous nations, teachers assume an anticipatory role in the formulation of curricula, ensuring that educational frameworks align with national objectives (Kneen, et al., 2023), thereby rendering teachers more responsive to societal demands. Their role has increased in the digital age, as they are charged with the incorporation of technology into educational settings, thereby equipping students with requisite competencies for the contemporary economy (Areej, 2023).

The effectiveness of teachers is frequently defined as the capacity to elicit improvements in student achievement metrics (Goe, et al., 2009). It is additionally characterised as the performance of teachers concerning their influence on student learning and development (Seidel & Shavelson, 2007). Typically, it is assessed through value-added models that encapsulate a teacher's effect on student success, evaluations of a teacher's classroom performance by external evaluators (e.g., supervisors or mentor teachers), or student assessments of instructional quality (Atteberry et al., 2015; Bardach, et al., 2021). This concept may be conceptualised through various dimensions, including pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), classroom management, and professional development and growth.

PCK is a construct introduced in 1986 by Shulman (Shulman, 2004), which refers to the teachers' capacity to convey subject-specific content in manners that facilitate comprehension for students. Teachers must possess not only an in-depth understanding of the material they instruct but also the ability to present it in ways that accommodate the heterogeneous learning needs of their pupils (Rowan, et al., 2020). In the primary education context, where instructors are tasked with teaching multiple subjects, robust PCK is critical for enhancing student learning.

Another significant facet of teacher effectiveness pertains to classroom management skills. This is defined as the activities undertaken by teachers that promote learning, which encompass, among other aspects, curriculum planning, organisation of the physical environment, teachers personality traits, time management, instructional delivery, and the resolution of classroom challenges (Amoke, 2018). Numerous responsibilities associated with classroom management are complex even for experienced teachers and are substantially more challenging for novice teachers. Effective classroom management is essential for the realisation of meaningful teaching and learning outcomes (Amoke, 2018). The efficacy of classroom management has been correlated with improved student outcomes, as students are more inclined to engage in learning when classrooms are meticulously organised and disruptions are minimised (Goodman, et al., 2023). In Nigeria, a significant number of primary school teachers encounter difficulties in managing large and diverse classrooms, which may hinder their overall effectiveness (Edinoh, et al., 2024).

The third dimension is professional development and growth; it focuses on teachers' ongoing learning and career development. It is crucial for teacher effectiveness as it enables teachers to stay updated on educational trends, adopt new teaching strategies, and continuously improve

their practice (Desimone, 2009). In Nigeria, access to professional development opportunities for primary school teachers is often limited, which affects their ability to keep up with new pedagogical methods and educational technologies (Yusuf & Mande, 2024)

Despite the numerous mentoring programmes in teacher education, there is no agreement on the precise definition of a mentor, and teacher mentoring is not widely understood (Koki, 1997). This means there are several definitions of the concepts. For the purpose of this study we adopted the definition given by the Center for Health Leadership and Practice (2003: p. 1) defines mentoring as a ‘‘process where an experienced person assists a less-experienced person in developing their goals and skills through a series of time-limited, private, one-on-one conversations and other learning activities’’. Mentoring has been identified as an effective strategy for improving teachers’ effectiveness (Halai, 2018; Botha et al., 2021; Okumu et al., 2021; Amoke, 2018) particularly in the context where teachers are struggling to meet educational standard. Studies have shown that mentoring can help teachers develop necessary skills to teach content effectively, manage classroom efficiently and growth professionally (Cornelius et al., 2019; Ekiz – Kiran, et al., 2021; Shank et al., 2021; Gelatu, 2024). Botha and Hugo (2021) highlighted the role play by mentoring in primary school to include providing guidance and support needed to steer the challenges of teaching young learners. Mentors who are often experienced educators can offer newly employed teachers insight into classroom challenges and support their ongoing professional development, job satisfaction and positive teaching experience (Botha & Hugo, 2021; Hulme & Wood, 2021), impact the quality of education in primary schools.

Empirical researches have consistently showed that mentoring plays a crucial role in developing teachers’ competencies. Teachers who undergoes structured mentoring programmes, demonstrate improved instructional techniques and higher students' engagement (Kutsyruba et al., 2019; Amoke, 2019:), it fosters reflective teaching practices, allowing researchers to evaluate and refine their approaches to delivery critical content and managing classroom activities (Achinstein & Davies, 2016). The majority of empirical studies on mentoring and teachers' performance have been carried out at secondary schools and post-secondary institutions of higher learning (Shittu et al., 2024; Iheanyi, et al., 2023; Amoke, 2018; Abiodun et al., 2022; Oladipo et al., 2016). However, despite these documented evidences there are few researches that investigated the effect of mentoring in primary schools to include Etim and Omorobi (2020); Botha and Hugo, (2021); Oguwazu and Omotuyole, (2023). The majority of the studies were carried out outside of Nigeria. A surprising lack of research exists on the topic of enhancing teachers' effectiveness and mentoring. This supports Abetang et al., (2020) argument that mentorship research has not been sufficiently investigated. Additionally, just a little research have been done on how this crucial dialogue from developing nations, like Nigeria. With limited attention given to primary educational sub sector, particularly in rural or semi - urban areas like Plateau State, this creates a significant gap in understanding how mentoring can address the specific needs of primary schools teachers in these setting.

Theoretically, the study seeks to explain why mentoring activities would help to enhance teachers’ outcomes through a multi-theoretical approach. So, Adult learning theory (Andragogy) and self-determination Theory (SDT) were used to elucidate the procedure through which the hypothesised interactions are possible. Adult learning theory was developed by Malcolm

Knowles in 1984 (Hartree, 1984), it is build on the assumptions of adult learning theory include the belief that adults are self – directed and motivated learners driving upon the life experiences and knowledge. Predicated on adult learning theory, the study offers valuable insights on how mentors can leverage the principles of andragogy by engaging mentees in setting their own learning objectives, allowing them to take an active role in the learning process which will leads better understanding of pedagogical content and professional development (Klinge, 2015).

In addition, the study used self-determination theory (SDT) it is a psychological theory that focuses on understanding the intrinsic motivations and psychological needs that drive human behaviour and well-being. The theory emphasises the role of autonomy and skills required by mentors and mentees to make decisions and take ownership of their learning process. Additionally, members can enhance competences by providing constructive feedback and offering opportunities for skills development and career development of the teacher. The related aspect can be supported by creating a nurturing and supportive mentor – mentee relationship (Van den Broek et al., 2016).This study, therefore, seeks to explore the positive impact of mentoring in the context of Plateau State primary schools. In light of these observations this study aims to provide a holistic investigation role of mentoring in enhancing teachers' effectiveness by incorporating the specific dimensions of teacher effectiveness such as pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management skills and professional development and growth. The study hopes to offer valuable insights into improving mentoring programmes in schools. In addition, the study will provide recommendations for policy – makers and schools administrators on how to optimise mentoring for teachers maximisation.

Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to explore the impact of mentoring on teacher effectiveness:

1. What is the effect of mentoring on pedagogical content knowledge of teachers in primary schools in Plateau State?
2. To what extent does a mentoring influence classroom management skill of teachers in primary schools in Plateau State?
3. What is the effect of mentoring on professional development and growth of teachers in Plateau State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study

Ho_1: Mentoring has no significant effect on pedagogical content knowledge of primary schools teachers in Plateau State.

Ho_2: Mentoring has no significant effect on classroom management skills of primary schools teachers in Plateau State.

Ho_3: Mentoring has no significant effect on professional development and growth of primary schools teachers in Plateau State.

METHODS

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design because the opinions of the respondents are sought. Osuala (2003) stated that when a survey centres on individuals and their opinions, beliefs, motivation and behaviour, the survey method is the most appropriate.

The area of this study is Plateau State. The populations for the study are teachers teaching in both public and private secondary in Plateau State, Nigeria, which is made of 15, 790 (Statistical, 2023). The sample size of the study was determined using the Taro- Yamane (1967) statistical formula.

Which is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N\,(e2)}$$

Where n= Sample size desired
N = Overall population
e = Tolerated assumed error at 0.05 based on 95% confidence level. Therefore,

$$n = \frac{15{,}790}{1 + 15{,}790\,(0.05 \times 0.05)}$$

$$\frac{15{,}790}{1 + 15{,}790\,(0.0025)}$$

$$\frac{15{,}790}{40.475}$$

$$= 390.11$$

The sample size for this study was based on 390 teachers.

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire divided into sections three. The questionnaire was structured on a five point rating scale of Strongly Agree= 5, Agree = 4, Undecided, Disagree = 2, strongly Disagree = 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts. One from measurement and evaluation unit of the Department of Psychology and two from the Department of Business Education, all in Federal University of Education, Pankshin, Plateau State. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to test the reliability of the items shown in table 1.

Table 1: Reliability Test

Variables	Items	Crobach Alpha
Mentoring	5	.767
Pedagogical content knowledge	9	.910
Classroom management skills	8	.702
Professional career development and growth	6	.873

Table1 shows the summary of the reliability results. It can be seen from that the results of the reliability test show that the reliability tests for the variables under investigation are all above 0.70. Consequently, given the established yardstick of 0.70, it can be concluded all the constructs are reliable.

390 Copies of the questionnaires were distributed through the help of research assistants and 253 were used representing 65% of response rates. In line with Nulty (2008), who claimed that a 60% response rate was sufficient for an easy-to-reach paper survey, the data were analysed using

mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and simple regression to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance, rejecting the null hypothesis if the t-value was less than 1.96 and the p-value was greater than 0.05.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 2: Mentoring

SN	STATEMENT	MEAN	STD DEV	REMARK
1	Mentoring has provided with valuable feedback on my teaching	3.89	0.97	Agreed
2	I feel more confidents in my teaching abilities	3.91	1.03	Agreed
3	Mentoring has enhanced my engagement in reflective practice and self assessment	3.59	1.27	Agreed
4	Mentoring help me identify and address my professional strengths and weaknesses	3.11	1.04	Agreed
5.	I am motivated to seek for further certifications and training as a result of mentoring	3.30	0.84	Agreed

Table 2 demonstrates that mentoring fosters teacher involvement and self-evaluation, builds teachers' confidence and skills, and gives them insightful feedback. It also encourages teachers to pursue additional certification and training by assisting them in recognising their own strengths and shortcomings. Since every statement exceeded the requirement of three and every standard deviation was positive, indicating agreement among the sample's responders, all of the items were agreed upon.

Research Question 1: What is the impact of mentoring on pedagogical content knowledge of primary school teachers in Plateau State?

Table 3: Pedagogical Content Knowledge

SN	STATEMENT	MEAN	STD DEV	REMARK
1	Mentoring has improved my understanding of subject matter as I teach	3.12	1.03	Agreed
2	I feel more confident in my ability to explain complex concepts to my students due to mentoring	3.48	1.41	Agreed
3	Mentoring has helped me design lessons that align better with the curriculum standards	3.27	1.08	Agreed
4	I use more effective instructional strategies in my teaching as a result of mentoring	3.51	1.39	Agreed
5.	Mentoring has enhanced my ability to address diverse learning needs within the classroom	3.33	1.03	Agreed
6	I integrate new teaching methods and educational research into my lessons because of mentoring	3.11	1.37	Agreed
7	Mentoring has improved my ability to connect different topics within the subject area I teach	3.37	1.33	Agreed
8	I am better at assessing students understanding the subject matter as result of mentoring	3.35	1.33	Agreed
9	Mentoring has made me more effective in using instructional tools and resources	3.37	1.31	Agreed

Table 3 demonstrates how mentoring affects pedagogical content knowledge. All of the statements agreed that mentoring helped the mentee better understand the subject matter, gain

confidence in explaining complex concepts, design better lessons that support the curriculum, improve the use of instructional strategies when delivering the lesson, and improve the mentee's ability to meet the various needs of the students. Additionally, mentoring helps the mentee integrate new teaching methods into the lesson, connect various topics within the subject area, assess the learner effectively, and, lastly, teach them how to use resources effectively.

All the items were agreed because the various statements were above the criterion of 3 and all standard deviations are positive, showing agreement among respondents in the sample. This means that effective mentoring enhance teachers' ability teach subject matter clearly.

Research Question 2: What is the impact of mentoring on classroom management skills of primary school teachers in Plateau State?

Table 4: Classroom Management Skills

SN	STATEMENT	MEAN	STD DEV	REMARK
1	Mentoring has helped me establish clear and effective classroom rules and expectations	3.91	1.01	Agreed
2	I manage disruptive behaviours more effectively in my classroom due to mentoring	3.83	0.99	Agreed
3	Mentoring has improved my ability to create a structured and offered classroom environment	3.60	1.05	Agreed
4	I use positive reinforcement more effectively to encourage desirable students behaviour as a result of mentoring	3.58	0.93	Agreed
5.	Mentoring has provided me with the strategies to handle conflicts between students	3.67	0.99	Agreed
6	I feel more competent in managing a large diverse classroom because of mentoring	3.76	1.05	Agreed
7	Mentoring has improved my ability to keep student engagement and minimise disruptions	3.88	1.33	Agreed
8	Mentoring has enhanced my ability to create a safe and inclusive learning environment	3.68	0.93	Agreed

Table 4 demonstrated that mentoring provides the mentee with a thorough awareness of the classroom management strategies required of future primary school teachers in Plateau State. The results show that mentoring helps to control disruptive conduct, enforce effective classroom rules, develop positive student behavior, handle conflicts, feel more capable of managing a large classroom, engage students, and provide a safe and inclusive learning environment. Since all of the standard deviations are positive and the various statements were more than three points, indicating agreement among the sample's responders, all of the items were accepted. This implies that one of the main responsibilities of mentoring is to oversee classroom activities.

Research Question 1: What is the impact of mentoring on professional development and growth of primary school teachers in Plateau State?

Table 5: Professional Development and Growth

SN	STATEMENT	MEAN	STD DEV	REMARK
1	Mentoring has encouraged me to pursue professional development opportunities.	3.78	1.23	Agreed
2	I have set and achieved more career goals with the help of mentoring	3.30	1.38	Agreed
3	Mentoring has enhanced my engagement in reflective practice and self assessment	3.07	1.30	Agreed
4	Mentoring help me identify and address my professional strengths and weaknesses	3.17	1.15	Agreed
5.	I am motivated to seek for further certifications and training as a result of mentoring	3.64	1.03	Agreed
6	Mentoring has prepared me for leadership roles within my school	3.35	1.21	Agreed

The mean scores and standard deviation of the respondents' answers about professional development and advancement are displayed in table 5. According to the respondents' pattern of responses, mentoring facilitates the pursuit of professional development opportunities, the accomplishment of additional career goals, and the improvement of self-assessment engagement. Other things include assessing one's professional strengths and shortcomings, pursuing additional credentials, and getting ready for leadership positions. Since the numerous statements exceeded the requirement of three, all of the items were agreed upon. Every standard deviation is positive, indicating that the sample's respondents are in agreement. This suggests that in order to improve teachers' professional development and progress, mentoring is required.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between mentoring and pedagogical content knowledge of teachers in primary schools in Plateau State.

Table 6: Model - summary

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std Error of estimate
1	.481	.232	.229	.61525

@ predictors (constant) mentoring

The value of R (0.481) is the correlation between mentoring and pedagogical content knowledge of teachers is moderate and positive. 23.2% of the variation in PCK can be explained by mentoring. This indicates the model fits data. The adjusted R^2 of 0.229 accounts for the number of predictors, but in simple linear regression, it will be close to R^2.

Table 7: Anova [a]

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	28.778	3	28.778	76.026	.000
Residual	95.391	250	.378		
Total	124.169	253			

@ Depedent variable: pedagogical content knowledge
Predictors (constant) mentoring

Regression sum of squares is 28.778; this is the variation in pedagogical content knowledge explained by mentoring. Residual sum of squares this is unexplained variation (error) in the

model. The F statistic calculated value of 76.026 indicates that the model is a good fit; this means that predictive power is moderate. The p value of less than 0.05 levels of significant shows that the model is statistically significant, meaning that mentoring significantly predicts PCK.

Table 8: Simple Coefficient Tables

Unstandardize coefficient			**Standardize coefficient**		
Model	**B**	**Std error**	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig**
Constant	1.844	.214	-	8.609	.000
Mentoring	.515	.059	.481	8.719	.000

Results in table 8 shows that mentoring is significantly and positively related to PCK with a (β = .515, t = 8.719. p – 0.000). Since the p value is less than 0.05, the slope is statistically significant. This means that mentoring significantly impacts pedagogical content knowledge.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between mentoring and classroom management skills of teachers in primary schools in Plateau State.

Table 9: Model - summary

Model	**R**	**R^2**	**Adjusted R^2**	**Std Error of estimate**
1	.521	.272	.263	.60133

@ Predictors (constant) mentoring

The value of R (0.521) is the correlation between mentoring and classroom management skills of teachers is moderate and positive. 27.2% of the variation in classroom management can be explained by mentoring. This indicates the model fits data. The adjusted R^2 of 0.263 accounts for the number of predictors, but in simple linear regression, it will be close to R^2.

Table 10: Anova [a]

Model	**Sum of squares**	**Df**	**Mean square**	**F**	**Sig**
Regression	33.767	3	11.350	31.129	.000
Residual	90.401	250	.362		
Total	124.169	253			

@ Depedent variable: classroom management skills
Predictors (constant) mentoring

Regression sum of squares is 33.767; this is the variation in classroom management is explained by mentoring. Residual sum of squares this is unexplained variation (error) in the model. The F statistic calculated value of 31.129 indicates that the model is a good fit; this means that predictive power is weak. The p value of less than 0.05 levels of significant shows that the model is statistically significant, meaning that mentoring significantly predicts classroom management.

Table 11: Simple Coefficient Tables

Unstandardise coefficient			**Standardize coefficient**		
Model	**B**	**Std error**	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig**
Constant	1.319	.275	-	5.524	.000
Mentoring	.444	.380	.933	3.177	.002

Dependent variable: classroom management skills

Results in table 11 shows that mentoring is significantly and positively related to classroom management with a (β = .444, t = 3.177. p – 0.002). Since the p value is less than 0.05, the slope is statistically significant. This means that mentoring significantly impacts classroom management skills.

Table 12: Model - summary

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std Error of estimate
1	.502	.252	.243	.60943

@ Predictors (constant) mentoring

The value of R (0.502) is the correlation between mentoring and classroom management skills of teachers is moderate and positive. 25.2% of the variation in professional development and growth can be explained by mentoring. This indicates the model fits the data. The adjusted R^2 of 0.243 accounts for the number of predictors, but in simple linear regression, it will be close to R^2.

Table 13: Anova [a]

Model	**Sum of squares**	**Df**	**Mean square**	**F**	**Sig**
Regression	31.319	3	10.440	28.107	.000
Residual	92.850	250	.371		
Total	124.169	253			

@ Dependent variable: professional development and growth
Predictors (constant) mentoring

Regression sum of squares is 31.319; this is the variation in classroom management is explained by mentoring. Residual sum of squares this is unexplained variation (error) in the model. The F statistic calculated value of 28.107 indicates that the model is a good fit; this means that predictive power is weak. The p value of less than 0.05 levels of significant shows that the model is statistically significant, meaning that mentoring significantly predicts professional development and growth.

Table 14: Simple Coefficient Tables

Unstandardise coefficient			**Standardize coefficient**		
Model	**B**	**Std error**	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig**
Constant	1.412	.298	-	5.000	.000
Mentoring	.440	.065	..411	6.715	.002

Dependent variable: professional development and growth.

Results in table 14 shows that mentoring is significantly and positively related to professional development and growth of teachers, with a (β = .440, t = 6.715. p – 0.002). Since the p value is less than 0.05, the slope is statistically significant. This means that mentoring significantly impacts professional development and growth.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Our findings that mentoring and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) are positively correlated suggest that good mentoring enhances the ability of teachers to impart knowledge more effectively and concisely. For new leaders in particular, this results in enhanced confidence and better teaching techniques. Students' learning outcomes would therefore probably increase since

teachers will be able to better tailor their lessons to each individual student. Additionally, robust mentorship programmes foster instructors' ongoing professional growth, fostering long-term, and high-quality teaching methods.

The results are consistent with the submission of Ekiz-Kiran (2021), who claimed that using an observation form based on the PCK component to watch mentors teach was helpful for pre-service teachers' overall development. The results further support Nesje and Lejonberg's (2022) report, which noted that mentoring has a significant potential to increase pre-service teachers' reflection on teaching and learning. These results also support the findings of Mok and Staub's (2021) study, which found that pre-service teachers' instructional skills improved during their practicum with the help of coaching, mentoring, and supervisor assistance.

The results of the second hypothesis showed that classroom management abilities and mentoring are closely linked. It implies that teachers who get good mentoring typically grow better at managing the classroom. Through mentoring, teachers can acquire useful tactics and perspectives on managing students' conduct, planning class activities, and fostering a positive learning atmosphere. They are therefore better able to uphold discipline, involve students, and create a supportive learning environment in the classroom, all of which enhance student experiences.

The results were consistent with the study of Amoke (2018), which found that formal mentoring seemed to improve teachers' performance in secondary public school classroom management abilities. The results were also corroborated by Shank and Santiague (2021), Evertson and Smithay (2010), and Hailron et al. (2020), who found that mentor protégés and new teachers taking part in training and mentoring programmes could be more successful at managing and organizing guidance to new teachers on how to create more practical classroom activities that will significantly enhance student behavior and engagement. Cornelius et al. (2019) and Arslan et al. (2022) both noted that teachers' classroom behaviors changed prior to, during, and following mentoring. Additionally, it was discovered that after receiving professional development and specific coaching, new teachers enhanced their teaching methods. The study’s conclusions are further supported by recent research by Geletu (2024), reported that mentoring practices plays an important role in students learning engagement and effective classroom management of the teacher.

Mentoring successfully promotes and advances teachers' career development when there is a positive correlation between mentoring and teachers' professional development and progress. Through mentorship, teachers receive insightful criticism, direction, and opportunity to develop their skills, which aid in improving classroom performance, improving their teaching methods, and expanding their knowledge. Based on this link, teachers who get regular and high-quality mentorship are more likely to advance their careers, gain more knowledge, and succeed in teaching. This result supports Hudson's (2013) findings that mentoring professional development for teachers can enhance their ability to mentor pre-service teachers, improve the quality of their mentoring, and reflect on and deconstruct teaching methods for their own pedagogical development.

Additionally, mentor teachers' professional development with their own teaching identity and practice was discovered by Walters et al. (2020). The outcome is in line with research by Pandey

et al. (2022), which found that mentorship is a fantastic way for new teachers to become more competent and helps them grow both personally and professionally.

IMPLICATIONS

A number of important managerial implications are highlighted by the positive correlation between mentoring and gains in professional growth, pedagogical topic understanding, and management skills. Mentoring programmes can be used by educational managers to help teachers improve their teaching methods and classroom management skills, which will greatly improve the quality of instruction. By encouraging job satisfaction and establishing a positive work environment, these programmes not only serve to improve teacher performance but also aid in the retention of qualified teachers. Additionally, mentoring can be used to find and develop future school leaders, creating a pool of seasoned professionals prepared for leadership and administration positions. Mentoring should be a strategic component of professional development for school administrators.

According to theoretical implications, the findings validate and broaden contemporary theories of education, especially those pertaining to constructivist and social learning models. In line with the notion that professional development is a continuous process that lasts the entirety of a teacher's career, mentoring encourages the continued acquisition of information and skills. These results support theories that consider informal experiential learning through peer collaboration and mentorship, in addition to formal schooling, as a component of teacher development. Thus, mentoring programmes encourage the integration

From a policy standpoint, the benefits of mentoring indicate that formalised mentoring programs ought to be created and sustained in conjunction with educational systems. The allocation of resources for these programmes, such as money for mentor training, support materials, and incentives for mentors and mentees, must be a priority for policymakers. For the quality and results of mentoring programmes to remain consistent throughout educational institutions, clear policies and guidelines should be created to standardise mentoring activities. Additionally, mentoring ought to be incorporated into professional teaching standards as a fundamental part of teacher certification and career advancement. Policymaker can encourage a culture of lifelong learning and professional growth in the teaching profession by instituting mentorship. into frameworks of teachers' education and development and contribute to professional growth models that emphasise learning from experienced colleagues and in practice.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals a robust beneficial connection between mentorship and the increase of teachers' classroom management abilities, pedagogical material knowledge, and overall professional development. These results highlight the critical role that organised mentorship plays in improving student outcomes, teacher effectiveness, and career advancement. However, there are drawbacks to the study. The results' applicability to other educational contexts was limited by the sample size, which was comparatively limited to Plateau State. Additionally, the study's brief duration might have missed the long-term effects of mentorship. Issues concerning potential biases are also raised by reliance on self-reported data.

In terms of knowledge contribution, this study contributes to the expanding literature on the value of mentoring in education by highlighting its many advantages for teacher development. It especially fills in gaps in the research by looking at how mentoring fosters professional development and progress in addition to improving content understanding and classroom management. Policymakers and teachers' can use these strategies to create mentorship programmes that are more successful. Expanding the sample size, carrying out longitudinal studies to evaluate the long-term effects of mentoring, and including objective metrics of student outcomes and teaching effectiveness should be the main goals of future study. This will provide an expanded view of how career development and teaching are influenced by mentorship across time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Mentoring programmes should focus on subject specific training and practical reach of strategies. Mentors need to guide teachers in understanding how to effectively teach complex subject matter by breaking it down into manageable concepts for students, pairing novice teachers with experienced teacher in the same subject area, this will help them refine their content delivery and develop specialised instructional methods.
2. Mentors should focus on effective classroom management practices and offer real - time feedback to teachers, helping them apply these strategies in their own classroom and analysis of case studies can also be incorporated into mentoring sessions
3. Schools should create structured pathways for career advancement that incorporate mentoring of various stages. Mentors should assist teachers on setting clear professional goals, identifying areas for improvement and pursuing advanced certification of leadership opportunities which can be achieve through workshops, conferences and networking.

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